
Research Article

Received: 11-06-2025; Accepted: 11-11-2025; Published: 31-12-2025

From teen talk to royal speech: Language style shifts of Mia Character in *The Princess Diaries*

Rania Kalila Delisha^a, Dini Sri Istiningdias^a

^aEnglish Literature Study Program, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Diponegoro, Jl. Prof. Sudarto No.13, Tembalang, Semarang, 50275, Indonesia

raniakaliladelisha@students.undip.ac.id

Abstract

This study explores Mia Thermopolis's character development in *The Princess Diaries* through the lens of Martin Joos' theory of language styles. By examining her use of casual, formal, consultative, and intimate language, this research uncovers the complexities of her identity as she transitions from an awkward normal girl to a royal princess. The analysis highlights how Mia's language choices reflect her evolving self-acceptance and the challenges she faces in reconciling her dual identity. Mia as an awkward normal girl, establishing her as a relatable figure, with her insecurities, clumsiness, self-deprecating humor, informal dialogue, vulnerability, and her struggles. Mia is in the transition phase, highlighting her significant growth and exploration of her identity. Mia, as a Royal Princess, the contrast between her past awkwardness and her current royal responsibilities highlights the tension between her authentic self and societal expectations. Social factor plays a significant role in Mia's Language Style. By learning to navigate the complexities of her social environment, she gains confidence in her role as a princess while remaining connected to her true self.

Keywords: language style, social factors, *The Princess Diaries* movie.

1. Introduction

Mia Thermopolis, the central character in *The Princess Diaries*, serves as a compelling representation of the adolescent struggle for identity and self-acceptance. As a teenager who unexpectedly discovers her royal lineage, Mia's journey is marked by significant personal growth and transformation. This study aims to analyze her character development through the lens of Martin Joos' theory of language styles, which categorizes language into five distinct styles: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate (Joos, 1967). By examining Mia's use of these language styles, we can gain deeper insights into her evolving identity and the social dynamics that shape her experiences throughout the film.

The narrative of *The Princess Diaries* unfolds in three distinct phases, Mia's initial portrayal as an awkward normal girl, her transition into a more self-aware individual, and her eventual acceptance of her role as a royal princess. Each phase is characterized by different language styles that reflect her emotional state, social interactions, and the challenges she faces. In her early interactions, Mia predominantly employs a casual language style, filled with humor and slang, which underscores her desire to maintain her identity as an ordinary teenager. This casual communication resonates with the audience, particularly young viewers who can relate to her insecurities and the pressures of adolescence (Holmes, 2013). As Mia navigates her transition phase, her language begins to evolve. The introduction

of formal and consultative styles signifies her growing awareness of her responsibilities and the expectations placed upon her as a future princess. This shift in language not only reflects her adaptation to her new role but also highlights the internal conflict she experiences as she grapples with the duality of her identity. The formal language she uses in interactions with authority figures, such as her grandmother, Queen Clarisse, illustrates her respect for the royal institution and the seriousness of her new responsibilities. Conversely, her consultative exchanges reveal her willingness to seek guidance and support, showcasing her proactive approach to personal growth (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Furthermore, Mia's intimate language with her mother provides a window into her vulnerabilities and emotional struggles. These moments of personal reflection allow her to express her fears and insecurities, emphasizing the importance of familial support in her quest for self-acceptance. The interplay between her casual, formal, consultative, and intimate language styles serves as a narrative device that enriches the storytelling, allowing audiences to engage with Mia's experiences on multiple levels.

Martin Joos (1967) proposed a framework categorizing language into five distinct styles, such as frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate. Each style serves different communicative purposes and is influenced by the context in which it is used. Joos' theory provides a valuable lens for analyzing how characters in films, such as Mia in *The Princess Diaries*, employ different language styles to convey their personalities, emotions, and social dynamics. By applying Martin Joos' theory of language styles to Mia's character, this study seeks to illuminate the complexities of her identity and the social factors that influence her language choices. The analysis will demonstrate how Mia's evolving language reflects her journey toward self-acceptance and the reconciliation of her dual identity as both a teenager and a princess. Ultimately, this exploration of language styles in *The Princess Diaries* will contribute to a deeper understanding of the film's central themes of identity, growth, and the challenges of navigating personal and social dynamics in the face of change.

