



Language Style in After We Collided Movie: A Study on Sociolinguistics

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Abstract: This research examines the language styles used by the main characters, Hardin Scott and Tessa Young, in the movie *After We Collided* through a sociolinguistic approach. The study applies Martin Joos' theory of five language styles: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate, and Janet Holmes' four social factors: participant, topic, setting, and function that influence language choice. The objectives are to identify the types of language styles, analyze the influencing factors, and determine the most dominant style. Using a descriptive qualitative method, the researcher collected dialogue data from the movie, categorized each utterance by language style, identified the social factors affecting it, and calculated the frequency of use. The results reveal four language styles: casual (25 data), consultative (15 data), intimate (8 data), and formal (1 data), while frozen style was not found. Casual style is the most dominant, as most conversations occur in relaxed, emotional, and spontaneous situations. The most influential factors are topic and function (7 data each), followed by setting (5 data) and participant (3 data). These findings confirm that emotional dynamics and communicative purposes strongly shape language style, enhancing the authenticity of the dialogue and effectively portraying the evolving relationship between the main characters.

Keywords: *Sociolinguistics, Language Style, Social Factor, After We Collided Movie*

INTRODUCTION

Language is primarily utilized as a mechanism of communication among people in communities. It is universal, which implies that everyone has the ability to convey their thoughts, emotions, messages, and other forms of communication using language.

Language is an essential aspect of human identity. As noted by Wardhaugh (2006, cited in Rohmah & Mulkiyah, 2021), language acts as a primary medium for communication within a community. It enables individuals to form social bonds, share experiences, and engage in cultural and communal activities. Through language, people

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express their thoughts and feelings in organized and commonly understood ways.

Language is primarily utilized as a mechanism of communication among people in communities. It is universal, which implies that everyone has the ability to convey their thoughts, emotions, messages, and other forms of communication using language. According to Crystal (2013:676), the transmission of information (a message) between a source and a receiver via a signaling system is referred to as communication; this idea is limited to "human communication." People can communicate with one another in a variety of ways. People utilize language as a tool to convey their wishes.

Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistic studies that examines the interplay between society and language, particularly how social factors shape language. Fishman (1971, cited in Simamora & Sherina, 2022) defines sociolinguistics as an interdisciplinary field that investigates language variation and its functions. Wardhaugh (2010, cited in Simamora & Sherina, 2022) adds that sociolinguistics considers the speakers, the language or variety used, to whom, at what time, and for what purpose. Joos (1967, cited in Simamora & Sherina, 2022) introduced five language styles: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate. Meanwhile, Holmes (2013, cited in Vitariani, 2022) identified four social factors influencing language choice: participant, topic, setting, and function.

In popular culture, sociolinguistic analysis can be applied to movies, as they not only create characters and narratives but also reflect real-life social interactions. The movie *After We Collided* (2020), directed by Roger Kumble, presents emotionally rich and varied dialogue between the main characters, Tessa Young and Hardin Scott. This conversations depict shifts in language style depending on emotional and situational

context, making it an ideal object for sociolinguistic analysis.

Although many studies have analyzed the language style in movies and series using the frameworks of Joos (1967) and Holmes (2013), none have specifically focused on *After We Collided* with this theoretical combination. R. J. Putri et al. (2021) analyzed *Teman Tapi Menikah* and found casual style as the most frequent, influenced mainly by participant factors. Vitariani (2022) studied *The Young Victoria*, identifying all five language styles with influencing factors including setting, topic, function, and participants. Simamora & Sherina (2022) investigated *Business Proposal*, revealing consultative and casual styles as dominant, while frozen style was absent, with influencing factors such as age, social position, setting, and conversation type. Lauterboom & Nuraeni (2024) examined *The Menu* and found casual style to be the most prevalent alongside various language functions. Kasitha & Ardiantari (2022) analyzed slang formation in *After We Collided*, focusing on compounding and clipping processes, thus differing in purpose and theoretical approach from the present study.

This studies confirm the relevance of the Joos and Holmes frameworks in analyzing language style across diverse genres. However, the absence of research applying this theories to *After We Collided* leaves a gap that this study aims to fill. Based on this background, the research addressed the following questions: (1) What language style is used by the main character in the movie *After We Collided*?, (2) What factors influence the language style used by the main character in the movie *After We Collided*? And (3) Which language style is most frequently used by the main character in the movie *After We Collided*?

