



Style Shifting and Its Functions Beta Squad YouTube Channel

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Abstract. This study examines style shifting and its communicative functions in the *Last to Leave the Island* video uploaded on the Beta Squad YouTube channel. It aims to identify the types of style shifting used by group members and analyze the underlying communicative functions of these linguistic variations during interaction. The study is grounded in sociolinguistic theories of style variation, including Labov's (1972) Attention to Speech Theory, Bell's (2014) Audience Design Theory, and Eckert and Rickford's (2001) view of style as a resource for constructing social meaning and identity. A qualitative descriptive method was employed, with data collected through observation and documentation. The video was repeatedly viewed, transcribed, and analyzed using qualitative content analysis to identify utterances containing style shifting. The findings show that style shifting occurs frequently among Beta Squad members, including shifts from formal to casual, casual to competitive, serious to humorous, neutral to expressive, and cooperative variations. In addition, style shifting serves multiple communicative functions such as humour, audience engagement, solidarity building, emotional expression, instruction giving, cooperation, self-motivation, and identity construction. A total of 191 instances were identified, with humour as the most dominant function (31.4%), followed by solidarity (12.5%) and emotional expression (8.9%). Overall, style shifting functions as a strategic communicative resource in digital interaction, used to entertain audiences, strengthen relationships, and maintain effective communication in online media contexts.

Keywords: Beta Squad; Functions; Sociolinguistics; Style Shifting; YouTube.

1. INTRODUCTION

Language not only as a medium of communication but also as social practice through which individuals construct identity, negotiate, relationships, and respond to contextual demands. Within the field of sociolinguistics, language variation is a central concern, as it reflects how speakers systematically adapt their linguistic choices across different social situations. As argued by (Wardhaugh, 2015), variation in language is not arbitrary but is closely related to social factors such as class, context, and communicative purpose. This perspective highlights that language use is inherently variable and socially conditioned. In sociolinguistics, style is considered a dynamic and socially meaningful linguistic resource, (Hernández-Campoy, 2016) explains that speakers adjust their linguistic choices depending on social situations, communicative purposes, and audience. Styles allow speakers to express identity, build relationships, and negotiate meaning during interaction. Thus, speakers may shift their speaking style according to context and interactional goals.

In style and Sociolinguistic Variation, (Eckert and Rickford, 2001) focus that style shifting is closely linked to the level of attention paid to speech and the social meanings speakers aim to convey. From this perspective, shifts in style reflect not only differences in formality but also the speaker orientation toward audience design, identity construction, and interactional goals. Speakers may shift between formal and informal styles to perform various communicative functions, such as establishing solidarity, expressing evaluation, or

emphasizing particular ideas. In contemporary digital contexts, particularly on platforms such as YouTube, the phenomenon of style shifting becomes increasingly prominent. Content creators interact with diverse audiences while balancing authenticity and entertainment, leading to frequent and strategic stylistic variation. One notable example is Beta squad YouTube channel, where members engage in spontaneous and dynamic interactions. Their communication often involves shifts between highly informal, colloquial expressions and more serious or directive speech, making it a rich site for examining style shifting in naturalistic digital discourse.

Despite the extensive discussion of language variation in sociolinguistics, the analysis of style shifting in digital entertainment contexts, particularly within group base YouTube content, remains relatively limited. Therefore, this study aims to analyze style shifting and its functions in Beta Squad YouTube videos by identifying the types of stylistic shifts employed by the speakers and examining the communicative purposes underlying these shifts. By doing so, this research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of how linguistic variation operates in contemporary digital communication and how speakers strategically use language to navigate complex social interactions.