2. Methods

This research employs a descriptive qualitative method combined with sociolinguistic analysis to explore the language styles of Mia Thermopolis in *The Princess Diaries*. By utilizing purposive sampling and observational techniques rooted in Arikunto's framework, the study focuses on the comprehensive examination of Mia's dialogues, capturing 54 key data points representing her dynamic speech patterns throughout the movie. The application of Martin Joos' theory of language styles enables a systematic classification of Mia's language into casual, formal, consultative, and intimate styles, revealing the intricate relationship between her language use and character development (Aryani Dewi & Sulatra, 2024). The methodology, comprising script observation, transcription, and percentage-based descriptive analysis, allows for nuanced insights into how Mia's speech evolves in response to changes in her social roles and personal identity. The data was analyzed using a distributional method. By collecting, identifying, and classifying based on differences in language methods that lead to the daughter's personality. How the princess experienced changes in life since she joined the kingdom. Analyzing the language style in the movie "*The Princess Diaries*" can be a fascinating and insightful exercise that involves various methods and techniques. One common approach is to perform a qualitative analysis of the dialogues and narratives, which can help reveal important aspects of the characters, the setting, and the overall tone of the film. The identification process was aided by categorizing the script data specifically according to Martin Joos's theory, which divided into five language styles.

Through analyzing both micro-level linguistic features and broader contextual factors, the research highlights how Mia balances the tensions between her teenage identity and royal responsibilities. This duality is reflected in her shifting language styles across interactions with peers, family, and authority figures. This methodological approach demonstrates the effectiveness of qualitative sociolinguistic analysis in uncovering the layered dimensions of character portrayal in film

narratives (Purba et al., 2021). It contributes to a deeper understanding of language as a dynamic tool for expressing identity, negotiating social roles, and illustrating personal growth. The study not only sheds light on Mia's transformative journey but also offers a replicable framework for examining language and identity in similar contexts.

3. Results

The findings indicate that Mia, the protagonist in "*The Princess Diaries*," employs four distinct language styles throughout the narrative, with a clear dominance of casual language. The casual style is overwhelmingly the most used language style by Mia, accounting for 62.96% of her dialogue. This high percentage suggests that Mia's character is primarily portrayed in a relatable and informal manner, which resonates with her youthful identity. Casual language typically includes informal vocabulary, colloquial expressions, and a conversational tone. Mia's use of casual language allows her to connect with her peers and the audience, making her experiences and emotions more accessible (Nabilah & Candria, 2023). This style reflects her personality as a teenager navigating the complexities of her life, including her unexpected transition into royalty. The dominance of casual language helps to establish Mia as a relatable and down-to-earth character. It emphasizes her struggles, humor, and authenticity, allowing readers to empathize with her journey. This style also serves to highlight the contrast between her everyday life and the formal expectations of her royal identity. The formal style is used less frequently, comprising only 25.93% of Mia's dialogue. This formal style highlights the contrast between Mia's everyday life and her new royal identity, emphasizing her struggle to adapt to her new role. Formal language is characterized by the use of complete sentences, proper titles, and a more serious tone. Mia's formal language is likely reserved for moments of importance, such as public declarations or interactions with authority figures, where the gravity of the situation necessitates a more elevated style. The occasional use of formal language serves to highlight key moments in Mia's journey, such as her acceptance of her royal identity. It contrasts sharply with her casual style, emphasizing her growth and the weight of her responsibilities as a princess (Ramdhani et al., 2020). This shift in language style underscores the tension between her personal desires and the expectations of her royal role. The consultative style is the least used, making up only 7.41% of Mia's dialogue. This suggests that formal discussions or advisory interactions are not the primary focus of her character's communication. Consultative language is typically used in professional or formal settings where advice or information is exchanged. It often involves a more structured approach to communication. The minimal use of consultative language indicates that Mia's interactions are primarily informal and personal, focusing on her relationships and experiences rather than formal discussions. This aligns with her character as a teenager navigating her identity and the expectations placed upon her (Normalita & Silalahi, 2022).

The intimate style is the rarest, making up only 4.65% of Mia's dialogue. This suggests that her personal relationships and emotional connections are not the primary focus of the narrative. Intimate language typically involves personal, affectionate, or private communication, often used between close friends or significant others. In Mia's case, this style may be used in moments of vulnerability or when she is expressing her feelings to those she trusts. The limited use of intimate language indicates that while Mia has close relationships, the narrative primarily emphasizes her external struggles and growth rather than her internal emotional landscape (Vitariani, 2022). This may reflect her journey of self-discovery and the challenges she faces in balancing her personal life with her royal duties.