The objectives of this study are: (1) to identify the types of language styles used by the main characters; (2) to analyze the social factors influencing this language styles; and (3) to determine the most frequently used language style in the movie *After We Collided*. Achieving these objectives requires a clear understanding of the theoretical foundations underpinning this research.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze data from sociolinguistic studies better to understand language use across different styles and functions. The theories employed to analyze the types of language styles are from Martin Joo (1976)

Language

Language is fundamental to human life and interaction. As Sapir (1921, cited in Mwakapina, 2021) mentioned, language is an innate human tool for expressing thoughts, emotions, and needs through the organized use of vocal sounds. Wardhaugh (1972, cited in Mwakapina, 2021) characterized language as a system of arbitrary vocal symbols that enable cooperation within a social group. Chomsky (2000, cited in Mwakapina, 2021) emphasized that humans possess an innate ability to comprehend and produce grammatically correct sentences, whether finite or infinitely varied. According to Priyanti et al. (2023), language embodies cultural elements and is influenced by the cognitive processes of its speakers. Based on the above explanation, language can be understood as a natural and essential human tool for communication, shaped by inherent cognitive abilities and cultural influences.

Linguistics

Linguistics is essential for scientifically understanding language. As Nasution (2023) notes, linguistics examines language not as an isolated phenomenon but as a universal aspect of human behavior. Hartman and Stork (1972, cited in Nasution, 2023) describe linguistics as the study of language from various perspectives, including its use for communication, self-expression, and social connection. Afolayan & Alabi (2021) define linguistics as the scientific analysis of language, involving the breakdown of language into smaller components to reveal its fundamental features. Oviogun & Veerde (2020) divide linguistics into microlinguistics, focusing on internal structures such as phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and lexicology, and

macrolinguistics, which examines external aspects such as sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, anthropolinguistics, stylistics, philology, and the philosophy of language.

Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics focuses on the relationship between language and society. Bosede (1992, cited in Emike et al., 2021) explains that it examines how cultural and social influences shape communication. Buhari (2021) adds that factors such as ethnicity, religion, gender, education, and age influence language use and social identity. Fasold (1993, cited in Rachmawati, 2020) highlights two key concepts: language variation based on speaker choice and language as a tool for information and opinion sharing. Labov (1972, cited in Ratnawati et al., 2021) emphasizes that language style refers to variations in how the same speaker communicates in different contexts. Sociolinguistics thus seeks to understand not only language patterns but also the reasons behind linguistic choices and their connection to identity, social roles, and cultural values.

Language Style

Language style refers to the variations in communication influenced by the relationship between speaker and listener, the situation, and the purpose. Ducrot and Todorov (1993, cited in Simamora & Sherina, 2022) define it as using different expressions to convey the same message according to context. Chaika (1982, cited in Ratnawati et al., 2021) notes that social environment shapes a person's speaking or writing style. Meyerhoff (2006, cited in Putri et al., 2021) adds that language style reflects personality, thought processes, and emotional state. Putri et al. (2022, cited in Lauterboom & Nuraeni, 2024) underline its role in facilitating mutual understanding between speakers and listeners.

Classification of Language Style

Martin Joos (1967, cited in Simamora & Sherina, 2022) categorizes language styles into five levels of formality:

- a. Frozen Style: Highly formal, fixed expressions, often used in ceremonial or legal contexts, with little to no interaction between speaker and

- listener (Holmes, 1992, cited in Putri et al., 2021).
- b. Formal Style: Used in structured situations like lectures or speeches, marked by complete grammar, formal vocabulary, and minimal audience participation (Joos, 1976, cited in Putri et al., 2022).
 - c. Consultative Style: Semi-formal, interactive communication where the speaker explains clearly and seeks feedback, common in workplace discussions or service encounters (Putri et al., 2022).
 - d. Casual Style: Informal, used when interacting with close friends, family, or loved ones, often features brief expressions, and elements of regional dialect, with minimal focus on sentence structure (Simamora & Sherina, 2022).
 - e. Intimate Style: Personal and private, using terms of endearment, incomplete sentences, and implicit understanding between close relationships (Simamora & Sherina, 2022).

