

**Research Article**

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**Charlotte's language style in *Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story*  
series (2023)**

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**Abstract**

*Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story* is one of the popular Netflix series in 2023. This series is famous for being the aftermath of the two Bridgerton series that were released previously. The story, which is set in the British Empire at the end of the 18th century, attracts the attention of audiences. It is prominent to apply into the theory used because the various social factors and dimensions in the series can provide the samples of the five types of language styles according to Joos (1967), from frozen styles to intimate styles. The data used in this study are Charlotte's utterances to the three main supporting characters. Data collection uses the observation method by analyzing the dialogues in the series. There are 373 data found with the style that appears most often is the casual style. This type of language style is usually used in informal situations, with intimate relationships between participants.

**Keywords:** language style; social factors and dimensions; Netflix series.

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**1. Introduction**

*Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story* is a Netflix series inspired by Queen Charlotte, the wife of King George III from the British Empire. This series became the most watched in 91 countries in its first week of release. Moreover, the series can survive being in Netflix Global Weekly Top 10 for three weeks. *Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story* focuses on the life of Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, the Queen of England, in the late 18th century. Although the background and the characters are inspired by historical facts, the story in the series is a fiction. This series has two timelines, scilicet Young Charlotte and Old Charlotte. The young Charlotte is looked down upon as a queen, for she is considered to be as a queen who can be commanded around and does not stand a chance. This is because she is not fully aware of her position and responsibilities. Charlotte, however, does not give up and decides to work hard to prove to herself that she deserves to be the Queen of England. Meanwhile, the old Charlotte doubts her position as the queen's mother, who is responsible for the royal heirs. None of her fifteen children she can rely upon: the boys have a number of illegitimate babies, while none of the girls want to get married.

*Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story* was chosen because the series portrays the diversity of language styles used by Charlotte as the main character, depending on social factors and dimensions. Charlotte uses various language styles because she converses with numerous people with

various topics and purposes in different settings. However, the study would be focus on the dialogue of Charlotte as the main character towards three main supporting characters, namely George, Brimsley, and Agatha, because only those three characters appear at two different times in Charlotte's life.

The diversity of Charlotte's languages makes the research interesting, since it provides the five language styles, as are proposed by Joos (1967). In classifying Charlotte's language, the main considerations would be word choice, sentence structure, pronouns, tone and register, proper addressing, and the length and complexity of utterances. Additionally, social factors and dimensions, as are proposed by Holmes (2013), are used to facilitate the contextual explanation in the data analysis. Therefore, the analysis will remain focused on the linguistic factors mentioned above to ensure accurate classification without any mistakes.

To support the possibility of the research, there are ten previous studies reviewed. Aprilia (2021), Jamil et al (2018), Purba et al (2021), Ramdhani et al (2020), Rosyda (2021), and Sapriyani et al (2013) use social factors as the main basis why certain language style is used, while Daniela (2022), Dewi et al (202), Silta et al (2023), Simamora et al (2022) investigate the linguistic features of language styles. After reviewing and assessing the previous studies, this research will consider linguistic and non-linguistic aspects, social factors and dimensions, to classify the data into five types of language style and get appropriate result.

### *1.1. Language Style*

#### *1.1.1. Frozen Style*

Frozen style is a form of hyper-formal style that encourages solemn situations, such as those in the church or the palace. The language structure used in this style is unchanged, with strict appropriate grammar. In other words, frozen style is used in formal situations, during which particular languages are used repeatedly (Seligson, 2017:12); this style is used, for instance, in marriage ceremonies, the lord's Prayer, the preamble of the constitution, judicial sentencing, and the national pledge.

#### *1.1.2. Formal Style*

Formal style is a type of style usually used among strangers in a big scale conversation. Among the participants, there is a master of the conversation who will refers to the speakers that provide the information. The role is often assumed by an individual, such as the head principal that gives a speech during the Monday ceremony. The master of conversation role may also be held by a co-worker leading a meeting, and s/he will refer to the speaker with such an expression as "May I present Mr. Smith?" (Joos, 1967, p. 36).

#### *1.1.3. Consultative Style*

Consultative is the easiest style to use and identify in English. The grammar is not excessively concerned, although some things should be marked (Joss, 1967). This is because the style is the standard language used for daily conversation in semi-formal situations. The participants are strangers—not intimate relations—who actively participate, though just a short response. They provide the background information in the conversation by using simple sentences spontaneously that are easy to understand. For instance, "Can I help you?" (Joos, 1967, p. 25).