Style shifting has been widely discussed in sociolinguistics as a linguistic strategy used by speakers to adjust their language according to audience, social context, and communicative goals. Previous research on style shifting has demonstrated that style shifting is closely related to identity construction, social positioning, and adaptation to different interactional environments. The recent research by (Gonzales, 2025) investigates higher order style shifting in Cantonese-English in Hong Kong. The research reveals that speakers shift between monolingual and bilingual styles depending on audience design and socio-indexical meanings. Importantly, it highlights that style shifting operates not only as a reactive process shaped by audience expectations but also as an agentive practice through which speakers construct identity and negotiate social meanings. This research contributes to sociolinguistic theory by proposing that style exists as a layered resource with distinct social meanings, rather than merely a combination of linguistic elements.

(Fernández-Mallat, 2025) investigated style shifting practices among five Spanish speakers living in multidialectal communities in Anglo-America. Using a mixed methods approach, the research found that speakers consciously adjusted linguistic features such as *voseo*, *tuteo*, and coda /s/ pronunciation depending on whether they interacted with ingroup or outgroup members. The findings revealed that style shifting was not merely a result of accommodation but a deliberate strategy for expressing identity, achieving pragmatic goals,

and positioning oneself within particular social groups. Speakers demonstrated a high degree of awareness and control over their linguistic choices across different contexts. Research on social media communication has also highlighted phenomena related to style shifting. (Homepage & Rodgers, 2025) examined the impact of social media on language change and communication styles and found that digital communication has blurred the boundaries between formal and informal language. Social media users frequently adapt their language according to audience, platform, and communicative purpose, creating hybrid communication styles that combine characteristics of spoken and written discourse. The study argues that language in digital spaces has become increasingly adaptive and context-sensitive, reflecting continuous stylistic adjustments in online interactions.

In digital communication contexts, (Lee, 2017) examines style shifting in YouTube vlogging through an acoustic analysis of a content creator speech across different video formats. The findings indicate that style shifting occurs across varying levels of spontaneity, where more scripted videos show more controlled and “careful” speech, while live or gaming videos exhibit greater variability. This suggests that attention to speech and performative demands influence linguistic choices. The research also points out that audience design alone cannot fully explain style shifting in digital media, emphasizing the role of speaker agency and performance in shaping linguistic behaviour.

Another study by (Firayani, 2025) explored semantic shifts in English loanwords used in Indonesian youth slang. Although the primary focus was semantic change, the findings demonstrated that young people actively modify language to construct social identities, express group membership, and adapt to communicative norms of digital communities. The research suggests that linguistic variation in online environments functions as a marker of identity and social belonging, which aligns with sociolinguistic perspectives on style shifting.

Similarly, (Tjijombo et al., 2025) investigated language shift and maintenance among Ovahimba-speaking youth in Namibia. Their findings revealed that social, educational, and cultural factors influence young people’s language choices. Exposure to multilingual environments, media, and formal education encourages speakers to adjust their linguistic behaviour in different social settings. While the research focused on language shift, it also highlighted how language use changes according to social demands and identifies negotiation.

Furthermore, (Yoon, 2023) explores speech style shifting in Korean entertainment talk shows, focusing on the alternation between polite and deferential speech styles. The research finds that style shifting is closely tied to the construction of institutional roles, interactional goals, and entertainment dynamics. Speakers strategically shift styles to balance formality and

informality, manage relationships and construct identities within semi-institutional discourse. This highlights that style shifting functions not only as a linguistic adjustment but also as a pragmatic resource in interaction.

In addition, (Alzoubi et al., 2025) examined language variation in colour meaning among Jordanian Arabic speakers across generations and genders. The study found that younger speakers, particularly females, used more innovative and nuanced linguistic forms than older speakers. These findings indicate that linguistic choices vary according to social categories such as age and gender, supporting the sociolinguistic view that speakers adjust language use to reflect social identity and group affiliation.

