

**DIGITAL DISCOURSE FORMALITY CRITERIA AND THE SOCIAL FUNCTIONS OF WEB GENRES: A LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS****Aliboyeva Nilufar Mahamatali qizi**Associate-professor, PhD of Kokand State University  
nilufarmuhammadjanovna2405@gmail.com<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20457245>**Abstract**

The rapid expansion of digital communication has transformed traditional patterns of human interaction and created new forms of discourse in virtual environments. This study investigates the criteria of formality in digital discourse and examines the social functions of web genres within contemporary online communication. Using discourse analysis and genre analysis methods, the research explores linguistic, pragmatic, and structural features of communication across various digital platforms, including electronic mail, social networking sites, blogs, and online forums. The findings demonstrate that formality in digital discourse is determined by adherence to linguistic norms, lexical choice, structural organization, and communicative etiquette. Furthermore, web genres facilitate information processing, enhance user navigation, and contribute to effective communication in digital environments. The study highlights the hybrid nature of digital discourse, where formal and informal communicative practices coexist and continuously evolve.

**Keywords:** digital discourse, formality, web genres, discourse analysis, digital communication, web linguistics.

**Introduction**

The digitalization of communication has significantly influenced language use and discourse practices worldwide. The emergence of social media, online forums, blogs, and professional networking platforms has resulted in new communicative environments characterized by multimodality, interactivity, and rapid information exchange. Consequently, scholars have increasingly focused on understanding how language functions within digital spaces.

Digital discourse refers to communicative activities that occur through digital technologies and online platforms. Unlike traditional written discourse, digital discourse combines linguistic, visual, and technological elements, creating a unique communicative environment. Within this environment, the distinction between formal and informal communication has become increasingly complex.

The purpose of this study is to identify the principal criteria of formality in digital discourse and to investigate the social functions performed by web genres. The study addresses the following research questions:

1. What linguistic and pragmatic factors determine formality in digital discourse?
2. How do different digital platforms influence the level of formality?
3. What social functions do web genres perform in digital communication?
4. Literature Review

The concept of discourse was first introduced by Harris (1952), who emphasized the importance of language beyond sentence boundaries. Later studies expanded discourse analysis by incorporating social, cultural, and pragmatic dimensions of communication.

Crystal (2011) argues that internet communication has produced distinctive linguistic patterns that differ considerably from traditional written and spoken language. Similarly, Herring (2007) identifies computer-mediated communication as a hybrid form integrating features of both speech and writing.

Genre theory has also contributed significantly to understanding digital communication. According to Bateman (2008), genres function as cognitive frameworks that help users interpret texts and predict communicative intentions. Web genres provide recognizable conventions that facilitate information processing and navigation within digital environments.

### 3. Methodology

This research employs a qualitative descriptive design based on discourse analysis and genre analysis.

The study analyzes communicative practices across four major digital platforms:

- Electronic mail;
- Professional networking platforms;
- Social networking sites;
- Online forums and blogs.

The data consist of representative examples of digital texts selected according to their communicative purpose and audience characteristics.

The analysis focuses on:

- Linguistic accuracy;
- Lexical selection;
- Address forms;
- Text organization;
- Pragmatic and ethical features.

### 4. Results

The findings reveal that digital discourse exhibits four fundamental characteristics:

#### 4.1 Interactivity

Communication occurs synchronously or asynchronously, enabling immediate feedback and dynamic interaction.

#### 4.2 Multimodality

Digital discourse incorporates text, images, videos, hyperlinks, emojis, and audio content.

#### 4.3 Hybridization

Digital communication combines features of written and spoken language.

#### 4.4 Compactness

Users frequently employ abbreviations, acronyms, and concise expressions.

The analysis identified five major indicators of formality:

- Compliance with grammatical norms;

- Formal lexical choices;
- Appropriate forms of address;
- Structured textual organization;
- Observance of communicative etiquette.

Professional platforms such as LinkedIn and academic networks demonstrate higher levels of formality than social media platforms such as Instagram and Telegram.

#### 5. Discussion

The results indicate that formality in digital discourse is context-dependent and influenced by communicative goals, audience expectations, and platform conventions. Unlike traditional discourse, digital communication often demonstrates a blending of formal and informal styles.

Web genres serve important cognitive and social functions by reducing uncertainty and facilitating communication. Genre conventions enable users to identify communicative purposes quickly and navigate digital environments more effectively.

The findings support previous studies suggesting that digital discourse should be viewed as a continuum rather than a strict dichotomy between formal and informal communication.

#### 6. Conclusion

Digital discourse represents a dynamic communicative phenomenon characterized by interactivity, multimodality, and stylistic hybridity. Formality within digital communication is determined by linguistic, structural, and pragmatic factors.

Web genres play a crucial role in organizing information, supporting navigation, and facilitating communication in online environments. Future research should investigate the impact of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence and algorithm-driven communication systems, on discourse formality and genre evolution.

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