Mia's character development in "*The Princess Diaries*" happens in three phases. First, as the Awkward Normal Girl, she is clumsy and shy, using casual language that makes her relatable to other teens with insecurities. This foundation is crucial for establishing her relatability. Her clumsiness and self-deprecating humor resonate with many young people who grapple with similar insecurities. The casual dialogue and interactions create a sense of authenticity, allowing the audience to connect with her on a personal level. The intimate moment reveals her deeper emotional struggles, showcasing her desire for acceptance and understanding. This phase sets the stage for her character development, making her journey compelling and engaging. In the Transition Phase, Mia grows significantly, showing more confidence and self-awareness while navigating new social situations, with moments of

formal and intimate language that add depth to her character. This phase captures her exploration of identity, as she begins to assert herself and navigate new social dynamics. The abundance of casual interactions reflects her evolving confidence and willingness to engage with a broader social circle. The formal and consultative moments highlight the challenges she faces in adapting to new expectations and seeking guidance from mentors. The intimate reflection allows her to express her fears and aspirations, adding emotional depth to her character. This phase is pivotal, as it illustrates the complexities of adolescence and the journey toward self-acceptance.

Finally, in the Royal Princess phase, Mia takes on her royal duties, highlighting the contrast between her past awkwardness and her new role. Although this phase has fewer examples, it shows the struggle between her true self and the expectations of being a princess, as her casual language reflects her down-to-earth nature, while her formal language shows her intelligence and ability to handle her responsibilities. (Jamil & Nasrum, 2018). This phase serves as a critical culmination of her journey, self-discovery, and adaptation, highlighting the balance between her authentic self and the expectations of royalty. The contrast between her past awkwardness and her current royal responsibilities emphasizes the tension between her authentic self and societal expectations. The formal data points highlight the weight of her duties and the need for composure, while the consultative interactions showcase her intelligence and capability as she navigates her new role. This phase underscores the idea that while titles and roles are significant, it is the journey of self-discovery and personal growth that truly defines Mia.

4. Discussion

4.1 Language Styles in Mia's Character Development

Mia predominantly employs a casual language style when interacting with her friends, particularly Lilly. This informal language, filled with slang and humor, reflects her desire to maintain her teenage identity. For instance, her jokes about typical high school dilemmas highlight her longing for normalcy and connection, emphasizing her struggle to balance her royal duties with her desire for friendship. The 11 causal data points establish her as a relatable figure, embodying the everyday struggles of adolescence. In contrast, Mia adopts a formal style when speaking to authority figures, such as her grandmother, Queen Clarisse. This shift in language reflects her respect for the royal institution and the expectations placed upon her. For example, when she addresses the Queen with structured sentences and polite language, it signifies her awareness of her responsibilities and the weight of her royal lineage. The 13 formal data points emphasize the seriousness of her new responsibilities and the expectations of royal etiquette (Chaika, 1982). Mia's limited use of consultative language is evident in discussions where she seeks practical advice and feedback. This style fosters a sense of collaboration and mutual respect, allowing Mia to engage in meaningful conversations that help her grow and adapt. The three consultative data points illustrate her proactive approach to personal growth and her willingness to seek help when needed. Mia's intimate language with her mother reveals her vulnerability and need for support. In moments of personal reflection, she uses softer, more emotional language, which underscores her internal conflicts and desire for acceptance. This intimate dialogue illustrates her reliance on familial bonds as she navigates her dual identity. The single intimate data point adds depth to her character, revealing her vulnerabilities and desire for connection (Simamora & Sherina, 2022). Mia's character development is intricately linked to her use of different language styles. Her ability to switch between casual, formal, consultative, and intimate language demonstrates her growth, her adaptability, and the complexities of her dual identity. The contrast between these styles highlights her internal conflicts and her efforts to balance her royal duties with her desire for normalcy and connection. The frequency of each style also provides insight into her priorities and the relationships that are most important to her.