Previous research shows that style shifting functions as a way to adapt to audiences, express identity, maintain social relationships, and achieve communication goals. However, research on style shifting in collaborative digital entertainment, particularly YouTube group interactions, remains limited. Therefore, this research focuses on the Beta Squad YouTube channel to analyse the types of style shifting and their communicative functions in multi speaker interactions. This research also examines how contextual factors, such as audience awareness, spontaneity, and group dynamics, influence the use of different speaking styles, contributing to a broader understanding of language variation in contemporary digital communication.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics that examines the relationship between language and society. It focuses on how social factors such as age, gender, social class, ethnicity, and communicative context influence language use. According (Wardhaugh, 2015), language variation is closely connected to social structure and social interaction. Speakers do not use language uniformly, rather, they adjust their linguistic choices according to different social situations. Sociolinguistics therefore seeks to explain why language varies and how such variation reflects social meaning.

In contemporary communication, sociolinguistic variation is increasingly visible in digital media platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, and social networking sites. Online interaction provides speakers with opportunities to perform identities, negotiate relationships, and adapt language to diverse audiences. As a result, sociolinguistics offers an important framework for understanding how language functions in modern digital environments. Through sociolinguistic analysis, researchers can examine how speakers strategically modify

their language to achieve particular communicative goals. Language style refers to the particular way individuals use language in different social contexts. It encompasses the linguistic choices speakers make regarding vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and expressions in order to achieve specific communicative purposes. In sociolinguistics, language style is considered an important aspect of language in the same manner across all situations. Instead, they adjust their speech according to the audience, setting, topic, and social relationship involved in an interaction.

According to (Meyerhoff, 2011), language variation reflects not only linguistic differences but also social identities, power relations, and personal styles. Speakers use different linguistic forms to present themselves in particular ways and communicate social meanings. For example, a person may use formal language during a job interview but switch to a more casual style when talking with close friends. These differences demonstrate that language is flexible research that speakers employ strategically depending on communicative needs.

Language style also functions as a means of expressing social identity. Through their linguistic choices, speakers can signal membership in a social group, indicate social status, or establish solidarity with others. In many social interactions, speakers consciously or unconsciously select language forms that help them achieve desired interpersonal outcomes. As a result, language style is not merely a matter of linguistic preference but also a reflection of social relationships and cultural expectations.

Hence, (Mesthrie & Rajend, 2011), explains that language serves as social research through which individuals negotiate identities, construct relationships, and create social meanings. Different styles may communicate different levels of formality, authority, intimacy, or humor depending on the context of interaction. Therefore, style plays a significant role in shaping how messages are interpreted by listeners and how speakers position themselves within a conversation.

The use of language style is particularly evident in contemporary digital communication. Social media platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and X provide opportunities for speakers to interact with diverse audiences from different social backgrounds. Content creators often adjust their language styles to attract viewers, entertain audiences, establish authenticity, or strengthen connections with followers. Consequently, the research of language style has become increasingly relevant in understanding communication in digital environments.

In addition, (Ayres-Bennett and Bellamy, 2021) emphasize that language use is shaped by social norms, audience expectations, and communicative purposes. Speakers continuously adapt their linguistic choices in response to changing social circumstances and interactional demands. The selection of a particular style is influenced not only by the speaker's intentions but also the expectations of the audience and the broader social context in which communication occurs.

Styles can generally range from highly formal to highly informal forms of communication. Formal styles are typically used in academic, professional, or institutional settings where social norms require careful language use. Informal styles, on the other hand, are commonly found in everyday conversations among friends, family members, or individuals who share close social relationships. Between these extremes, speakers may employ various intermediate styles depending on the level of familiarity, social distance, and communicative objectives involved in the interaction.

Based on these perspectives, language style can be understood as the deliberate or unconscious selection of linguistic forms that reflects social identity, communicative goals, audience expectations, and contextual demands. Since speakers frequently modify their language styles in response to changing situations and audiences, the concept of language style provides an essential foundation for understanding style shifting. Therefore, the research of language style is crucial for analyzing how speakers adapt their language in dynamic social interactions, including those found in digital media content such as YouTube videos.

