

An Exploration of Gossiping as a Prevalent Discursive Genre in Social Interactions

Vilma María Mendoza Rojas

Orlando Javier Vera Gonzalez

Trabajo de Grado para Optar al Título de Licenciados en Lenguas Extranjeras con Énfasis en
Inglés

Director

Silvia Andrea Tarazona Ariza

Magister en Theoretical and Applied Linguistics

Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras con Énfasis en Inglés

Escuela de Idiomas

Facultad de Ciencias Humanas

Universidad Industrial de Santander

Bucaramanga

2024

Acknowledgement

First and foremost, a heartfelt thank you to ourselves, for enduring countless late nights, endless revisions, and the occasional bout of self-doubt.

Thanks to SZA for her music and releasing her album SOS that helped us to make it through and crepes and waffles for their pollo chipotle.

To our dear readers, who may secretly (or not-so-secretly) enjoy a bit of gossip themselves, this work is a nod to you. You're not alone in this delightful guilty pleasure, and we hope our findings bring a smile to your faces and a twinkle to your eyes.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my soulmate Christofer, to my amazing sister Jenifer and my doggy Hachi.

To my beloved parents and my sister, whose unwavering support and sacrifices have been the cornerstone of my journey, I dedicate this work with heartfelt gratitude. To my dearest friend, Tom, whose unwavering support has been an invaluable cornerstone in shaping who I am today. Your friendship transcends language barriers, and together, we've navigated the intricacies of gossip, forging a bond that goes beyond words. Thank you for your unconditional encouragement and for being an essential part of this journey. And to my loyal pets Sacha, Chanel, Coco, Simona and our beloved Hailey, who have offered companionship and solace throughout late nights and endless research, your comforting presence made this journey more enjoyable.

TABLE OF CONTENT

Introduction	9
Justification	9
Objectives	10
General Objective	10
Specific Objectives	10
Research questions	11
1. Theoretical Framework	11
1.1. Gossip as a social discursive genre	11
1.2. Social interaction	12
1.3. Interpersonal relationships	13
1.4. Sociolinguistic approaches to daily situations	14
1.5 Social functions of language and intentions	16
Background	16
2. Methodology	20
2.1. Research Design	20
2.2. Participants	20
2.3. Data Collection Instruments	21
2.4. Resources and Analysis Techniques	22
2.5. Resources Used:	23
2.6. Analysis Techniques Employed:	23
3. Findings and Discussion	25
3.1. Gossip	25
3.1.1. Definitions of Gossip	25
3.1.2. Gossip as Entertainment and Bonding	26
3.1.3. Negative Impacts and Ethical Considerations	27
3.2. Social Interaction	28
3.2.1. Transactional Nature of Social Interaction	29
3.2.2. Performative Aspects of Social Interaction	30
3.2.3. Mass Media's Influence on Gossip	31
3.3. Interpersonal Relationships	32
3.3.1. Trust-Building and Mutual Understanding	32
3.3.2. Role of Gossip in Impression Formation	33

3.3.3. Emotional Cognition and Linguistic Processing in Gossip	33
Further research	34
4. Conclusions	36
Primary sources	41
Limitations of the study	41
References	45

List of Appendixes

Appendixes..... 49
APPENDIX A . PARTICIPANTS' INTERVIEW PROTOCOL..... 49
APPENDIX B . PARTICIPANTS' SURVEY..... 50
APPENDIX C. CONSENT INFORM..... 55

Abstract

Title: An exploration of Gossiping as a prevalent discursive genre in Social Interactions*

Authors: Vilma María Mendoza Rojas, Orlando Javier Vera González**

Key Words: Gossip, Human communication, Interpersonal relationships, Sociocultural dynamics

Description:

Gossip, an intricate facet of human communication embedded within the fabric of social interactions, serves as a dynamic force for shaping the tapestry of human relationships. (Altman & Taylor, 1973) This research study delves into the multifaceted dimensions of the discursive genre of gossip, examining its role as a potent sociocultural force within contemporary social landscapes.

Employing a comprehensive sociolinguistic lens, the study unravels the intricate nuances of gossip's influence on the construction, negotiation, and maintenance of interpersonal relationships in diverse social contexts. Underlying the exploration are specific objectives, including an examination of people's attitudes towards gossip, an identification of existing patterns of gossip as a discursive genre, an exploration of linguistic and sociocultural factors influencing gossip, and a depiction of its influence on interpersonal relationships.

Drawing from theoretical insights, participant interviews, and established sociolinguistic perspectives, this research aims to shed light on the intricate dynamics of gossip and its significant impact on contemporary social interaction and human relationships.

Resumen

Título: Una exploración del chisme como un género discursivo predominante en las interacciones sociales.*

Autores: Vilma María Mendoza Rojas, Orlando Javier Vera González**

Palabras Clave: Chisme, Comunicación humana, Dinámicas socioculturales, Relaciones interpersonale

Descripción:

El chisme, un aspecto intrincado de la comunicación humana incrustado dentro del tejido de las interacciones sociales, sirve como una fuerza dinámica que da forma al tapiz de las relaciones humanas. Esta investigación profundiza en las dimensiones multifacéticas del chisme, examinando su papel como una potente fuerza sociocultural y cómo funciona dentro de los paisajes sociales contemporáneos.

Empleando una lente sociolingüística integral, el estudio desentraña los matices intrincados de la influencia del chisme en la construcción, negociación y mantenimiento de relaciones interpersonales en diversos contextos sociales. Subyacen a la exploración objetivos específicos, incluyendo un examen de las actitudes de las personas hacia el chisme, la identificación de patrones existentes de chisme como género discursivo, y al mismo tiempo una exploración de los factores lingüísticos y socioculturales que influyen en el chisme, y una representación de su influencia en las relaciones interpersonales.

Basándose en perspectivas teóricas, entrevistas a participantes y perspectivas sociolingüísticas establecidas, esta investigación tiene como objetivo arrojar luz sobre la dinámica intrínseca del chisme y su impacto significativo en la interacción social contemporánea y las relaciones humanas.

Introduction

“Que hablen bien o que hablen mal, pero que hablen”

- Salvador Dalí

Gossip, a pervasive and intricate aspect of human communication, has long captivated the curiosity of scholars across various disciplines. Embedded within the fabric of social interactions, it serves as a dynamic force for shaping the intricate tapestry of human relationships. From casual exchanges to intimate confidences, gossip functions as both a vehicle for information dissemination, and a catalyst for the construction of social identities. As a fundamental element of sociolinguistic inquiry, the study of gossip not only unveils the nuanced interplay between language and society but also sheds light on the intricate mechanisms underpinning interpersonal dynamics (Altman & Taylor, 1973). This research endeavors to delve into the multifaceted dimensions of gossip, exploring its role as a potent sociocultural force within contemporary social landscapes. By employing a comprehensive sociolinguistic lens, this study aims to unravel the intricate nuances of gossip's influence on the construction, negotiation, and maintenance of interpersonal relationships in diverse social contexts.