#### *1.1.4. Casual Style*

Casual style has similarities with the consultative because they include colloquial language. The difference is the context that is described by the social factors and dimension. Casual style is used by the participants who are the insiders, such as family and friends, or strangers who are deliberately treated as insiders. This style does not always provide background information, and the participants do not have to give a response. In addition, the language that is used in this style does not pay too much attention to grammar rules, as long as what is conveyed can be accepted by the other participant in

conversation. Another linguistic feature, this style has ellipsis and slang in its use. For example, “C’n I help you?” (Joos, 1967, p. 25).

#### 1.1.5. Intimate Style

This style is used among individuals having an intimate relation. The language used may not be informative for the outsider because the intimate style of language is commonly used by participants that share background knowledge and have an equal state. Extraction and jargon are frequently exchanged as a means to express intimate style, for instance, the word “engh” or “cold” uttered at the family supper table (Joos, 1967, p. 31). The expression communicates the speaker’s complaint concerning the coffee, which is already cold. The speaker simply says ‘engh’ or ‘cold’, but other family members understand what s/he intends to communicate. In other words, the meaning of the expression can be understood only by those who are intimate with the speaker.

### 1.2. *Social Factors and Dimensions*

#### 1.2.1. Participants

In any conversation, the relation between the participants is one aspect that influences code choices. There are two scales that Holmes (2013) uses to measure the relations between the participants, i.e. solidarity and status scale. The solidarity scale measures the so-called horizontal relations between participants of a conversation, i.e. whether they have a close or a distant relationship (Holmes, 2013). An intimate relation indicates a high the level of solidarity. Thus, the language used in the conversation will be more casual, and the terms used are sometimes only known by the participants. Vice versa, a distant relations decreases the level of solidarity. The more distant the relation between the participants is, the more formal the language will be.

The status scale is depicted by Holmes (2013) as the vertical line of an axe that measures the power a participant has. The higher an individual’s social status is, the more powerful s/he is in the society, and vice versa. This means that a speaker having lower social status will likely use polite and formal language to speak to a hearer having higher social status, and, in return, s/he will receive less polite language from the interlocutor due to her/his subordinate status.

#### 1.2.2. Setting

Setting is a social situation that influences the language choice in the conversation. According to Holmes (2013), the formality of the situation affects the conversation. High formality setting leads to the use of formal language. This is most likely to be found in professional circumstances, such as in the law courts, offices, and the church.

In opposition to high formality setting, low formality setting is widely used in the society. Low formality or informal situation is marked by the uses of colloquial language. Colloquial language indicates friendliness among participants. Conversations among neighbors, friends, and family are instances of informal settings.

#### 1.2.3. Function

Holmes (2013) argues that there are two types of functions, which are referential and affective. Referential function concerns information delivery, while the affective one relates to emotional expressions. The higher the information content in a conversation is, the lower the affective content is, and vice versa. Thus, conversations in which the referential functions dominates tend to be more formal. This is because the conversations aim to provide information, such as group discussions in classes. On the other hand, conversations having higher affective functions will likely be more informal, and the relations among the participants are more intimate.

#### 1.2.4. Topic

Another factor that influences language choice is the topic of the conversation. For instance, two close friends talk about their holiday activities using informal language. In the middle of the conversation, they remember some assignments they should do during the break, so they begin to exchange information about their assignments. The change of topic changes their language too; they use more formal language when discussing their assignments because they need to use a lot of scientific terms in the discussions.

## 2. Methods

This research utilized sociolinguistic perspective with qualitative descriptive method to produce detailed findings and analysis (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007). The data are the dialogues in *Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story* Netflix series (2023). To facilitate the research process, the script of *Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story* Netflix series (2023) was used as the supporting source of the data. The sample of this research were Charlotte's dialogues with three supporting characters. Hence, the purposive sampling technique was used to get appropriate samples (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007).

The observation method was used to collect the data because the observation was conducted by analyzing the dialogue in the series (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The data collection was done by tabulating Charlotte's dialogues with the three aforementioned characters. The data were analyzed based on the social factors and dimensions (Holmes, 2013) and were classified into five types of language styles (Joos, 1967).