Style Shifting

Style shifting is a sociolinguistic phenomenon that refers to the variation in an individual's speech according to different social situations, audiences, and communicative purposes. According to (Stolarski, 2013), style shifting involves intra-speaker variation, meaning that the same speaker may use different linguistic style depending on the context of interaction. Speakers continuously adjust their language choices in response to social and situational factors, making style shifting an important aspect of sociolinguistic variation.

One of the earliest explanations of style shifting was proposed by (Labov, 1972), who argued that style variation is influenced by the amount of attention speakers pay to their own speech. According to this perspective, speakers tend to use more formal language when they are highly aware of their linguistic performance, whereas less formal styles emerge when speakers pay less attention to how they speak. Another influential perspective is the Audience Design Theory proposed by Allan Bell. Bell argues that style shifting occurs because speakers adapt their speech to their audience. The presence and characteristics of listeners influence

linguistic choices, leading speakers to modify their language in order to accommodate different addressees and social contexts. Furthermore, Stolarski (2013) suggests that style shifting cannot be explained by a single factor. Instead, it is affected by multiple factors, including the level of formality, audience interaction, communicative goals, and the social context of the speech event. Therefore, style shifting should be understood as a complex sociolinguistic process through which speakers adjust their language to meet the demands of different communicative situations.

Functions

Style shifting has been widely recognized as important sociolinguistic research to achieve various social and communicative purposes. Rather than being merely a change in linguistic form, style shifting enables speakers to construct identities, manage interpersonal relationships, adapt to audiences, and communicate social meanings. Sociolinguistics have argued that stylistic variation is closely connected to speaker interactional goals and the social contexts in which communication occurs.

According to (Bell, 2014), style shifting functions as a means of audience adaptation. Through the Audience Design framework, Bell explains that speakers adjust their linguistic styles according to their listeners in order to make communication more effective and social positions. Consequently, style shifting allows speakers to accommodate different audiences while achieving specific communicative objectives. Beyond audience adaptation, Bell argues that style shifting serves a function of self-identification and social meaning construction. Speakers actively select linguistic forms to project particular identities and align themselves with specific social groups, style shifting therefore enables individuals not only to respond to social contexts but also to shape how they are perceived by others.

Similarly, (Eckert and Rickford, 2001) emphasize that style is crucial means through which speakers construct social meaning and identity. They argue that stylistic variation should not be viewed merely as a reflection of social categories but as a resource that speakers use to create and negotiate identities. From this perspective, style shifting functions as a tool for expressing group membership, performing social roles, and constructing personal and collective identities. Speakers use stylistic choices strategically to position themselves within particular social groups and to communicate meaningful social distinctions. Thus, they suggest that style shifting plays an important role in the construction of personae and social identities. Linguistic variation becomes symbolic research that individuals employ to present themselves in different ways according to interactional needs, through style shifting, speakers can highlight specific aspects of their identity, express attitudes, and create social meanings that are

recognized by members of their community. Supporting these perspectives, (Fernández-Mallat, 2025) found that style shifting functions as a strategy for social positioning and community affiliation. His study of multidialectal Spanish-speaking communities revealed that speakers deliberately adjust their linguistic styles when interacting with different social groups. These stylistic changes enable speakers to signal belonging, negotiate social relationships, and express particular social meanings. Therefore, style shifting functions as a mechanism through which speakers actively navigate social boundaries and establish connections with others. Another important function identified is solidarity building. Speakers frequently adopt linguistic features associated with their interlocutors to reduce social distance and create a sense of shared identity. Through this process, style shifting contributes to the development of interpersonal closeness and facilitates smoother social interaction. This function is particularly evident in informal settings where speakers seek to strengthen group cohesion and maintain positive relationships.