Justification

This project is carried out to assess the theoretical, social, and professional relevance of studying gossip as a basis for social intention from a sociolinguistic perspective. Gossip, as a linguistic and social phenomenon, offers an intriguing research field for sociolinguistics, which

deals with the study of the relationship between language and society (Altman & Taylor, 1973; Goffman, 1959). This project will contribute to the expansion of knowledge in the field of sociolinguistics by analyzing how linguistic and sociocultural variables influence the use and perception of gossip in contemporary social interaction, as discussed by Splichalova and Splichal (2016). Gossip, a form of communication present in people's everyday lives, and its influence can be significant in how we relate to others, reflecting the dynamics explored by Homans (1958). Understanding how gossip affects our social relationships from a sociolinguistic perspective, informed by Dunbar's (2004) evolutionary perspective, can have implications for improving the quality of our interactions and promoting healthier coexistence. Studying gossip from a sociolinguistic perspective may be relevant for professionals in fields such as communication, psychology, and social work (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), as it can help these professionals address challenges and conflicts that arise in different contexts more effectively.

Objectives

General Objective

To explore the role of gossip and its influence on interpersonal relationships in daily social interactions from a sociolinguistic perspective.

Specific Objectives

1. To analyze people's attitudes and perceptions towards gossip in different social contexts from a sociolinguistic perspective.
2. To identify the existing patterns of gossip as a discursive genre, its use and its motivations in social interactions.

3. To depict the influence of gossip on the construction of interpersonal relationships.

Research questions

What is the impact of the discursive genre of gossip on contemporary social interactions from a sociolinguistic perspective?

What are the perceptions that speakers have about the gossiping discursive genre in their daily lives?

What are the linguistic elements used to construct the gossiping discursive genre?

1. Theoretical Framework

In this section of the document, there will be described the four main categories at the core of the research: gossip and its definition, social interaction, interpersonal relationships, gossip in sociolinguistics, and social intention. This section adds emphasis on the actors of the phenomenon as well as the gaps present in the literature in Colombia.

1.1. Gossip as a social discursive genre

Gossip, as an intricate linguistic and social phenomenon, lies at the heart of human interaction, bearing profound implications for contemporary society. Altman & Taylor's sociolinguistic perspective (1973) underscores its role as a means of forging and deepening interpersonal relationships, emphasizing its potency as a bridge between individuals. Yet, gossip extends beyond mere linguistic exchanges; Deci & Ryan's work (2000) draws our attention to the motivations concealed within this social act, revealing how human needs and self-determination underlie its existence. Moreover, Feinberg & Willer's research (2012) illuminates the moral

dimensions of gossip, highlighting its capacity to serve as a conduit for the expression of ethical values and judgments. Within the realm of communication theory, Goffman's insights (1959) elucidate how gossip becomes a strategic tool in the theater of everyday life, where individuals craft their identities and influence the impressions others hold of them. Knapp & Vangelisti (2000) offer a lens through which we view gossip as a pivotal component in the intricate web of interpersonal communication, impacting the quality of relationships and the fabric of societies. Embedded in an evolutionary perspective (Dunbar, 2004), gossip reveals its adaptive functions, hinting at the survival advantages it may have conferred upon our ancestors in navigating complex social networks. As we delve into the study of gossip, these scholarly insights guide our exploration of its multifaceted nature, prompting us to unravel its linguistic, psychological, moral, and communicative dimensions in the intricate tapestry of human social interaction.

1.2. Social interaction

Social interaction, as a complex interplay of human dynamics, is intricately woven into the fabric of everyday life, serving as the foundational bedrock upon which interpersonal relationships are built and sustained. Altman & Taylor's sociolinguistic framework (1973) elucidates the role of social interaction in fostering trust-building and the gradual development of intimate connections, emphasizing its significance in nurturing interpersonal bonds. Homans' exploration of social behavior as an exchange (1958) further underscores the transactional nature of social interaction, highlighting how individuals engage in reciprocal acts, contributing to the construction of their identities within social networks. Goffman's seminal work (1959) on the presentation of self in everyday life sheds light on the performative aspect of social interaction, illustrating how individuals strategically navigate various social settings to craft and maintain

their desired identities. Rosnow and Fine's paper "Rumor and Gossip in Interpersonal Interaction and Beyond: A Social Exchange Perspective" contributes to our understanding of how rumor and gossip function as key elements in this social exchange, often playing pivotal roles in the negotiation of social dynamics. Luhmann's book "The Reality of Mass Media" adds a structural perspective, exploring how mass media shapes and influences the dynamics of social interaction on a broader societal scale. Moreover, insights from Adolphs' paper on "Social Emotion Processing" highlight the role of emotional cognition in mediating social interactions, emphasizing the significance of the insular cortex in processing social emotions, which can influence the nature and outcomes of gossip within social groups. Drawing from these perspectives, social interaction emerges as a multifaceted process that not only facilitates bonding and identity construction but also serves as a platform for conflict resolution and the negotiation of interpersonal dynamics, all of which are intricately intertwined with the pervasive human practice of gossip, as expounded upon by various researchers including Dunbar, Oberzaucher, Grammer, Wilson, Sober, McAndrew, Levitin, Pinker, and Feinberg.

1.3. Interpersonal relationships

Interpersonal relationships, as intricate webs of social connections, form the cornerstone of human social dynamics, encompassing various dimensions of trust-building, identity construction, and emotional exchange. Building upon Altman & Taylor's sociolinguistic insights (1973), the foundations of interpersonal relationships are revealed as rooted in meaningful communication and the gradual development of mutual understanding, underscoring the significance of linguistic nuances in fostering deep connections. Homans' social exchange perspective (1958) further emphasizes the reciprocal nature of interpersonal relationships,

highlighting the role of mutual give-and-take and the balance of social rewards and costs in maintaining stable social connections. Goffman's seminal work (1959) on the presentation of self in everyday life provides a lens to understand how individuals strategically manage their identities within interpersonal relationships, emphasizing the performative nature of social interactions and the role of self-presentation in shaping relational dynamics. Integrating insights from Rosnow and Fine's paper on "Rumor and Gossip in Interpersonal Interaction" offers a social exchange perspective, illustrating how rumor and gossip function as both currency and mechanisms for the negotiation of social ties within interpersonal relationships. Incorporating these perspectives within the broader context of the sociolinguistic framework, interpersonal relationships emerge as complex entities influenced by linguistic dynamics, reciprocal exchanges, and strategic self-presentation, all intricately interwoven with the pervasive practice of gossip and its multifaceted role in shaping social interactions and relational dynamics.

1.4. Sociolinguistic approaches to daily situations

Sociolinguistics is pivotal for understanding the intricate linguistic dimensions of gossip and its profound connections with societal structures. Several interdisciplinary insights contribute to this understanding. Rosnow & Fine's (2001) research on "Rumor and Gossip in Interpersonal Interaction" highlights the social exchange perspective, unveiling the intricate social dynamics woven by the currency of gossip within interpersonal relationships. Luhmann (2002) provides structural insights in "The Reality of Mass Media," explaining how mass media influences and shapes the dissemination of gossip, thereby influencing societal discourse. Adolphs (2017) emphasizes the role of emotional cognition in navigating the nuances of gossip, suggesting the significance of the insular cortex in processing social emotions and shaping the trajectory of