This classification provides a spectrum from the most rigid to the most relaxed forms of communication, illustrating how language style selection adapts to context and social bonds.

Factors Influencing Language Style

Holmes (2013, cited in Vitariyani, 2022) identifies four key social factors that shape language style:

- a. Participant: Characteristics of the interlocutors (age, social status, relationship, cultural background) influence style choice (Merrison & Griffiths, 2006, cited in Putri et al., 2021).
- b. Topic: The seriousness or familiarity of the subject affects the degree of formality (Simamora & Sherina, 2022).
- c. Setting: The time and place of communication influence word choice, with formal situations requiring greater linguistic attention (Putri et al., 2021).

- d. Function: The communicative purpose (informing, persuading, expressing emotion) drives style adaptation for effectiveness (Simamora & Sherina, 2022).

These factors influence the choice of language style. Speakers naturally adjust their language style according to these four factors to ensure that their communication is appropriate, effective, and relevant to the content

Language Function

According to Jakobson (1980:81), we can divide functions of language into six functions that can be used to characterize an effective act of verbal communication. People use language functions in their utterances throughout a conversation. They converse with one another using different language functions depending on the message's intent. Different language functions are used when a person informs, commands, inquires, or offers something to the addressee. In some contexts, more than one language function may be employed in communication. The following are functions based on Roman Jakobson's theory:

1. Emotive Function

Emotive function can be referred to as the expressive function. This function helps in the interpretation of the subject's emotions, feelings, wants, and moods. The emotional feature provides immediate information on the sender's tone.

2. Referential Function

The referential function explains a circumstance, object, or mental state and relates to the message factor. Both definite descriptions and deictic terms can be used in the referential function's descriptive statements (Jakobson, in Hebert, 2011, p.4). In simpler terms, it means to convey information about a thing or a fact.

3. Conative Function

This function mainly focuses on the receiver of the message. The language used with this function is intended to catch the addressee's attention or prompt a response. It has the ability to influence behavior; in other words, the speaker uses this function to persuade someone to do something in response to a statement.

4. Phatic Function

The Phatic Function is suited in greetings and simple casual conversations, especially with strangers. It focuses on both physical and psychological activity. This function is responsible for establishing, extending, verifying, and ending linguistic messages in communication.

5. Poetic Function

Poetic function is mostly concerned with both the message and the method of transmission. It indicates that rhetorical figures of speech is employed to improve the message. Poetic Function is defined as the use of poetic elements such as metaphor, metonymy, alliteration, rhyme, ambiguity, repetition, simile, and antithesis, according to Holmes (1992:258).

6. Metalingual Function The metalingual function, according to Jakobson in Hebert (2011:4), involves the use of language to express or discuss oneself. Metalinguistic may be utilized by itself or rather in conjunction with other sources of knowledge. The metalinguistic function deals with the code itself.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach. Qualitative research was used because it could delve into the complexity of social reality, encompassing human experiences and perceptions (Lim, 2024). A descriptive qualitative design was considered the most suitable since the research primarily involved verbal data, specifically the dialogues of the main characters, which required detailed elaboration and interpretation. The data in this study was identified using Martin Joo's (1976) theory to analyze the types of language styles and Roman Jakobson's (1980) theory to analyze the language function. The descriptive qualitative research method is employed in this analysis because the study systematically examines textual evidence to verify the conclusions about the types of language styles

used and their functions in the selected movie. The data used in this study were directly taken from the primary source, the movie *After We Collided* (2020) as well as the original screenplay transcript which contains the dialogues.

The method applied in collecting the data was by using the observation method, as the data were collected from the primary source. The technique used in this study involved observing to identify the different types of language styles incorporated within the main character's utterances, followed by classifying which dialogues were included in the different kinds of functions to interpret the meaning of the character's utterances. Presenting findings through descriptive explanations, supported by dialogues, screenshots of scenes, and frequency tables showing the dominant language styles used.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Language Style Used by the Main Characters

Researcher found that the language style in the movie *After We Collided* includes formal, consultative, casual, and intimate styles. The language style theory used in this analysis is based on the theory of Joo (1967), which classifies language styles into frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate styles. However, in this study, the frozen style was not found.