In addition, both (Eckert and Rickford, 2001) and (Fernández-Mallat, 2025) emphasize that style shifting serves important communicative and pragmatic functions. Speakers strategically alter their styles to express emotions and attitudes, emphasize information, create humor, gain attention, and achieve specific interactional goals. As a result, style shifting becomes an effective communicative tool that allows speakers to adapt their language to different situations while maintaining audience engagement and conveying intended social meanings. Overall, all of the theory demonstrates that style shifting performs multiple interconnected functions, including audience adaptation, identity construction, social positioning, solidarity building, self-presentation, emotional expression, and the achievement of communicative goals. These functions show that style shifting is not merely a linguistic phenomenon but also significant social research through which speakers construct meaning and manage social interaction.

Beta Squad

Beta Squad is a popular content creator group based in the United Kingdom consisting of Chunkz, Niko Omilana, AJ Shabeel, Sharky, and King Kenny. The group was officially formed in 2019 after the members, who had already established themselves as individual content creators, decided to collaborate and create content collectively. Many of the members knew each other before the group formation through previous collaborations, friendships, and shared involvement in the UK YouTube community. Their decision to form Beta Squad was motivated by the desire to produce larger-scale entertainment content, combine their different personalities and creative strengths, and expand their audience reach through collaborative

videos. Before establishing Beta Squad, several members had already worked together on independent YouTube projects. Chunkz and Sharky frequently appeared in each other's content, AJ Shabeel. Initially worked behind the camera before becoming a creator himself, while Niko Omilana and King Kenny had also developed their own online audiences. As their professional relationships grew stronger, they recognized the potential benefits of creating a unified content creator group. Consequently, Beta Squad was launched as a collaborative platform focusing on challenges, social experiment, comedy, and interactive entertainment videos.

The group is known for producing challenge videos, entertainment content, and spontaneous group interactions that attract millions of viewers worldwide. The interactions among Beta Squad members are characterized by humor, competition, cooperation, teasing, and audience-oriented communication. These interactional features create frequent opportunities for style shifting as members adjust their language according to changing situations and communicative goals. Therefore, the Beta Squad YouTube channel provides valuable sociolinguistic data for investigating how style shifting operates in contemporary digital entertainment discourse.

YouTube

YouTube has become one of the most influential digital communication platforms in contemporary society. It enables users to create, share, and interact with audiovisual content across diverse communities. Unlike traditional media, YouTube encourages direct interaction between content creators and audience through comments, subscriptions, live chats, and community engagement. In YouTube content, language plays a central role in maintaining audience interest and facilitating interaction. Content creators frequently adjust their speaking style according to the nature of the content, audience expectations, and interactional dynamics. As a result, YouTube provides a rich environment for investigating sociolinguistic phenomena such as style shifting, code-switching, identity construction, and audience design. For this reason, the Beta Squad YouTube channel serves as an appropriate site for examining style shifting because its members engage in spontaneous, humorous, and highly interactive communication that frequently involves changes in speaking style.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research employs a qualitative descriptive method. According to (David Creswell, 2023), qualitative research is an approach used to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups describe to a social phenomenon, it emphasizes natural settings, multiple

sources of data, and interpretation of meaning based on participant interactions. This method is suitable for this study because the research focuses on analysis style shifting in natural communication among speakers in digital media, specifically in the interactions shown on the Beta Squad YouTube channel. The research aims to describe how style shifting appears in everyday spoken language and how it functions within social interaction.

The research was conducted from April 2026 to June 2026. The researcher carried out the analysis at home through online observation by accessing videos uploaded on the official YouTube channel. The place of research was not limited to a physical location because the data source was obtained from online media. The researcher used internet-based materials, including video recordings, transcripts, and academic references, to support the analysis process. The object of this research is the spoken interaction among members of the Beta Squad YouTube channel. The data include utterances, phrases, and sentences that show changes in speaking style, particularly shifts between formal and informal language. These utterances were selected because they reflect authentic language use in digital communication and provide examples of style shifting influenced by audience, topic, and interactional context.

The data were collected through documentation and observation techniques. The researcher first watched several selected videos from the official Beta Squad YouTube channel repeatedly to understand the context of interaction. During the observation process, the researcher identified utterances that showed style shifting and transcribed them into written form. After that, the relevant utterances were selected based on the research focus. The selected data were then organized according to the type of style shifting and their communicative functions. This process follows qualitative procedures because the data were obtained from natural interaction and analysis through interpretation rather than numerical measurement.