gossip within social networks. Dunbar's (2004) seminal work "Grooming, Gossip, and the Evolution of Language" reveals the evolutionary origins of gossip as a tool for fostering group cohesion and social bonding. Oberzaucher & Grammer's (2016) investigation into "The Case of Moulay Ismael-Fact or Fancy?" prompts critical evaluation of the cultural underpinnings and context-specific variations in the practice of gossip, highlighting its adaptive functions and cultural relevance. Wilson & Sober (1994) provide a broader evolutionary perspective on gossip in "Reintroducing Group Selection to the Human Behavioral Sciences," illuminating how it fosters group cooperation and social cohesion. McAndrew (2012) delves into the psychological underpinnings of gossip in "The Science of Gossip: Why We Can't Stop Ourselves," elucidating the cognitive and social mechanisms driving its persistent presence in human social interactions. Levitin's (2015) book "The Organized Mind: Thinking Straight in the Age of Information Overload" provides insights into the cognitive processing of gossip within the framework of information management and cognitive psychology. Pinker (2007) deepens our understanding of the intricate connection between language and human cognition in "The Stuff of Thought: Language as a Window into Human Nature," shedding light on how language serves as a powerful vehicle for the expression and dissemination of gossip within societal contexts. Finally, Feinberg & Willer (2012) empirical research on "Gossip and Ostracism Promote Cooperation in Groups" underscores the pivotal role of gossip in fostering cooperation and social cohesion within group settings, emphasizing its significance in shaping group dynamics and fostering collaborative endeavors. The integration of these diverse perspectives within the purview of sociolinguistics reveals the complex interplay between linguistic dynamics, societal structures,

and the pervasive practice of gossip, enriching our comprehension of its multifaceted role in human social interactions.

1.5 Social functions of language and intentions

Social psychology, as a key gateway to comprehending the intricacies of human behavior within the tapestry of social networks, underscores the pivotal role of social intention in shaping and guiding interpersonal dynamics. At the heart of this paradigm lies the intricate phenomenon of gossip, serving as a powerful mechanism for the expression and navigation of social intentions within diverse social contexts. Deci & Ryan's seminal contributions (2000) offer an insightful lens through which to examine the underlying motivations that drive the pervasive practice of gossip, elucidating the fundamental human needs and the quest for self-determination that often underlie the fabric of gossip within social groups. Moreover, Feinberg & Willer's nuanced exploration (2012) highlights the moral and ethical considerations embedded within the realm of gossip, shedding light on how these considerations shape the nature and consequences of gossip within interpersonal relationships and broader social dynamics. Integrating these insights within the broader landscape of social psychology unveils the intricate interplay between human motivations, moral values, and social intentions, underscoring the critical role of gossip as both a reflective and formative tool in the complex tapestry of human social interactions.

Background

The study of gossip as a basis for social intention has been addressed in various disciplines such as sociology, psychology, and communication. Below are some relevant previous studies that are useful for answering the research question posed.

In the field of sociology, research has investigated the role of gossip in the formation and maintenance of social relationships. For example, Jones & Pittman (1982) conducted a study that examined how gossip influences group cohesion and the construction of social identities. Their findings highlight that gossip can have both positive and negative effects on interpersonal relationships and the sense of belonging.

From a psychological perspective, gossip has been studied in relation to the satisfaction of social needs and self-affirmation. Feinberg & Willer (2012) conducted research that demonstrated that gossip can serve an important function in maintaining reputation and social order. Additionally, studies such as Baumeister et al. (2004) have explored how gossip can be used as a strategy for managing image and social status.

In the field of communication, the effects of gossip on the construction of social narratives and the dissemination of information have been analyzed. For example, Knapp & Vangelisti (2000) have studied how gossip can influence impression formation and the construction of social identities. Furthermore, research on gossip in the media, such as the study by Splichalova & Splichal (2016), has examined the role of gossip in creating stories and generating public interest.

In the context of Colombia, regarding the legal framework governing the planned actions in the research project, the following regulations and legislative frameworks stand out:

Constitución Política de Colombia (1991): Establishes the principles and fundamental rights that guarantee coexistence and mutual respect in Colombian society. The principles of equality, dignity, and non-discrimination are fundamental in addressing gossip from an ethical and respectful perspective.

Ley 1480 de 2011, Estatuto del Consumidor: This law establishes the rights and duties of consumers in Colombia, promoting fair and equitable relationships between individuals. If gossip involves defamation or rights violation, this law may have legal implications.

Ley 1620 de 2013, Ley de Convivencia Escolar: This law aims to promote healthy coexistence in educational establishments, fostering the prevention and addressing of situations of harassment, violence, and discrimination. If gossip becomes a form of interpersonal harassment or violence, this law can provide guidelines for addressing and preventing such situations.

Ley 1482 de 2011, Ley de Discriminación Racial o Étnica: This law seeks to prevent and punish any form of racial or ethnic discrimination in Colombia. If gossip is used as a means to spread racial or ethnic stereotypes or prejudices, this law may be relevant in addressing it.

National Public Policy on Coexistence and Citizen Security: This policy establishes guidelines for promoting peaceful and safe coexistence in Colombian society. If gossip contributes to generating conflicts or affects citizen security, this policy can provide guidelines for addressing these issues.

These legal references are important to ensure that the study of gossip as a basis for social intention is conducted within an ethical and legal framework and to ensure the protection of the rights of the individuals involved in the research.

To answer the research question posed, different theoretical approaches and conceptual foundations will be used to understand the role of gossip in contemporary social interaction.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, the focus will be on interpersonal communication and theories of social influence. The theory of interpersonal communication, developed by Altman & Taylor (1973), focuses on the study of face-to-face interactions and how they contribute to the formation and maintenance of relationships. This theory will allow for an analysis of how gossip becomes a communication tool that influences the dynamics and quality of interpersonal relationships.

Regarding theories of social influence, the social exchange theory and impression management theory will be utilized. The social exchange theory, proposed by Homans (1958), argues that interpersonal relationships are based on a balance of costs and benefits, and gossip can play a role in this exchange, either strengthening or weakening the relationship. On the other hand, impression management theory, developed by Goffman (1959), focuses on how individuals manage the image they project to others, and gossip can influence the perception and reputation of an individual.

In the psychological realm, concepts such as social identity and satisfaction of social needs will be considered. Social identity, studied by Tajfel & Turner (1979), refers to the part of a person's self-image that derives from their belonging to a social group. Gossip can influence the construction and maintenance of social identity, as well as the perception of belonging to a particular group. Additionally, the satisfaction of social needs will be addressed in line with Deci & Ryan's (2000) theory of basic psychological needs, which posits that individuals have an intrinsic need for belongingness and connection with others. Gossip can fulfill a function in

satisfying these needs, although it can also generate conflicts and tensions in interpersonal relationships.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

Qualitative method research was conducted to answer the research question. Qualitative research, as advocated by Creswell (2013), involves a nuanced exploration of the phenomenon, aiming to understand the depth and context of the subject matter. Creswell highlights that qualitative investigations delve into the intricacies and meanings, providing a holistic perspective on the research question. Similarly, Denzin and Lincoln (2018) emphasize the interpretive nature of qualitative research, allowing for a deep understanding of diverse perspectives within specific contexts. Jokonya (2016) adds that qualitative research is valuable for its exploratory and contextually grounded approach, facilitating a comprehensive examination of the research topic.

2.2. Participants

The target population for this study were 7 adult individuals in Colombia, without specific geographical restrictions. A representative sample will be sought to reflect the diversity of the population in terms of age, gender, educational level, and socioeconomic context. The sample size was determined considering representativeness and statistical sufficiency criteria, using stratified random sampling techniques.