4.2 Character Development Across Phases

Mia's character development can be divided into three distinct phases: as an awkward normal girl, in a transition phase, and as a royal princess. In this initial phase, Awkward Normal Girl, Mia is

characterized by her clumsiness, shyness, and self-deprecating humor. The casual language she employs establishes her relatability and authenticity, resonating with many young people who experience similar feelings of insecurity and social anxiety. The transition phase is where Mia undergoes significant growth and exploration of her identity. With 22 casual data points, this phase captures her journey toward self-discovery, showcasing her attempts to assert herself and navigate new social dynamics. The increased confidence in her dialogue reflects her evolving self-awareness, while the inclusion of formal, consultative, and intimate moments illustrates the complexity of her experiences (Juliana Dewi et al., 2020). In the royal princess phase, Mia's character takes on a new dimension. Although this phase is represented by fewer data points, it serves as a critical culmination of her journey. The contrast between her past awkwardness and her current royal responsibilities highlights the tension between her authentic self and societal expectations. The single casual data point reflects her down-to-earth nature, while the formal and consultative data points illustrate her engagement with advisors and mentors, showcasing her intelligence and capability as she navigates her new role (Octavia Larasati & Simatupang, 2022).

4.3 Mia's language styles, influenced by social factors, significantly contribute to the movie's themes of identity and self-acceptance.

Mia's use of language styles in *The Princess Diaries* highlights her struggles with social identity and relationships, reflecting her insecurities and the pressures of fitting into different social contexts. Her language choices reveal the complexities of navigating her dual identity as both a regular teenager and a princess. The contrast between her casual and formal language illustrates her internal struggle to reconcile her identity as a teenager with her newfound royal status. Her journey is marked by moments of vulnerability and empowerment, as she learns to navigate her social environment while remaining true to herself. (Wulansari, 2020). Mia's language choices, influenced by social factors, contribute significantly to the movie's themes of identity and self-acceptance. The contrast between her casual and formal language styles illustrates Mia's internal struggle to reconcile her identity as a teenager with her newfound royal status. Her casual language reflects her desire to remain true to herself, while her formal language signifies her acceptance of her responsibilities. As Mia navigates her relationships and the expectations of her royal role, her evolving language styles mirror her journey toward self-acceptance. Mia's communication purposes also influence her language choices, as she navigates different social situations and seeks to achieve specific goals. In casual settings, Mia's language style allows her to express her identity as a regular teenager. Her use of casual language serves as a means of asserting her individuality and resisting the pressures of her royal identity. For Example, when she states, "I'm just a girl from San Francisco. I'm not a princess!" her casual language underscores her desire to remain grounded and authentic, reflecting her internal conflict between her two identities. As Mia becomes more comfortable with her royal identity, her language style evolves to reflect her acceptance of her new role. The shift to formal and consultative styles during royal duties signifies her growing confidence and willingness to embrace her responsibilities. For Example, when she delivers a formal speech at a royal event, her polished language demonstrates her acceptance of her identity as a princess and her commitment to serving her people. The moments of vulnerability expressed through intimate language with her mother highlight the importance of support in her quest for authenticity (Rosyda, R. W, 2021). Ultimately, Mia's ability to adapt her language style to different contexts and relationships empowers her to embrace her dual identity. By learning to navigate the complexities of her social environment, she gains confidence in her role as a princess while remaining connected to her true self.

5. Conclusions

The sociolinguistic analysis of Mia's language styles in *The Princess Diaries* reveals how social factors shape her interactions and contribute to her character development. Through her evolving language, Mia embodies the movie's themes of identity and self-acceptance, ultimately illustrating the power of language in expressing and shaping one's sense of self. This study highlights the significance of language as a tool for navigating the challenges of belonging and acceptance, emphasizing the

importance of embracing one's dual identity in the face of societal expectations. Mia's journey serves as a reminder that personal growth often involves overcoming insecurities, seeking support, and learning to balance different aspects of one's identity, making her a relatable and inspiring character for readers of all ages. Mia's language styles in *The Princess Diaries* reflect her character development through the lens of Martin Joos' theory, which reveals a strong emphasis on casual communication, reflecting her relatable and youthful character. Mia adopts a formal style when interacting with authority figures, such as her grandmother, Queen Clarisse. This reflects the expectations of royal etiquette and the seriousness of her new responsibilities. The limited use of consultative styles and intimate highlights the narrative's focus on her journey and the challenges she faces as she transitions into her royal role. This diversity in language styles enriches the storytelling, allowing readers to engage with Mia's experiences on multiple levels while showcasing her growth and adaptability in the face of change. Mia's language styles, influenced by social factors, significantly contribute to the movie's themes of identity and self-acceptance. The contrast between her casual and formal language illustrates her internal struggle to reconcile her identity as a teenager with her newfound royal status. Her journey is marked by moments of vulnerability and empowerment, as she learns to navigate her social environment while remaining true to herself. Mia's ability to adapt her language style to different contexts and relationships empowers her to embrace her dual identity. By learning to communicate effectively in various situations, she gains confidence in her role as a princess while maintaining a connection to her authentic self. This interplay between language, identity, and social dynamics underscores the movie's message about the importance of self-acceptance and the complexities of navigating personal and social identities. The sociolinguistic analysis of Mia's language styles, grounded in Martin Joos' theory, reveals how social factors shape her interactions and contribute to her character development. Through her evolving language, Mia embodies the movie's themes of identity and self-acceptance, ultimately illustrating the power of language in expressing and shaping one's sense of self. Mia's use of language styles in *The Princess Diaries* serves to illustrate the complexities of social identity and relationships. By employing different styles, casual, formal, intimate, and consultative, Mia navigates the challenges of belonging and acceptance in her dual roles as a teenager and a princess. Martin Joos' theory provides a framework for understanding how these language choices reflect her evolving social identity and the dynamics of her relationships with others.