The data analysis in this research uses qualitative content analysis. The collected utterances were first reduced by selecting only the speech containing clear examples of style shifting. The selected data were then classified into several categories, such as formal style, casual style, and colloquial style. After classification, the researcher interpreted each datum by examining its communicative function, such as expressing humor, showing solidarity, emphasizing an idea, or engaging the audience. The final step was describing the findings systematically by relating them to sociolinguistic theories of style variation. This analysis process is consistent with Creswell's qualitative procedures, which involve organizing the data, reading the data, coding, identifying themes, and interpreting meaning.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research analyses style shifting and its communicative functions in the video “LAST TO LEAVE THE ISLAND” uploaded by Beta Squad YouTube channel. Beta Squad is a popular YouTube content creator group from the United Kingdom consisting of Chunkz, Niko Omilana, AJ Shabeel, Sharky, and King Kenny. The group is widely recognized for producing entertainment content that combines challenges, humor, spontaneous interaction, and competitive activities. Their videos often involve informal communication and dynamic group interaction, making the channel relevant for sociolinguistic analysis, especially in the research of style shifting in digital communication.

Based on the analysis, the researcher found that style shifting occurs frequently throughout the video. The members continuously shift between casual, colloquial, expressive, directive, and serious speaking styles depending on the context of interaction, emotional intensity, audience awareness, and communicative goals. The findings indicate that style shifting is used not only as a linguistic variation but also as a communicative strategy to create humor, maintain solidarity, express emotions, construct identity, and engage viewers.

Table 1. Result Style Shifting and Its Functions in Beta Squad Video.

No	Minute	Utterance	Style Shifting	Function
1.	00:00 – 00:05	“Welcome to Beta Squad Island. Yeah. Let’s go.”	Formal style => casual style	Audience engagement
2.	01:00 – 01:07	“I’m going to be the last to leave because I’m going through a little bit of a drought.”	Casual style => competitive style	Self-motivation and identity construction
3.	01:30 – 01:32	“How am I supposed to win this when this is Kenny’s natural habitat?”	Serious concern => humorous sarcastic style	Humour
4.	01:53 – 02:00	“THE LAST to leave this island WILL BE THE LUCKY BASTARD WHO TAKES AWAY £10,000.”	Neutral => expressive style	Audience engagement and emphasis

5.	02:26 – 02:28	“This is the shade zone where the coolest people hang out.”	Informative style => humorous style	Humour and solidarity
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Based on Table 1, the researcher found that style shifting frequently occurs throughout the interaction among the members of Beta Squad. The members often shift between formal, casual, expressive, humorous, competitive, and instructional speaking styles depending on the context and communicative purpose. These style shifts function to create audience engagement, express emotion, build solidarity, provide instructions, and increase entertainment value in the video.

The first datum appears at minute 00:00 – 00:05 when the speaker says, “Welcome to the Beta Squad Island. Yeah. Let’s go.” In this interaction, the speakers shift from a formal welcoming style into an enthusiastic casual style. The phrase “Let’s go” creates excitement and energy at the beginning of the video. This style shifting functions to engage viewers and establish an entertaining atmosphere.

The second datum occurs at minute 01:00 – 01:07 when one member Niko says, “I’m going through a little bit of a drought.” The speaker shifts from a casual conversational style into a more serious competitive style. This shift emphasizes determination and personal ambition to win challenges. The function of this style shifts in self-motivation and identity construction as a strong competitor.

Another datum is found at minute 01:30 – 01:32 through the utterance, “How am I supposed to win this is Kenny’s natural habitat?” In this situation, the speaker shifts from expressing concern into humorous sarcasm. The speaker jokingly implies that Kenny naturally belongs on the island. This shift creates humor and maintains the relaxed interaction among the members.