Through deliberate sampling, all of the individuals who consented to fill out a consent form were chosen. According to Bryman (2016), the purpose of this process is "to sample cases/participants in a strategic way, so that those samples are relevant to the research questions

that are being posed" (p. 418). It is a non-probabilistic sampling technique. Furthermore, a typical sample is used as the sampling type. This kind of sample is one that "reflects the average person, situation, or instance of the phenomenon of interest," according to Merriam & Tisdell (2016) (p. 97). In general, the study's participants align with its exploratory character and purpose, which is to get deeper insights into a contextualized phenomenon rather than generalize outcomes.

2.3. Data Collection Instruments

The research employed a variety of data collection methods to acquire both quantitative and qualitative data aligned with the specific research objectives. Among the proposed data collection instruments are:

- **Structured Questionnaire:** This tool is aimed at gathering quantitative data concerning individuals' attitudes towards gossip, patterns of utilization, and the quality of interpersonal relationships. It will incorporate response scales, closed-ended questions, and multiple-choice queries.
- **Semi-structured Interviews:** In-depth interviews were carried out with a carefully selected group of participants to extract qualitative insights regarding their experiences, perceptions, and motivations related to gossip. These interviews enabled a thorough exploration of sociolinguistic variables and contextual factors that influence the use and perception of gossip.
- **Content Analysis:** A comprehensive content analysis of secondary sources, including academic articles and media materials, was conducted to provide contextual information about gossip within diverse sociocultural and political settings.

To ensure the reliability and validity of the data collection instruments, they went through a process of validation through peer review and pilot testing.

The data collection process consisted of utilizing various online instruments, namely semi-structured interviews and self-completion surveys, each tailored to specific participant groups. In essence, each participant group responded to the instrument version designed for their demographic. Several items within both the interview and survey were adapted from prior studies that aimed to investigate the phenomenon similarly.

Emphasizing the significance of interviews, Patton (2015) asserts that interviews provide researchers with access to elements that may not be readily apparent, such as "feelings, thoughts, and intentions" (as cited in Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 108). Furthermore, interviews serve as a valuable instrument for comprehending perspectives, which are integral to this study. Consequently, to allow participants to freely express their viewpoints (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), online semi-structured interviews were conducted during the initial phase of the research.

In the subsequent phase of the study, the self-completion survey was generated based on the responses collected from the online interviews. The self-completion survey was administered in a Google Forms format, a format that Bryman (2016) explains has certain advantages, as it relies on closed-answer formats that are easy for participants to complete and reduces both participant exhaustion and potential interviewer interference.

2.4. Resources and Analysis Techniques

The data collection process involved various resources and analysis techniques, and it was structured into two distinct phases.

2.5. Resources Used:

- **Statistical Software:** For quantitative data analysis, statistical software like SPSS or R was utilized.
- **Voice Recorder:** During interviews, a voice recorder was employed to ensure accurate transcription and facilitate qualitative analysis.

2.6. Analysis Techniques Employed:

- **Descriptive Statistical Analysis:** To gain insights from the quantitative data, a descriptive statistical analysis was conducted. This involved the computation of measures such as central tendency, dispersion, and relative frequencies.
- **Thematic Analysis:** The qualitative data collected during interviews underwent thematic analysis to uncover emerging themes, patterns, and categories related to the use and perception of gossip.
- **Comparative Analysis:** Both quantitative and qualitative data were subjected to comparative analysis, enabling the identification of relationships and the contrast of perceptions and patterns.

The data collection process employed a multifaceted strategy. In its initial phase, we gathered qualitative data and subjected it to a rigorous analysis procedure characterized by two distinct coding cycles, drawing inspiration from Leavy's (2017) methodology. The first cycle embraced in vivo coding, allowing us to derive themes directly from the participants' own language, expressions, and narratives. This approach not only spotlighted the salient aspects as

perceived by the participants but also provided a platform for various interpretations, echoing the insights of Saldaña (2013).

Subsequently, in the second coding cycle, we implemented a color-coding technique to discern primary categories based on the frequency and significance of terms identified during the initial in vivo coding. This methodological step drew inspiration from the methodologies of Onwuegbuzie & Hwang (2016) and Saldaña (2013). With these central themes in place, we proceeded to employ phenomenological interpretive content analysis, a framework in harmony with Krippendorff's (2018) perspective, emphasizing the quest to decipher the data's meaning and its implications.

The second phase of data collection involved the acquisition of quantitative data through a self-administered survey instrument thoughtfully designed based on the insights gleaned from the semi-structured interviews. This survey featured a spectrum of questions, ranging from closed-ended and open-ended to Likert-scale inquiries. These questions served the dual purpose of gauging participants' individual perspectives and aggregately assessing the level of consensus among them regarding the subject matter, aligning with the guidance provided by Joshi et al. (2015). The survey data was subsequently subjected to a meticulous statistical analysis utilizing Microsoft Excel.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1. Gossip

At the core of human connection, gossip is a complex linguistic and social phenomenon with significant social and cultural ramifications for modern civilization. It goes beyond simple communication to include social bonding, entertainment, and moral values transmission. The notion of gossip is a complex and ever-evolving part of interpersonal communication that merits careful examination and interpretation. Using a wealth of research and participant interviews, we explore the meanings, social roles, and moral issues surrounding gossip in this section.

3.1.1. Definitions of Gossip

Gossip is a multifaceted concept that emerged prominently in the interviews. Participants provided their own definitions of gossip, emphasizing its role in human interaction. These definitions align with the sociolinguistic perspective of gossip as a means of forging and deepening interpersonal relationships. According to Altman & Taylor (1973), gossip plays a crucial role in facilitating trust-building and connecting individuals. In the interviews, gossip was commonly described as conversations or discussions about people and their lives. It was not limited to people known personally but extended to discussions about celebrities or public figures. The data revealed that gossip often delves into the personal lives and actions of individuals, whether it's an acquaintance or someone famous. Participants often associated gossip with sharing information about someone, emphasizing that it could be about actions, behaviors, or life events. This aligns with the primary purpose of gossip in human interaction, which, according to Deci & Ryan (2000), includes exchanging information, building connections, and

fulfilling social needs. People engage in gossip as a way to share knowledge, opinions, or observations about others. Gossip, as defined by the participants, can encompass a wide range of topics, from casual chatter about friends' activities to discussions about the behavior and decisions of public figures.

3.1.2. Gossip as Entertainment and Bonding

The interviews revealed that gossip is often perceived as a form of entertainment and a way to bond with others. Participants commonly described gossip as a means of having fun, engaging in light-hearted conversation, and finding amusement in discussing others. This perception of gossip resonates with the sociolinguistic view of gossip as a social bonding tool. Altman & Taylor (1973) highlight gossip's role in forging connections and creating interpersonal bonds. In personal settings, gossip is often regarded as a source of entertainment, allowing people to share anecdotes, humorous stories, or observations about others.

The discursive genre of gossip, as revealed through our sociolinguistic exploration, exerts a profound impact on contemporary social interactions. Gossip, beyond its conventional portrayal, emerges as a complex linguistic and social phenomenon that significantly influences how individuals navigate their interpersonal relationships. From a sociolinguistic standpoint, our findings highlight gossip's role in social bonding, entertainment, and moral values transmission. The performative aspects of social interaction, influenced by Goffman's insights, underscore how individuals strategically manage their identities through gossip. On top of that, the transactional nature of social interaction is evident, with gossip serving as a currency that shapes the dynamics

of social exchange. Gossip, while often perceived as a source of entertainment and bonding, also poses ethical considerations, with potential negative impacts on trust and reputation.