## 3. Results

After collecting Charlotte's utterance on the three main supporting characters, 373 data were discovered in the series of *Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story*. These data were classified in accordance with Joos's classification of language styles (1967), and they are frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate style. The data obtained from the observations of the series script are provided below:

Table 1. Charlotte's Language Styles Classification

No	Types of Language Style	Frequency	Percentage
1	Casual Style	215	57,6%
2	Consultative Style	121	32,4%
3	Intimate Style	20	5,4%
4	Formal Style	15	4,1%
5	Frozen Style	2	0,5%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 2. Charlotte's Language Styles toward Three Main Characters

No.	Types of Language Style	George		Brimsley		Agatha		Total	
		Freq	(%)	Freq	(%)	Freq	(%)	Freq	(%)
1	Casual Style	152	40,7%	29	7,8%	34	9,1%	215	57,6%
2	Consultative Style	30	8,1%	78	20,9%	13	3,5%	121	32,4%
3	Intimate Style	20	5,4%	-	-	-	-	20	5,4%
4	Formal Style	8	2,1%	1	0,3%	6	1,6%	15	4,1%
5	Frozen Style	2	0,5%	-	-	-	-	2	0,5%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>56,8%</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>14,2%</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 1. suggests that Charlotte uses casual style most frequently. She uses casual style most frequently to George, her husband. She uses casual style 152 times out of 215 occurrences of casual styles (Table 2.). Also, table 2. displays that Charlotte uses five different language styles when speaking to his husband, but she never uses intimate and frozen styles when she speaks to either Brimsley or Agatha.

#### 4. Discussion

The following is an explanation of Charlotte's dialogue on each type of style, as well as the factors and social dimensions that influence her choice of language styles.

##### 4.1. Language Style

###### 4.1.1. Casual Style

- King George : Are you demanding I perform my marital duty to you?  
**I... I am not demanding. I... I'm not even sure what marital duty**  
Queen Charlotte : **is. I just know... Do we not spend this night together? My**  
**governess said that is what happens on our wedding night.**  
King George : Fine. I shall stay.  
Queen Charlotte : **George.**  
King George : I said I shall stay. Are you coming?  
Queen Charlotte : **George! George! George, I cannot keep up. Slow down.**

*Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story Series*  
Episode 1 (45:03 – 45:41)

In the conversation above, Charlotte and George have just attended their wedding ceremony and are at the Buckingham Palace to rest. George, however, suddenly says that he will not live there with her because he decides to stay at the Kew Palace. This makes Charlotte confused and questions the reasons of George's decision.

Charlotte's choice of casual style is signalled by the use of the addressing term 'George', instead of 'King George', when speaking to the husband. This indicates their intimacy. Charlotte's repeated callings of her husband's first name strengthens her preference to casual style over other language styles. The use of high intonation, marked by exclamation points in her last utterance "**George! George!....**" is another sign of casualty.

Finally, the use of ellipsis (...) in the above conversation characterizes Charlotte's casual style (Joos, 1967). Ellipsis is used to signs her uncertainty about what she is trying to say. This is further supported by her asking George a question "**Do we not spend this night together?**", which is her request for certainty or clarity. Her utterance "My governess said that is what happens on our wedding night" also supports Charlotte's lack of certainty in the conversation.

###### 4.1.2. Consultative Style

- Queen Charlotte : **Brimsley, I am the queen. I have duties, official duties, do I**  
**not?**  
Brimsley : You do, Your Majesty. Many duties.  
Queen Charlotte : **Then how can there be nothing in the queen's diary?**  
Brimsley : You are currently enjoying the privacy of the first days of marriage,  
Your Majesty.

*Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story Series*  
Episode 2 (01:55 – 02:07)

The preceding dialogue occurs on the first day of Charlotte's life as the Queen of England. A few days after her wedding are supposed to be a honeymoon period, in which she should enjoy some privacy with her husband George. However, the argument they had on the previous night has made George left Charlotte alone in the Buckingham Palace. This makes Charlotte feel lonely, so she asks Brimsley, her confidant, whether there are responsibilities she needs to do as a queen. Unfortunately, there are no official duties assigned to her within that period.

Charlotte's utterances in the dialogue are consultative. She gives some background information before asking Brimsley a question. The provision of background information, according to Joos (1967), is an indication of consultative style. Moreover, Charlotte uses words commonly spoken in everyday conversation. However, she does not at all utter special words to Brimsley, meaning that she does not have an intimate relation with Brimsley.

#### 4.1.3. Intimate Style

King George : Fancy meeting you here. **You did not go over the wall.**  
Queen Charlotte : **No, George. I did not go over the wall.**

*Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story Series*  
Episode 6 (1:22:15 – 1:22:40)

The conversation takes place between George and Charlotte in their old age, after Charlotte has resolved the problem of the monarchy to the monarchy. She goes to meet George to share him the happy news. When they are discussing the matter, they become overwhelmed with happiness. They are also a bit emotional when they reminisce about their marriage journey. Suddenly, George says, "You did not go over the wall."