Furthermore, at minute 01:53 – 02:00, the speaker dramatically announces, “THE LAST to leave this island WILL BE THE LUCKY BASTARD WHO TAKES AWAY £10,000.” The speaker shifts from neutral instruction into dramatic expressive style by increasing volume and emphasis. This style shifting functions to create suspense and attract audience attention. The fifth datum appears at minute 02:26 – 02:28 when the speaker says, “This is the shade zone where the coolest people hang out.” The interaction shifts from informative explanation into playful humor. The humorous expression creates solidarity among the members and contributes to the entertaining atmosphere of the video.

Table 2. Result Style Shifting and Its Functions in Beta Squad Video.

No.	Minute	Utterance	Style Shifting	Function
1	02:59–03:00	“Very good real estate.”	Casual style → Economic style	Humour
2	1:00:23– 1:00:24	“You are a prick.”	Neutral style → Colloquial style	Humour / Teasing
3	1:00:34– 1:00:36	“There’s no way. I found this first.”	Calm style → Emotional style	Self-defense
4	1:01:08– 1:01:10	“Alright, alright, alright. I’m going to give you guys a clue.”	Casual style → Instructional style	Giving instruction
5	1:01:36– 1:01:37	“Let’s just think dig it together, brother.”	Competitive style → Cooperative style	Solidarity
6	1:03:32– 1:03:34	“I FOUND IT. I FOUND THE TREASURE.”	Calm style → Expressive style	Celebration

Based on Table 2, the researcher found that style shifting frequently occurs during the treasure hunt challenge. The members constantly change their speaking styles depending on the situation, emotional pressure, and interaction with other members. The dominant style shifts found in this scene are from neutral style into emotional style, competitive style into cooperative style, and casual style into colloquial humorous style. These shifts function to express emotion, create humour, strengthen solidarity, and maintain audience engagement.

The first datum after table 1, appears at minute 02:59 – 03:00 with the utterance, “Very good real estate.” The speaker exaggerates the seating area as if it were valuable property. The shift from casual interaction into exaggerated economic language functions to create comedy and entertain viewers.

The second datum occurs at minute 1:00:23 with the utterance, “You are a prick.” In this interaction, the speaker shifts from neutral conversational style into an insulting colloquial style. The word “prick” is an informal British slang expression used jokingly among friends. Although the utterance sounds offensive literally, in this context it functions as humour and teasing between the members. This style shifting helps maintain the entertaining atmosphere of the challenge.

Another style shift appears at minute 1:00:34 – 1:00:36 when the speaker says, “There’s no way. I found this first.” The style shifts from calm interaction into defensive emotional style. The repetition of “There’s no way” shows frustration and competitiveness while trying to claim ownership of the digging spot. This shift functions as self-defense and emphasizes the members determination during the challenge. At minute 1:01:08 – 1:01:10, the members respond by saying, “Alright, Alright, Alright. I’m going to give you guys a clue.” In this scene, the speaker changes from casual interaction into an instructional style. The speaker becomes more formal and authoritative related to the game. The function of this style shifting

is giving instruction and controlling the challenge situation. The fifth datum is found at minute 1:01:36 – 1:01:37 with the utterance, “Let’s just think dig it together brother.” In this reaction, the speaker shifts from a competitive style into a cooperative style. Earlier, both members competed against each other, but the difficulty of the challenge encourages teamwork. The use of the word “brother” strengthens solidarity and friendship between the speakers.

Finally, the last datum appears at minute 1:03:32 – 1:03:34 with the utterance, “I FOUND IT. I FOUND THE TREASURE.” In this moment, the speaker shifts from calm searching style into highly excited expressive style. The use of capitalized shouting indicates sudden emotional excitement after successfully finding the treasure. The function of this style shifting is celebration and emotional release.

Table 3. Overall Function.