Moreover, participants frequently mentioned that gossip is a way to bond with friends, family members, or acquaintances. Gossip serves as a common topic of conversation that brings people together, initiates discussions, and strengthens social connections. Sharing gossip about common acquaintances, celebrities, or public figures creates shared experiences and opportunities for laughter and engagement. In this context, gossip contributes to relationship-building and reinforces social ties. These findings underscore the sociolinguistic perspective that gossip plays a pivotal role in trust-building and the gradual development of intimate connections (Altman & Taylor, 1973).

3.1.3. Negative Impacts and Ethical Considerations

Despite its entertaining and bonding aspects, the interviews also highlighted the potential for gossip to have significant negative impacts. Some participants shared experiences where gossip had led to misunderstandings, conflicts, and strained interpersonal relationships. This negative aspect of gossip resonates with Feinberg & Willer's research (2012), which emphasizes the moral dimensions of gossip. Feinberg & Willer highlight gossip's capacity to serve as a conduit for the expression of ethical values and judgments. The data from the interviews revealed that harmful or false gossip could damage trust and reputation, leading to conflict and strained relationships.

The ethical considerations within gossip were evident in participants' responses. They recognized that gossip could be used to spread false or harmful information, which could harm individuals' reputations and create misunderstandings. This raises questions about the responsibility associated with gossip and the moral values that underlie the practice. Participants' accounts underscore the complexities surrounding the moral dimensions of gossip, indicating that it can have both positive and negative consequences on interpersonal relationships and individual reputations. The ethical considerations linked to gossip align with the sociolinguistic perspective that emphasizes the role of gossip in conveying social judgments and values (Altman & Taylor, 1973).

3.2. Social Interaction

As a complicated interplay of human dynamics, social interaction is deeply ingrained in daily existence and acts as the cornerstone around which interpersonal relationships are developed and maintained. Social contact, which is based on reciprocity, trust, and mutual understanding, is crucial in forming the complexes of human relationships. It has a transactional quality to it, as people participate in acts of reciprocity that help shape their identities in social networks. This section delves into the performative and transactional dimensions of social contact, as well as the crucial function that rumors and gossip play in mediating social dynamics.

Based on the survey results, reminiscent of the concepts put forth by Altman & Taylor (1973) in "Social Penetration: The Development of Interpersonal Relationships," it is evident that a substantial 42% of the surveyed population consistently engages in gossipy conversations. The focal point of these discussions tends to revolve around relationships, aligning with findings reminiscent of Baumeister, Zhang, & Vohs (2004) in their work on "Gossip as Cultural

Learning." This preference indicates an inherent interest in discussing intricate interpersonal dynamics. Moreover, akin to Goffman's (1959) insights on "The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life," the unanimous belief that gossip is a customary facet of human interaction underscores its prevalent role in shaping social exchanges. Furthermore, echoing the sentiments highlighted by Dunbar (2004) in "Gossip in Evolutionary Perspective," a significant majority of respondents appear unperturbed by being the subject of gossip, signifying the assimilation of gossip as a normative part of social behavior. These findings collectively underscore the widespread acceptance and engagement with gossip as a prevalent social phenomenon, particularly concerning relationships, within the surveyed population, as observed in the light of the sociolinguistic lens.

3.2.1. Transactional Nature of Social Interaction

Social interaction, as observed in the interviews, embodies a transactional nature where individuals engage in reciprocal acts that contribute to the construction of their identities within social networks. This aligns with Homans' exploration of social behavior as an exchange (1958), which underscores the idea that social interactions often involve a give-and-take of actions and responses. Participants' experiences and perceptions revealed that social interaction is not unidirectional; rather, it involves a mutual exchange of communication, emotions, and actions. The reciprocity within social interaction was evident as participants described how they engage with others in ways that reciprocate the behaviors and actions they receive. This reciprocity contributes to the balance of social rewards and costs, affecting the stability and dynamics of

social connections. It highlights that the transactional nature of social interaction is fundamental to how individuals navigate their social networks and build and maintain their social identities.

The transactional nature of social interaction also has implications for how gossip functions within these exchanges. Gossip is not only a form of communication but also a currency that individuals use in their social interactions. The data from the interviews showcased how gossip serves as a means of negotiating social dynamics, building trust, and conveying social intentions. By engaging in gossip, individuals reciprocate social information and contribute to the intricate web of social exchange.

3.2.2. Performative Aspects of Social Interaction

Goffman's seminal work on the presentation of self in everyday life provided insights into the performative aspects of social interaction. The interviews revealed that individuals are conscious of the performative nature of social interaction and how they strategically manage their identities within interpersonal relationships. Goffman's perspective emphasizes that individuals play specific roles and use self-presentation strategies to craft and maintain their desired identities.

Participants' responses demonstrated their awareness of how they navigate various social settings to present themselves in specific ways. They described how they strategically manage their image, behavior, and communication to align with their intended identities. This conscious performance in social interaction was evident in both personal and professional settings, indicating that individuals adapt their presentation of self-based on the context and the impression

they want to create. The performative aspects of social interaction are closely linked to the role of gossip within interpersonal relationships. Gossip often involves discussions about the behavior and actions of individuals, and these discussions influence the impressions others hold of them. Participants acknowledged that the information shared through gossip plays a role in shaping how people are perceived by their social networks. This highlights the performative dimension of gossip and its impact on identity construction and impression formation.

3.2.3. Mass Media's Influence on Gossip

Participants acknowledged that mass media plays a significant role in shaping the nature and distribution of gossip. This aligns with Niklas Luhmann's (2002) discourse in "The Reality of Mass Media," which offers a structural understanding of how mass media influences and shapes the dissemination of gossip, thereby influencing societal discourse. The interviews reflected how mass media, such as television, the internet, and social media platforms, act as sources of gossip. News articles, celebrity gossip columns, and online discussions contribute to the circulation of information about public figures and celebrities. Mass media not only acts as a source of gossip but also as an amplifier, allowing gossip to reach a broader audience. This aligns with the notion that mass media has the power to amplify gossip, shaping public discourse and perceptions.

Moreover, participants acknowledged that mass media can influence the content and tone of gossip. Media coverage often dictates the topics of gossip, leading to discussions about current events, scandals, and trending stories. Mass media's influence extends beyond its role as an information source and contributes to the formation of the gossip landscape.

3.3. Interpersonal Relationships

The foundation of human social dynamics are interpersonal relationships, which are complex webs of social connections that include many facets of identity formation, trust-building, and emotional communication. These relationships are built on the steady growth of mutual understanding, meaningful conversation, and active listening. Furthermore, self-presentation and impression building are performative elements that aid in the construction of people's idealized identities in their social networks. This section delves into the various aspects of developing trust, presenting oneself, and the influence of gossip on perceptions and interpersonal relationships.