Formal Style

Formal style is the second highest level of formality after frozen style. It is typically used in public or polite conversations with people who are not familiar to the speaker. Its main characteristics are complete sentence structure, standard grammar, and polite expressions. Unlike frozen style, which is rigid, formal style still allows limited interaction while maintaining social distance.

Data 1 (00:03:37 – 00:03:43)

Tessa : "Sorry. Excuse me! Sir, can you hold that elevator, please!"

This utterance is classified as formal style. Tessa uses polite expressions such as "Sorry" and "Excuse me," followed by a complete request, "Sir, can you hold that elevator, please!" The sentence is grammatically structured and courteous, showing respect toward someone she does not know personally. The use of the word "Sir" also reflects a level of social distance and politeness, which are typical features of formal style. This scene takes place in a public space with strangers, where social

etiquette demands the use of polite and respectful language.

Consultative Style

Consultative style is a semi-formal style of communication that requires cooperation between the speaker and the listener. This style is more interactive than formal style and generally uses clear and polite sentences. It is commonly found in professional or service settings, and between acquaintances who are not very close.

Data 3 (00:05:12 – 00:05:44)

Kimberly : "I apologize for the mess. We've been short on interns lately, and we're a bit backlogged."

Tessa : "That seems crazy to me. People I know would kill for an internship here."

Kimberly : "I know, it's just that Vance has this small problem with firing them after a day. But that's not going to happen to you. I have a good feeling about this..."

Tessa : "Okay."

Kimberly : "The kitchen is right down the hall. Feel free to place any order for lunch. Any questions?"

Tessa : "Uh, no. I'm good."

Kimberly : "You got this."

This data is classified as consultative style because Tessa expresses her opinion clearly and politely ("That seems crazy to me..."). Her short but structured replies ("Okay" and "Uh, no. I'm good") maintain active participation in the conversation. The dialogue reflects mutual understanding and cooperation, which are hallmarks of consultative style.

Data 2 (00:49:09 – 00:49:14)

Tessa : "Excuse me, is this beginner's yoga?"

Instructor : "That was at ten- thirty. This is acro-yoga."

This data is classified as consultative style because Tessa uses a polite opening "Excuse

me" and a clear question with complete grammatical structure. The instructor responds with factual, concise information in a neutral and polite word. The conversation reflects mutual respect and cooperation, which are hallmarks of consultative style, and fits a service-oriented context where the speaker and listener do not share personal closeness.

Casual Style

Casual style is used in informal and relaxed situations between people who know each other well, such as friends, family, or romantic partners. It often includes slang, contractions, short sentences, and spontaneous expressions.

This type of communication appears natural and unstructured.

Data 2 (00:03:43 – 00:03:44)

Tessa : "Asswipe!"

This is classified as casual style because Tessa uses non-standard, informal language in a short, emotionally expressive utterance. It does not follow formal grammatical structure and reflects comfort or emotional closeness with the addressee.

Data 15 (00:42:58 – 00:43:34)

Tessa : "What is going on with Dad?!"

Tessa's mother : "Okay, that was rude." Tessa : "I'm just asking you about Dad."

Tessa's mother : "Fine. Your father wanted to see you, but I chased him off. Why are you getting so worked up about this?"

Tessa : "I'm not getting worked up! I just don't understand why you'd keep that a secret."

Tessa's mother : "And you never kept any secrets from me? Because I can think of a big one, and so can Noah. I thought we got past this little hiccup once you got your heart broken. But I can tell by the sound of your voice that this not the case. This boy is not good for you, Teresa. He is just like your father."

Tessa : "I'm hanging up."

This data is classified as casual style because the speaker uses spontaneous, unstructured, and emotionally direct sentences. This conversation contains exclamations, rhetorical questions, and personal comments without formal sentence

construction. The absence of polite expressions, rapid statements, and the use of everyday conversation are characteristics that describe casual style.

Intimate Style

Intimate style is a personal way of speaking used between people who are very close, such as couples or family members. It often includes personal expressions, terms of endearment, incomplete sentences, and language understood only by those involved.

Data 1 (00:22:20 – 00:22:24)

Hardin : "Tell me I'm the only one."

Tessa : "You're the only one."