No.	Function	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Humour	60	31.4
2	Audience Engagement	10	5.2
3	Solidarity	24	12.5
4	Identity Construction	4	2.0
5	Self-Motivation	5	2.6
6	Emphasis	1	0.5
7	Giving Instruction	1	0.5
8	Expressive	7	3.6
9	Cooperation	2	1.0
10	Celebration	1	0.5
11	Emotional Expression	17	8.9
12	Self-Expression	1	0.5
13	Self-Reflection	4	2.0
14	Teasing/Banter	12	6.2
15	Encouragement	3	1.5
16	Self-Defense	1	0.5
17	Competitive	5	2.6
18	Persuasive	3	1.5
19	Informative	2	1.0
20	Closing	1	0.5
Total		191	100.0

Table 3 presents the overall frequency of style shifting functions identified in the data. The distribution demonstrates that style shifting serves various communicative purposes, ranging from humour, audience engagement, solidarity, identity construction, self-motivation, emphasis, giving instruction, expressive, cooperation, celebration, emotional expression, self-expression self-reflection, teasing/banter, encouragement, self-defense, competitive, persuasive, informative, and closing. A total of 191 instances of style shifting functions were identified throughout the *Last to Leave the Island video*. The findings indicate that humour is

the most dominant function, occurring 60 times (31,4%). This result suggests that style shifting is primarily employed to create entertainment and maintain the comedic atmosphere that characterizes Beta Squad's content.

The second most frequent function is solidarity, with 24 occurrences (12,5%), followed by emotional expression, which appears 17 times (8,9%). These findings show that style shifting is not only used for entertainment purposes but also serves to strengthen interpersonal relationships among group members and express spontaneous emotional reactions during interactions. The high frequency solidarity related shifts reflect the close friendship and collaborative nature of the group, while emotional expression allows members to communicate excitement, frustration, surprise, and other affective states more effectively.

In addition, teasing or banter accounts for 12 occurrences (6,2%), while audience engagement appears 10 times (5,2%). These functions further support the entertainment-oriented nature of the video, where the members actively interact with both fellow members create a dynamic and engaging communicative environment that encourages audience involvement and maintains viewer attention throughout the challenge. Several other functions occur less frequently, including expressive (3,6%), self-motivation (2,6%), competitive (2,6%), identity construction (2,0%), self-reflection

(2,0%), encouragement (1,5%), persuasive (1,5%), cooperation (1,0%), and informative (1,0%). Although these functions appear less often, they demonstrate the diverse communicative purposes that style shifting serves within the interaction. The members use stylistic variation to motivate themselves, construct social identities, persuade others, cooperate during challenges, and provide information when necessary. Meanwhile, the least frequent functions are emphasis, giving instruction, celebration, self-expression, self-defense, and closing, each occurring only once (0,5%). Their limited frequency suggests and emerges only in particular interactional moments. Overall, the findings reveal that style shifting in Beta Squad's interactions serves multiple communicative purposes. However, the predominance of humour, solidarity, emotional expression, and audience engagement indicates that style shifting is mainly used to support entertainment, strengthen social relationships, and maintain interactional effectiveness within the digital media environment. These findings are consistent with (Bell, 2014) and (Eckert and Rickford, 2001) view that style shifting functions as research for audience adaptation, identity construction, social meaning-making, and the management of interpersonal relationships.

5. CONCLUSION

This research analysed style shifting and its function in the video Last to Leave the Island by Beta Squad. The findings show that style shifting frequently occurs as the members change their speaking styles based on the situation, emotions, communicative purposes, and interactions. The types found include shifts from formal to casual, casual to competitive, neutral to colloquial styles. These changes reflect the dynamic and context dependent use of language in digital entertainment.

The research also found that style shifting functions as a communication strategy to create humour, show solidarity, engage audiences, express emotions, and construct identity. Overall, style shifting helps Beta Squad members create entertaining and meaningful interactions. However, this research only focuses on one video, so future research may explore more videos or other sociolinguistic aspects in digital communication.

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