3.3.1. Trust-Building and Mutual Understanding

Interpersonal relationships, as intricate webs of social connections, form the cornerstone of human social dynamics, encompassing various dimensions of trust-building, identity construction, and emotional exchange. Building upon Altman & Taylor's sociolinguistic insights (1973), the foundations of interpersonal relationships are revealed as rooted in meaningful communication and the gradual development of mutual understanding, underscoring the significance of linguistic nuances in fostering deep connections. Participants' responses in the interviews consistently emphasized the importance of trust-building and mutual understanding in interpersonal relationships. They described how meaningful communication, active listening, and open dialogues contribute to building trust and deepening connections with friends, family, and colleagues. This aligns with Altman & Taylor's sociolinguistic perspective, which highlights that

interpersonal relationships are fostered through meaningful interactions that rely on linguistic nuances to convey trust and understanding.

3.3.2. Role of Gossip in Impression Formation

Gossip emerged as a significant factor in the formation of impressions within interpersonal relationships. The data from the interviews showcased how gossip serves as a means to convey information about individuals' behavior and actions. It plays a role in shaping how people are perceived by their social networks, and it can influence the impressions held by others. Participants described instances where they engaged in gossip to discuss the behavior or decisions of individuals they knew. These discussions often influenced the impressions they formed of those individuals. Gossip contributed to impression formation by providing insights into the actions, motivations, and character of others. It allowed individuals to build a collective understanding of individuals.

3.3.3. Emotional Cognition and Linguistic Processing in Gossip

The data from the interviews provided insights into the role of emotional cognition in mediating social interactions, emphasizing the significance of the insular cortex in processing social emotions, which can influence the nature and outcomes of gossip within social groups. While participants didn't explicitly refer to the insular cortex, they often described the emotional dimensions of gossip. Participants mentioned that gossip isn't solely about conveying factual information; it also involves expressing emotions, opinions, and social judgments. They shared that gossip could evoke empathy, sympathy, anger, or laughter, highlighting the emotional

nuances within gossip conversations. Gossip often conveys not only the actions or decisions of individuals but also the feelings and reactions of those sharing the gossip.

Furthermore, linguistic processing plays a vital role in gossip. Participants' narratives underscored how the choice of language and words can evoke different emotional responses. Expressive language and vivid descriptions enhance the emotional impact of gossip. This aligns with the notion that emotional cognition and linguistic processing are intertwined within gossip, influencing its effectiveness in conveying social intentions and values. This perspective is consistent with Ralph Adolphs' research on "Social Emotion Processing," which provides insights into the role of emotional cognition in mediating social interactions and highlights the significance of the insular cortex in processing social emotions. These findings support the idea that gossip involves emotional dimensions and can influence social interactions through the expression of feelings and social judgments.

Further research

The exploration of gossip, social interaction, and interpersonal relationships provides valuable insights into the intricate dynamics of human communication. However, there remains a wealth of uncharted territory and avenues for further research that can expand our understanding of these fundamental aspects of human interaction.

While our study has shed light on the sociolinguistic aspects of gossip and social interaction, further research can delve into cross-cultural comparisons. Investigating how gossip functions in different cultural contexts can reveal the extent to which sociolinguistic patterns vary

and the impact of cultural norms and values on gossip. For example, a comparative analysis of gossip in collectivist and individualist cultures could yield valuable insights into the role of social bonds and autonomy in shaping gossip dynamics.

It's also important to highlight that the advent of digital communication platforms and social media has dramatically transformed the landscape of interpersonal communication. Future research can explore the impact of technology on the nature and prevalence of gossip. How do online platforms influence the dissemination and reception of gossip? Are there fundamental differences in the sociolinguistic dimensions of online gossip compared to face-to-face interactions? Investigating these questions can provide a comprehensive understanding of the evolving role of gossip in the digital age.

In addition, gossip is not limited to casual social interactions but can also have profound effects on individuals' mental health and well-being. Further research can explore the connections between gossip, psychological processes, and mental health outcomes. For instance, how does being the subject of gossip affect one's self-esteem and mental health? Are there interventions or coping mechanisms that can mitigate the negative effects of harmful gossip? Understanding the intersection of gossip and mental health is a critical area for future investigation. It is not confined to personal relationships but also permeates professional environments too. Research into the role of gossip in organizational culture can uncover its impact on workplace dynamics, employee morale, and productivity. How do rumors and gossip influence decision-making processes within organizations? What strategies can leaders employ to manage and leverage

gossip constructively? Exploring these questions can provide valuable insights into the sociolinguistic dimensions of gossip in professional settings.

Also, for capturing the dynamic nature of gossip and its long-term impact on social relationships, longitudinal studies are essential. These studies can track how gossip patterns evolve over time within specific social networks and examine the enduring effects of gossip on trust, identity, and social bonds. Longitudinal research can also reveal the role of gossip in the formation and dissolution of interpersonal relationships, providing a comprehensive sociolinguistic perspective.

While our study has provided a foundation for understanding these phenomena, there are numerous directions for further research. By exploring cross-cultural variations, technology's influence, mental health implications, organizational dynamics, neuroscience, and longitudinal patterns, researchers can continue to unravel the complexities of human communication and the role of language in shaping our social world. These future investigations will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of gossip and its impact on individuals and society.

4. Conclusions

Human interaction is a complex web of linguistic and social phenomena, with gossip, social interaction, and interpersonal relationships at its core. Through extensive research and participant interviews, this study has explored the intricate sociolinguistic dimensions of gossip, social exchange, and the role of gossip in shaping human relationships. In this section, we

present the key conclusions derived from our investigation, encompassing both theoretical and practical insights.

Our research was guided by the objectives to explore the definitions of gossip, its functions in social bonding, its moral considerations, and its impact on social dynamics. Drawing upon the theoretical frameworks and concepts provided by Altman & Taylor, Feinberg and Willer, Goffman, Rosnow, and others, we delved into the findings to offer a comprehensive understanding of gossip's place in human interaction.

We looked into definitions and found that, yes, gossip has several facets. It serves as a means of sharing information about individuals' lives, actions, and decisions, extending from personal acquaintances to public figures. This aligns with the primary purpose of gossip, which includes information exchange and the fulfillment of social needs. It became evident that participants defined gossip as a vehicle for sharing knowledge, opinions, and observations, emphasizing its wide-ranging topics.

The multifunctional aspect of gossip as both a source of entertainment and a bonding tool became apparent. Our study resonated with Altman and Taylor's perspective that gossip plays a vital role in forging connections and creating interpersonal bonds. Participants recognized gossip as a form of amusement, enabling light-hearted conversations and humorous stories. It was frequently mentioned as a way to bond with friends, family, and acquaintances, serving as a shared topic that initiated discussions and strengthened social connections. Indeed, gossip contributed to relationship-building and reinforced social ties. Yet, we also delved into the

negative impacts and ethical considerations associated with gossip, drawing on Feinberg & Willer's research. Some participants shared experiences where gossip had led to misunderstandings, conflicts, and strained interpersonal relationships. This highlights the moral dimensions of gossip, indicating its capacity to serve as a conduit for the expression of ethical values and judgments.

Our exploration of the transactional nature of social interaction aligned with Homans' view of social behavior as an exchange. The reciprocity within social interactions emerged as a pivotal aspect, where individuals engaged in mutual exchanges of communication, emotions, and actions. This reciprocity contributed to the balance of social rewards and costs, affecting the stability and dynamics of social connections. We also delved into the performative aspects of social interaction, drawing from Goffman's insights. Participants demonstrated their awareness of the performative nature of social interaction and how they strategically managed their identities within interpersonal relationships. This conscious performance was evident in both personal and professional settings, indicating that individuals adapt their presentation of self based on the context.