This data is classified as intimate style. The language is minimal but emotionally loaded, requiring no further explanation between them. The emotional focus of the conversation highlights the closeness of their relationship.

Data 7 (00:58:25 – 00:58:48)

Hardin : "There's no one else for me, Tessa. No one. I love you." Tessa : "I love you too."

Hardin : "Don't say 'too.' Sounds like you're agreeing with me." Tessa : "I love you, Hardin."

This data is classified as intimate style. The intimate style is marked by declarations of love and personal remarks that show deep emotional involvement. The use of first names, affectionate phrasing, and playful correction ("Don't say 'too'...") reflect a private conversational mode between two people with a strong bond.

Factors Influencing the Language Style

Researcher found that the factors influencing the use of language style in the movie *After We Collided* include the participants, topic, setting, and function. The factor theory used in this analysis is based on Holmes (2013), which explains that language choices in communication are influenced by the people involved, the subject matter, the setting or location, and the purpose of the conversation.

Participants

Participants are factors related to who is involved in the conversation, including the relationship, social roles, age, and emotional

connection between the speaker and the listener.



Figure 1 Tessa's Drunk Phone Call to Hardin

Data 6 (00:16:44 – 00:17:39)

Hardin : "Tessa?"

Tessa : "Hi! I just, uh, I just wanted to inform you that I look hot, and you're missing it."

Hardin : "Tessa, where are you?"

Tessa : "Whoop! Somewhere that you're not."

Hardin : "Tess, I have your location, I can find you. How much have you had to drink?"

Tessa : "I don't know, like five?" Hardin : "Five what?"

Tessa : "Uh, Sex on the Beaches or is it Sexes on the Beaches? That coulda been fun!"

Hardin : "You are wasted."

Tessa : "Oh, hey, Hardin? I'm the commander. I've been the commander all night. Command...What's it called? I'm not wearing any underwear! Aaah! Ha ha ha!"

Hardin : "Tess, who are you with?" Tessa : "Why haven't you called me?"

Hardin : "I've texted you a hundred times! You haven't replied!"

In this data, the participants are Tessa and Hardin, who are former romantic partners with a strong emotional history. Tessa uses playful and teasing language ("I look hot, and you're missing it") without formal structure. Hardin's immediate, short question "Where are you?" shows a direct and personal tone. The familiarity between participants allows for casual style, marked by humor and emotional openness, which would not be appropriate with strangers or acquaintances.

Topic

Topic is a factor related to the subject matter or content of a conversation, which influences the speaker's choice of language style according to the seriousness of the topic being discussed.



Figure II Family Trauma Confrontation with Father

Data 16 (01:04:13 – 01:04:53)

Hardin's father : "Okay, well, you are obviously quite upset with me, so go ahead and say what's on your mind."

Hardin: "Why did you even invite us here?"

Hardin's father : "I invited you here because you're my family."

Hardin's father : "Hardin, I thought we were past this." *Hardin*: "We didn't get past it."

Hardin: "We're not your family. Your twelve steps making amends. Where's Mum's amends? Mum, have you got your amends yet?"

Hardin's father : "What would you like me to do? You don't think that I am consumed by guilt? I knew that night that I had to go."

Hardin: "No! After that night you had to stay! And you didn't! That night happened because of you!"

Hardin's father : "Yes! And I have been haunted by it for the last ten years!"

Hardin: "It haunts you?! I fucking watched it happen, you bastard!"

The topic of discussion centres on highly sensitive and unresolved family trauma. The emotional intensity arises directly from the topic itself, which involves feelings of guilt, regret, and a painful past. The seriousness of the topic leads to interruptions, rhetorical questions, and harsh words. These features indicate an unfiltered and highly emotional conversational style, influenced by the weight of the topic being discussed.

Setting

Setting refers to the time and place where communication takes place, where the formal or informal context of a situation determines the type of language style chosen by the character.



Figure III Office Elevator Polite Conversation

Data 1 (00:04:15 – 00:04:22)

Tessa : "Look, I'm sorry. It's my first day. I'm just trying to make an impression."

Trevor : "Well, you certainly succeeded at that."