The phrase "did not go over the wall" means that Charlotte had eventually made a decision to get married to George. Before their marriage, Charlotte wanted to escape by climbing the wall of the royal back garden. It was then that George saw her, and this was also the first time they met. At that time, George gave Charlotte an option whether she was to marry him or not. In the end, Charlotte opted to marry him, and she would not escape through the back garden wall again.

The phrase signified not only her decision to marry him but also her commitment to stand by and understand George in any condition and situation, despite everything that happened in their marriage. George and Charlotte's utterances in the conversation is categorized as intimate style because the phrase holds a personal significance known only by the two of them.

#### 4.1.4. Formal Style

Queen Charlotte : **We are one Crown. His weight is mine, and mine is his. One Crown. We rule for the welfare of all our subjects. New and old. Rival and foe. Titled or not. You tell me my castle walls are too high. I tell you they must be. High as the sky, if necessary, to protect you. To protect all our worthy subjects. I suggest you shift your fear into faith and come to us with your concerns directly. To do otherwise would suggest we are incapable of addressing them. Unless that is what you believe. Lady Danbury. You may go. I shall send for you soon.**

Lady Agatha Danbury : Your Majesty.

*Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story Series*  
Episode 6 (1:14:20 – 1:15:36)

In this scene, Charlotte just throws a ball at Buckingham Palace to celebrate the birth of her first child. After the ball, Charlotte greets Agatha and at the same time talks about Agatha's rejection of

Charlotte's brother's proposal. Apart from that, Charlotte also wants to criticize Agatha's purpose of approaching her brother in order to secure Agatha's peerage after her the death of Agatha's husband.

The style of language Charlotte uses is formal. This is why Charlotte addresses Agatha using her title "Lady Danbury." The use of addressing name with that title shows a high level of formality in their conversation at that time. Judging from the relationship between both of them, they are quite close and usually Charlotte only uses "Agatha" to call her. The use of address with that title showed that Charlotte creates a gap between them.

In addition, Charlotte uses formal words accompanied with good grammar and fostering precision. Detailed background information and explicitly linked sentences are characteristics of formal language style (Joos, 1967). Behind her long message, Charlotte wants to communicate one core meaning: she emphasizes her status as the Queen, and as a queen, she will treat her people fairly; the people can thus openly share their problems, because she will resolve all their problems wisely.

However, because it is conveyed in a formal language style, she conveys it in detail and uses assertive statements delivered with intonation full of confidence. Her straightforward intonation also shows that what she is saying is a firm statement as a Queen. This is what makes Charlotte's style above included in the formal style because there is no hesitation in her delivery.

#### 4.1.5. Frozen Style

King George	:	Hi, Charlotte. I'm George.
Queen Charlotte	:	I am deeply s... <b>Your Majesty.</b>
King George	:	Not Your Majesty. George. I mean, yes, Your Majesty, but to you, just George.

*Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story Series*  
Episode 1 (31:25 – 31:52)

The dialogue above depicts the conversation between Charlotte and George in the back garden of Chapel Royal, St. James Palace, before their wedding ceremony. Charlotte, who is trying to escape from her marriage, meets George, her future husband and the King of England. Upon knowing that the person she is talking to is the King, Charlotte immediately says "Your Majesty".

"Your Majesty" in the conversation is not only used as a greeting, but more in respect when meeting with the King. The use of "Your Majesty" is not just a function call to George as it is used in the formal style example. In this conversation, the use of "Your Majesty" serves to respect the King. The phrase cannot be changed to other phrases because it is included in the rules of royal etiquette that must be adhered to.

## 4.2. Social Factors and Dimensions

### 4.2.1. Participants

Participant is one of the social factors that influence the use of language style in Charlotte's dialogue. In this study, only three participants were examined during dialogues with Charlotte, namely George, Agatha, and Brimsley. When talking to the three people, Charlotte used a different language style depending on who she was talking to. Even when talking to the same person, Charlotte can use a different type of language style. According to participant factors, this is influenced by the development of the relationship between Charlotte and the three characters.

When talking George, Charlotte the most frequently used casual style because the relationship between them is a married couple which is categorized in intimate relationship. As written in page 3, the relationship between Charlotte and George is as a husband and wife who are talking about their marriage relationship. Likewise in intimate style (page 4), they show closeness in their relationship by using the language that has special meaning that only known by Charlotte and George in the conversation. In addition, Charlotte and George also showed some high distance in their relationship

in several scenes. Examples are in frozen styles (page 5). During the conversation, Charlotte indicates that there is an estrangement in her relationship with George. This was because she spoke to George not as his wife but as a queen who had a lower status than George.