The study highlighted the role of rumor and gossip in social exchange, echoing Rosnow's perspective. Gossip emerged as an integral part of social interactions, playing pivotal roles in conveying information, shaping perceptions, and mediating conflicts. Our findings demonstrated that gossip and rumor can have both positive and negative impacts on social interactions, reflecting the complexities of social exchanges.

In addition, the study recognized the significant influence of mass media on gossip, as theorized by Niklas Luhmann. Mass media acted as both a source and an amplifier of gossip, shaping the nature, content, and tone of gossip discussions. It was observed that mass media dictated the topics of gossip and contributed to the formation of the gossip landscape.

The foundation of interpersonal relationships, as explored, is rooted in trust-building and mutual understanding. This aligns with Altman & Taylor's sociolinguistic insights, emphasizing the significance of linguistic nuances in fostering deep connections. Trust-building and mutual understanding were consistently underscored as essential components of interpersonal relationships, highlighting the role of meaningful communication and active listening.

The study's exploration of the role of gossip in impression formation revealed that gossip plays a significant part in shaping how individuals are perceived within their social networks. It provides insights into the actions, motivations, and character of individuals, contributing to impression formation by offering a collective understanding of individuals.

Moreover, the study ventured into the realms of emotional cognition and linguistic processing in gossip. Participants described how the choice of language and words could evoke different emotional responses, emphasizing the intertwining of emotional cognition and linguistic processing within gossip.

As we reflect on these findings, it is clear that gossip is not a simplistic act of spreading information; it is a multifaceted social phenomenon intertwined with the nuances of language,

emotions, and identity. Gossip serves as both a mechanism for bonding and a tool for impression management, and its sociolinguistic dynamics play a crucial role in shaping the way individuals relate to one another.

To address the study's objectives, the data collected from interviews and surveys were analyzed, synthesizing the participants' perspectives and providing an in-depth understanding of the complexities of gossip in interpersonal relationships. Our findings underline the sociolinguistic view that gossip is a multifunctional tool, serving both positive and negative roles within social interactions.

In conclusion, this research contributes to the existing body of knowledge regarding gossip and its role in social interactions. Understanding gossip's multifaceted nature is essential, as it affects the way individuals form and maintain interpersonal relationships, convey information, and navigate the intricate web of human connections. Gossip's significance in human communication lies not only in its ability to entertain and bond but also in its power to convey moral values and shape social exchanges. This study has enriched our comprehension of gossip and serves as a foundation for future research exploring the complexities of gossip across different cultural contexts and the ever-evolving landscape of communication in the digital age.

The limitations of the study, as discussed further below, should be acknowledged. A small sample size, potential self-reporting bias, cultural context, and the absence of longitudinal data are important considerations. These limitations offer fertile ground for future research and signal areas where further inquiry is needed.

Evidently, the sociolinguistic study of gossip yields valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of human interactions, expanding our understanding of how language, emotions, and identity converge in the act of sharing information. The implications of this research extend beyond academia, offering a deeper understanding of the intricate tapestry of human connections and the role that gossip plays within it.

Primary sources

During this research we conducted a set of surveys and interviews, their formats are found below in the appendix section.

Limitations of the study

While this study has provided valuable insights into the sociolinguistic dimensions of gossip and its role in interpersonal relationships, several limitations should be acknowledged.

One notable limitation of this study is the relative scarcity of comprehensive research in the domain of interpersonal gossip within the context of social interaction and communication. While our study has made a concerted effort to explore the multifaceted dimensions of gossip and its impact on social dynamics, the existing body of knowledge in this area remains somewhat limited. This dearth of prior research suggests that gossip as a nuanced and multifunctional interpersonal phenomenon has not received the in-depth attention it deserves. Additionally, the existing literature often lacks the depth and granularity necessary for a thorough understanding of the complexities inherent in gossip's role in shaping interpersonal relationships. As such, further

studies and investigations are essential to delve deeper into this subject matter and provide more comprehensive insights into the various aspects of gossip within the realm of social interaction. The difficulty in sourcing a substantial body of literature during the study's literature review phase further underscores the pressing need for more research on this intriguing topic, which undoubtedly plays a substantial role in shaping human connections and social dynamics.

Among the main limitations, it also lies in the sample size and demographics. The study relied on a relatively small sample of seven participants, each with their unique experiences and perspectives. Although their narratives offered rich and diverse insights, it is important to recognize that these findings may not fully capture the broad spectrum of attitudes and behaviors related to gossip within a larger and more diverse population. Moreover, the sample was relatively homogeneous in terms of demographic characteristics, which may limit the generalizability of the findings across diverse cultural and social contexts.

Another limitation worth noting is the potential for self-reporting bias. The study heavily depended on self-reported data, wherein participants shared their thoughts, experiences, and attitudes towards gossip. However, self-reporting can introduce bias as participants may be inclined to provide responses that align with social desirability or societal norms. This bias can mask their genuine thoughts and behaviors regarding gossip. Future studies should consider employing additional data collection methods, such as observational research or social network analysis, to complement self-reporting and enhance the robustness of the findings.

Furthermore, this study was conducted within a specific cultural context, and this narrow focus presents inherent limitations. Gossip is known to exhibit cultural variations, and exploring

it within a single cultural context may not fully encompass the diverse ways in which gossip functions across the globe. To establish a more comprehensive understanding of gossip's sociolinguistic dimensions, future research should consider investigating gossip within various cultural contexts.

The lack of longitudinal data is also a limitation. The study's data collection was based on a one-time process, offering a static snapshot of participants' experiences with gossip. Gossip is a dynamic social phenomenon that evolves over time and can significantly impact relationships. A longitudinal approach, involving multiple data collection points over an extended period, would provide a more nuanced understanding of how gossip unfolds and influences social dynamics.

It's important to acknowledge that, as with any qualitative research, the interpretation of data is subjective. The researchers' analyses and interpretations of participants' responses may be influenced by their personal biases, experiences, or preconceptions. While efforts were made to maintain objectivity, employing intercoder reliability checks or involving multiple researchers to independently analyze data could enhance the credibility of the study.

Ethical considerations are paramount when studying gossip, as it often involves discussions about personal or sensitive information. The study aimed to uphold ethical standards, but the very nature of gossip raises questions about privacy and consent for those who are the subjects of gossip. This ethical dimension warrants ongoing scrutiny and careful navigation in future research.

Additionally, this research had time constraints and budget limitations, which may have influenced the depth of data collection and analysis. While the study made every effort to maximize its rigor within these constraints, additional resources could enable more extensive and comprehensive investigations in the future.

References

- Altman, I., & Taylor, D. A. (1973). *Social penetration: The development of interpersonal relationships*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Baumeister, R. F., Zhang, L., & Vohs, K. D. (2004). Gossip as cultural learning. *Review of General Psychology*, 8(2), 111-121.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods*. Oxford university press.
- Constitución Política de Colombia (1991).
- Current Journal of Applied Science and Technology*, 7 (4), 396-403. DOI:
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The " what" and " why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227-268.
- Dunbar, R. I. (2004). Gossip in evolutionary perspective. *Review of general psychology*, 8(2), 100-110.
- Feinberg, M., & Willer, R. (2012). The moral roots of gossiping. *Psychological Science*, 23(9), 972-980.
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Anchor Books.
- Homans, G. C. (1958). Social behavior as exchange. *American Journal of Sociology*, 63(6), 597-606.
- <https://aisel.aisnet.org/mwais2016/20>
- <https://doi.org/10.1111/fcsr.12276>
- <https://doi.org/10.9734/BJAST/2015/14975>.

- Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B. (2002). *The qualitative researcher's companion*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Jokonya, Osden, (2016)"The Significance of Mixed Methods Research in Information Systems Research" . *MWAIS 2016 Proceedings*. 20.
- Jones, E. E., & Pittman, T. S. (1982). Toward a general theory of strategic self-presentation. *Psychological Perspectives on the Self*, 1(2), 231-262.
- Joshi, A., Kale, S., Chandel, S., & Pal, D. K. (2015). Likert scale: Explored and explained.
- Knapp, M. L., & Vangelisti, A. L. (2000). *Interpersonal communication and human relationships*. Allyn & Bacon.
- Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology*. Sage
- Leavy, P. (2017). *Research design: Quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, arts-based, and community-based participatory research approaches*. Guilford Publications.
- Ley 1480 de 2011, Estatuto del Consumidor.
- Ley 1482 de 2011, Ley de Discriminación Racial o Étnica.
- Ley 1620 de 2013, Ley de Convivencia Escolar.
- Luhmann, Niklas & Cross, Kathleen. (2002). *The Reality of Mass Media*. Bibliovault OAI Repository, the University of Chicago Press.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. Jossey-Bass.

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., Frels, R. K., & Hwang, E. (2016). Mapping Saldana's Coding Methods onto the Literature Review Process. *Journal of Educational Issues*, 2(1), 130-150. <https://doi.org/10.5296/jei.v2i1.8931>

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Sage publications.

Política Pública Nacional de Convivencia y Seguridad Ciudadana. publications. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-4446.2007.00153_10.x

Rosnow, R. L. (2001). Rumor and gossip in interpersonal interaction and beyond: A social exchange perspective.

Rosnow, Ralph & Foster, Eric. (2005). Rumor and Gossip Research. *Psychological Agenda*. 19.

Saldaña, J. (2015). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Sage.

Splichalova, A., & Splichal, S. L. (2016). The role of gossip in constructing public opinion. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 40(2), 123-141.

Spunt, Bob & Adolphs, Ralph. (2017). The Neuroscience of Understanding the Emotions of Others. *Neuroscience Letters*. 693. [10.1016/j.neulet.2017.06.018](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neulet.2017.06.018).

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. *The social psychology of intergroup relations*, 33(47), 74.

Teddlie, C. and Tashakkori, A. (2009) *Foundations of Mixed Methods Research: Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches in the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Sage, London.

Appendixes

APPENDIX A . PARTICIPANTS' INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Can you tell me about your experiences with gossip in your personal or professional life?

How do you define gossip, and what do you think its primary purpose is in human interaction?

Have you ever been in a situation where gossip had a significant impact, either positive or negative?

Do you usually initiate gossip conversations, or do others initiate them with you?

What types of topics do you typically gossip about?

Can you describe a recent gossip conversation you had and what prompted it?

How do you perceive gossip: as a form of entertainment, a way to bond with others, or something else?

Have you ever witnessed gossip leading to misunderstandings or conflicts between people?

How do you think gossip affects interpersonal relationships, whether positively or negatively?

Can you share an example of a time when gossip played a role in strengthening or weakening a relationship?

How does online gossip differ from face-to-face gossip, in your opinion?

Have you ever experienced negative consequences as a result of online gossip, either directed at you or others?

How does gossip manifest in online communities, including social media platforms and forums?

How do you perceive yourself in terms of being a gossipper?

Have you ever changed your behavior because you didn't want to be seen as a gossipper?

How do you believe gossip impacts societal norms, values, or perceptions?

Are there any cultural or regional differences you've noticed in how gossip is perceived or practiced?

Can you share any insights into the role of gossip in specific social or professional settings?

How does gossip manifest in workplace cultures, and what impact does it have on productivity and relationships among colleagues?

Have you observed differences in workplace gossip between industries or professions?

APPENDIX B . PARTICIPANTS' SURVEY

Section 1: Demographics

What is your age?

What is your gender?

- a. Female
- b. Male
- c. Prefer not to say
- d. Non-binary
- e. Other _____

What is your level of education?

- a. Primary school
- b. Bachiller
- c. Higher education
- d. Other

What is your current employment status?

- a. Employed
- b. Unemployed

Do you consider yourself a “chismosa” person?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Section 2: Gossip Habits

How often do you engage in gossip conversations with others?

- a. Never
- b. Ocassionally
- c. Sometimes
- d. Often
- e. Always

Are there specific topics you prefer to gossip about, or do you discuss a wide range of subjects?

- a. Money
- b. Sex
- c. Power
- d. Relationships
- e. Reputation
- f. Celebrities

Do you think gossip is a normal part of human interaction?

- a. Yes
- b. No

How do you feel when you are the subject of gossip?

- a. Amazing
- b. Good
- c. Bad
- d. Horrible
- e. I don't care

Section 3: Perceptions of Gossip

What do you believe are the main reasons for people to gossip?

In your opinion, is gossip generally harmful or harmless?

- a. Harmful
- b. Harmless

Have you ever witnessed gossip leading to conflicts or misunderstandings?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If your answer was yes tell us about it

Do you think gossip serves a purpose in society, such as sharing information or reinforcing social bonds?

- a. Sharing information
- b. Social Interaction
- c. Bonding
- d. It has no purpose

Section 4: Personal Preferences

14. Do you enjoy engaging in gossipy conversations?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Have you ever regretted participating in a gossip conversation?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Do you think gossiping is a way to build or weaken social connections?

- a. Build
- b. Weaken

Section 5: Online Gossip

Do you engage in online gossip, such as discussions on social media or forums?

- a. Yes
- b. No

How often do you engage in online gossip, such as social media discussions or forums?

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

Have you ever experienced negative consequences as a result of online gossip?

- a. Yes
- b. No

APPENDIX C. CONSENT INFORM

Research Study Consent Form

An Exploration of Gossiping as a Prevalent Discursive Genre in Social Interactions

Introduction:

I am inviting you to participate in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take your time to read the following information carefully and ask any questions you may have before deciding whether or not to participate.

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this study is to explore and understand the multifaceted nature of gossip, delving into its social, cultural, and linguistic dimensions. By examining the roles gossip plays in interpersonal relationships, social interactions, and the broader context of societal discourse, we seek to contribute valuable insights to the existing body of knowledge. Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, we aim to uncover the various meanings, social functions, and ethical considerations associated with gossip. The ultimate goal is to enhance our understanding of gossip's impact on human connections and social dynamics, shedding light on its significance in contemporary society. Your participation is crucial to achieving this objective, and we appreciate your willingness to share your thoughts and experiences on this intriguing subject.

Confidentiality:

Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. [Explain how confidentiality will be maintained].

Voluntary Participation:

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to participate, withdraw from the study at any time, or refuse to answer specific questions without penalty.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions about the study or your participation, you can contact vilma.mendozamr@gmail.com

Consent:

I have read and understand the information provided above. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have received satisfactory answers. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Participant's Name (Print): _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____