References

Aryani Dewi, N. K., & Sulatra, I. K. (2024). Language Style Analysis on the Character "Sophie" in the School for Good and Evil Movie. *Ethical Lingua: Journal of Language Teaching and Literature*, 11(2). <https://doi.org/10.30605/25409190.774>

Chaika, E. (1982). *Language the Social Mirror*. Massachusetts: Newbury House Publisher, Inc.

Creswell, J. W., & David Creswell, J. (2017). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*.

Holmes, J. (2013). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. 4th edition. Pearson Education Limited (Vol. 4, p. 489).

Joos, M. (1967). *The Five Clocks: A Linguistic Excursion Into the Five Styles of English Usage*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.

Juliana Dewi, N. M. A., Ediwan, I. N. T., & Suastra, I. M. (2020). Language Style in Romantic Movies. *Humanis*, 24(2), 109. <https://doi.org/10.24843/jh.2020.v24.i02.p01>

Nabilah, H., & Candria, M. (2023). Charlotte's language style in Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story series (2023). In *Culturalistics: Journal of Cultural, Literary, and Linguistic Studies* (Vol. 7, Issue 2). <http://ejournal.undip.ac.id/index.php/culturalistics>

Normalita, I. S., & Silalahi, P. V. (2022). An Analysis Of Language Styles Used In "To All The Boys I've Loved Before" Movie. *Proceeding of Undergraduate Conference on Literature, Linguistic, and Cultural Studies*, 1. <https://doi.org/10.30996/uncolles.v1i.1373>

Octavia Larasati, V., & Simatupang, E. C. (2022). *Language Styles in the Movie Luca (2021): Sociolinguistics Study*. <https://doi.org/10.33258/birci.v5i2.5233>

Purba, D., Sulistia, F., & Lelyana Br. Manurung, Herman, V. (2021). Sociolinguistics Analysis on Language Style Form at the Movie Script of Papillon. *Trends Journal of Sciences Research*, 1(1), 37–45. <https://doi.org/10.31586/ujssh.2021.110>

Ramdhani, M. I., Amalia, S., & Sari, Y. P. (2020). Language Style in “What A Girl Wants” Movie. *IJER (Indonesian Journal of Educational Research)*, 5(2), 75-79. <https://doi.org/10.30631/ijer.v5i2.159>

Rosyda, R. W. (2021). An Analysis Of Language Style Used By The Main Character In “Wonder” Movie Thesis English Education Department Faculty Of Tarbiyah And Teacher Training State Institut Of Islamic Studies Ponorogo 2021.

Jamil, R.F., & Nasrum (2018). Language Style Used In J.K. Rowling’s Harry Potter And The Cursed Child. In *Resa Ferara Jamil and Nasrum Elite Journal* (Vol. 05).

Simamora, R. M. P., & Sherina, S. (2022). An Analysis of Language Styles Used by the Main Characters in the Dialogues in Business Proposal Series. *Bahasa: Jurnal Keilmuan Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, 4(2), 79–87. <https://doi.org/10.26499/bahasa.v4i2.291>

Vitariani, I. G. A. (2022). Language Style used by Victoria in the Movie Entitled “The Young Victoria.” *Udayana Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (UJoSSH)*, 6(1), 25. <https://doi.org/10.24843/ujossh.2022.v06.i01.p06>

Wulansari, O. (2020). An analysis of language styles and educational values in utterances by Will Smith as the main character in “The Pursuit of Happiness movie”.