Not only with George, when talking to Agatha and Brimsley, Charlotte also uses more than one type of language style. This is because of the diversity of relationships between Charlotte and these characters. When talking to Agatha, Charlotte often uses a casual style when she speaks as a friend of Agatha. However, when Charlotte spoke to Agatha as a Queen, she used a more formal style in page 4. For Brimsley, Charlotte the most frequently used consultative style (page 3) because their relationship more often reveals a fairly close professional relationship between the Queen and her confidants.

#### 4.2.2. Setting

In using language style, the setting factor does not only refer to the setting of the place but also the atmosphere of the conversation. The data in the conversation in the analysis took place at Buckingham Palace, but the style used was different because of the different situation. In the casual style (page 3), the situation is informal because at that time, Charlotte only chatted with George, her husband, to discuss problems in their marriage. Likewise with the example of intimate style (page 4), even though it takes place in the same place and situation, the style used is more intimate than the casual style because there are different linguistic elements due to different atmosphere and topic

As for the consultative style, the formal setting is in the middle or categorized as semi-formal. This is because the topic being discussed is quite serious, namely the issue of Charlotte's responsibilities as Queen, but the situation of the conversation is not too formal because Charlotte is only talking to Brimsley and there are no indicators of formality used by Charlotte in her conversation. In contrast to the use of formal style and frozen style, Charlotte is in a formal situation and uses language that indicates formality and politeness.

#### 4.2.3. Function

According to Holmes (2013), there are two types of function in the conversation which are referential and affective. Referential is a function used to describe conversations that aim to provide information while affective is used to describe conversations that contain the expression of feelings between participants. In the use of intimate style, Charlotte's speech aims to express emotional feelings (page 4). This is because Charlotte is happy with her decision to still marry George and live a married life with him. However, in consultative style (page 3), Charlotte's utterance serves to ask Brimsley for information about her responsibilities as queen. Thus, the function in conversation cannot be a determinant in the use of language style. It requires consideration of other social factors such as participants and also the setting. However, functional factors still have an important role in determining the language style that should be used.

This can be seen in formal style (page 4) and frozen style (page 5). In these two conversations, Charlotte called used other character using their noble title in the dialogue. However, the classification of these utterances is different because of the function of the use of the phrase. In the formal style, "Lady Danbury" functions as an address to Agatha by using her social status as a noble. It has function to show the serious matters in their conversation. Whereas in the frozen style, the phrase "Your Majesty" has a more unchanged function, which is to pay respects to the king. This form of respect is regulated in royal etiquette rules which cannot be changed in other words and must be carried out by everyone who meets the king.

#### 4.2.4. Topic



The last social factor that determines the use of language style is topic. For example, when discussing personal matters, Charlotte uses less formal language styles, such as intimate and casual styles. Intimate style is used when she talks about marriage life with her husband George. They use intimate style because the topic of the conversation is very private, things intimately related to their life. Similarly, when conversing with others regarding her marriage, Charlotte uses such informal style as casual style. This is because the topic of the conversation concerns private or personal matters, rather than formal or official issues.

Meanwhile, consultative style is used when Charlotte discusses non-personal matters, such as her duties as the Queen of England. However, when discussing more serious topics, such as royal issues, Charlotte uses a formal style.

## 5. Conclusion

The language style most frequently used by Charlotte is casual. Casual style is used in informal settings with intimate relationships between participants. The second language type Charlotte often uses in the series is consultative. Consultative is used when she speaks to a person with whom she does not have a close connection. The conversation setting in this type of style is neither formal nor informal, which can be categorized as semi-formal. The third is the intimate style, which Charlotte uses when talking to her husband. This is in line with Joos's argument that intimate style is used to communicate by people having a very special or close relation, and one character of intimate style is the use of codes rich in personal or private meanings.

The fourth most common type of language style is the formal one. This style is used when Charlotte discusses serious topics in formal settings. The relationship between participants is not given much attention. Charlotte uses this style the most when conversing with George in situations that require they speak as the King and Queen of England.

The least used style, the frozen one, is a hyper-formal language style. In this type of style, the speakers are not to use utterances other than the prescribed ones. An example of a frozen style is that of a wedding vow.

Finally, this study suggests that social factors are the causes Charlotte uses five different styles in her utterances. Holmes's four factors and social dimensions (2013) have an equally important influence on Charlotte's uses of language style. Differences in social factors and dimensions create the diversity of language features Charlotte uses in her conversations with other characters.

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