This interaction occurs in a professional setting, Tessa's workplace on her first day at Vance Publishing. The formal context prompts Tessa to use complete sentences and polite explanations to maintain professionalism. Even though the conversation is slightly relaxed by Trevor's teasing remark, the overall tone remains consultative due to the workplace environment and the lack of close personal relationship between the speakers.

Function

Function refers to the purpose or goal of the communication. When the aim is to give orders, persuade, express strong emotions, or create intimacy, the language style adapts to suit that purpose.

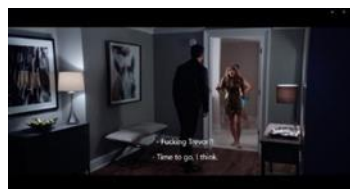


Figure IV. Door Confrontation scene

Data 9 (00:19:32 – 00:20:04)

Hardin: "Tessa! Tessa, open the door."

Trevor : "Is that Hardin Scott?"

Hardin : "Open the door!"

Tessa : "Hi. Are you trying to get me kicked out of this place? Yeah, come on in, why don't you? Hey..."

Trevor : "Hey, Hardin, didn't see ya. How ya been?"

Hardin: "Fucking Trevor?!" *Trevor* : "Time to go, I think. I'm just gonna..."

In this data, the function of Hardin's utterance is to command. His repeated use of imperative

sentences (“Open the door!”) shows urgency and emotional intensity. There are no politeness markers or complex grammatical structures. The style is casual and direct, matching the function of the utterance. The goal is immediate compliance, not polite negotiation.

The Most Frequently Used Language Style in After We Collided

After identifying and analysing each type of language style that appeared in the dialogue of the movie After We Collided along with the factors that influenced them, the researcher then calculated the frequency of occurrence of each type of language style and factor. The results of this calculation showed the most dominant type of language style used and the factors that most often influenced the choice of language style.

Table 1. Language Style's Frequency in After We Collided Movie

No.	Kinds of Language Style	Data Frequency	Percentage
1	Frozen Style	0	0%
2	Formal Style	1	2%
3	Consultative Style	15	31%
4	Casual Style	25	51%
5	Intimate Style	8	16%
TOTAL DATA		49	100%

Based on the table above, researcher found four types of language styles in the 49 data collected from the movie. Casual style appeared 25 times, consultative style 15 times, intimate style 8 times, and formal style 1 time. Casual style is the most dominant style in this movie. This can be explained by the fact that most of the conversations take place in casual and informal situations between characters who already know each other well, so they tend to use casual style more often.

Furthermore, from all the data that was analysed based on factors that influence language style, a comparison of the number of occurrences of each factor can be seen.

Table 2 Frequency of Factors That Influence Language Style

No.	Kinds of Factor Influencing Language Style	Data Frequency	Percentage
1	Participant	3	14%
2	Topic	7	32%
3	Setting	5	23%
4	Function	7	32%
TOTAL DATA		22	100%

From the table above, researcher found four factors that influence the language style used in the movie. Topic appeared 7 times, setting 5 times, participants 3 times, and function 7 times. Topic and function were the most dominant factors, each appearing in 32% of the total data. This indicates that both the topic discussed and the purpose of communication have a strong influence on the choice of language style in After We Collided.

CONCLUSION

The research underscores the value of language for communication and the need to study linguistics to comprehend the structure and evolution of language. It also discusses how the West Amarasi community's language shifts and how the next generation wants to teach Timorese to preserve its identity. According to the survey, many young people are interested in studying Timorese as a second language to maintain their uniqueness and identity, even though they live in Jakarta.

Based on the above discussion, the primary idea of the text in question is that language is essential for communication and that studying linguistics can help us comprehend the structure and development of language. The essay also touches on language changes within the West Amarasi community and the desire of the younger generation to retain their identity by learning Timorese, their native tongue. It also examines how parents transmit their mother tongues to their children. A questionnaire involving 55 participants with parental influence showed that 50.9% of them were taught their mother tongue or Timorese, compared to 74.5% who were taught Bahasa Indonesia. This is a far cry from the percentages where Timorese should have the upper hand, but the opposite is true. The author sees that this Timorese language shift occurs because of the influence of parents; there is another influence, namely migration where; influence seeing that 60% of the respondents answered that they did not experience culture shock when they migrated to Jakarta, the author can

conclude that respondents are already accustomed to using Indonesian compared to Timorese.

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