



Education Quarterly Reviews

Putra, I. M. C. A., & Yusra, K. (2025). Forms of Accommodation in 8 Mile Movie: How the Characters Implement Communication Accommodation Theory as an Affective Function. *Education Quarterly Reviews*, 8(1), 230-243.

ISSN 2621-5799

DOI: 10.31014/aior.1993.08.01.569

The online version of this article can be found at:
<https://www.asianinstituteofresearch.org/>

Published by:
The Asian Institute of Research

The *Education Quarterly Reviews* is an Open Access publication. It may be read, copied, and distributed free of charge according to the conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license.

The Asian Institute of Research *Education Quarterly Reviews* is a peer-reviewed International Journal. The journal covers scholarly articles in the fields of education, linguistics, literature, educational theory, research and methodologies, curriculum, elementary and secondary education, higher education, foreign language education, teaching and learning, teacher education, education of special groups, and other fields of study related to education. As the journal is Open Access, it ensures high visibility and the increase of citations for all research articles published. The *Education Quarterly Reviews* aims to facilitate scholarly work on recent theoretical and practical aspects of education.



ASIAN INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH
Connecting Scholars Worldwide

Forms of Accommodation in 8 Mile Movie: How the Characters Implement Communication Accommodation Theory as an Affective Function

I Made Chandra Arya Putra¹, Kamaludin Yusra²

^{1,2} English Education Department, The University of Mataram, Mataram, Indonesia

Correspondence: I Made Chandra Arya Putra, English Education Department, The University of Mataram, Mataram, Indonesia. Tel: 082236341404. E-mail: arya22ptr@gmail.com

Abstract

Albeit there are several studies invoking CAT as a framework, there are still limited studies wherein analyses the motives through the accommodation's forms. Therefore, this research examined the affective motives by analyzing the accommodation's forms in the characters of 8 Mile considering socio-historical context. To gather the data, this research took several stages including watching the movie, dialogue transcription, conversation listing, and utterances symbolization. Data analysis, moreover, consists of data reduction, data display, and data conclusion. This research found that downward convergence becomes the most frequent form with no upward divergence. In a circumstance where upward divergence is expected, i.e. conflict situation, the white character does the trans-convergence. This novel finding indicates that according to his social value, the white character with SE tends to trans-converge to AAVE dialect in order to achieve social validation and self-verification. Moreover, asymmetrical accommodation occurs within greater extent than symmetrical accommodation. This signifies that there appears an imbalance of perceived value to particular cultural background. Further, for both modality and duration, multimodality appears 24 occurrences pursued by unimodality in 21 occurrences. Finally, long-term accommodation happens with greater frequency than short-term accommodation. The former was 41 occurrences and the latter with only 4 occasions.

Keywords: Communication Accommodation Theory, Convergence, Trans-Convergence, Divergence, Affective Function

1. Introduction

Studies on the communication accommodation are thoroughly not new. There are several intercultural communication studies that invoke communication accommodation theory in various contexts such as family, health care, interethnic settings, diasporic communities, and intergenerational contexts. As far as the existing literature indicates, there is limited study that employs accommodation forms in order to examine the motives of accommodation. As such, this article examined the affective motives by analyzing the forms of accommodation in the characters of 8 Mile movie qualitatively, taking socio-historical context into consideration. To add to that, Dragojevic et al. (2016) argue that there are several forms of accommodation in regard to the social value of the

culture, degree, symmetry, modality, and duration. By invoking the accommodation forms, the researchers argue that the affective motives of accommodation can be explored further. This presumption, further, is validated since this research reveals that the motives of characters' accommodation stance influence the accommodation forms. Nevertheless, the researchers discovered thought-provoking motive that leads to the novel forms of accommodation.

In addition, Palomares et al. (2016) argue that individuals often do not manifest his or her personal identities in the interaction but rather interact based on their membership social categories. However, the researchers in this article claim that the individual's membership of cultural background will not become an evaluation in the intercultural communication if that cultural background does not bring forth any advantages. This presumption, moreover, will be identified via qualitative research with the framework of accommodation theory. Qualitative research has persistently focused on the interaction behavior in its natural setting (Gallois et al., 2016a); thus, the researchers posit the best way to examine the interaction is through qualitative research.

One example of intercultural communication is the encounter between white people and black people community in America. The black people community has its own language variety called African American Vernacular English (hereafter AAVE). This language variety, moreover, has several features that differ from standard English and thus express a sense of cultural distinctiveness to those outside of the community (Holmes, 2013). As stated by Zhang & Giles (2018) knowing how people from different cultures communicate is the key to a good communication. However, People from those two different cultures often ignore the appropriate way of intercultural communication. This kind of communication encounter, additionally, can be seen not only in real life but also in movies.

One movie that contains intercultural communication is 8 Mile movie. This movie was written by Scott Silver and reveals the story of the white character, named Jimmy Smith Jr. who wants to immerse himself in African-American culture in order to gain acceptance and enhance his rap career. Throughout the movie, there are many occasions in which Jimmy engages in numerous interactions with individuals of African-American culture. According to Putra et al. (2024) movies tend to imitate the language phenomena in the real life and therefore can be analyzed linguistically.

Communication Accommodation Theory (henceforth CAT) is relevant to the study of intercultural communication (Gallois et al., 2005). Communication can manage and mediate the interpersonal or intergroup connection and thus its adjustment is important to make that connection even better (Gasiorek, 2016). Additionally, the adjustment can take both verbal or non-verbal language when they like the interlocutor or have personal interest, otherwise, it also can happen in unconscious way (Holmes, 2013; Dragojevic et al., 2016). Moreover, CAT can be treated in three respects, namely convergence, divergence, and maintenance. Convergence is a condition in which a speaker reduces the language difference to his interlocutor. Divergence, on the other hand, is a condition in which speaker deliberately increases the language differences while communicating. Maintenance, moreover, is a condition where speaker remains or does not adjust his/her speech style to the interlocutor (Wardhaugh & M. Fuller, 2015; Elhami, 2020).

There are several studies which followed the framework of CAT in order to analyze the interaction between speakers. As such, these researches mainly focused on the accommodation strategy in families (Mahadhir et al., 2014; Rittenour et al., 2018), health care (Farzadnia & Giles, 2015; Cavallaro et al., 2016), and interethnic setting (Uly & Nurhayati, 2024). The study from Mahadhir et al. (2014), for instance, postulated that the discourse management strategy is used for the multiracial family members to regulate the topic so it does not invoke conflict. Within interethnic communication, in addition, Uly & Nurhayati (2024) found that convergence is utilized in the place they migrated. There is only one study wherein its focuses on the motives of accommodation (Nabila & Munir, 2020). This study, however, did not take socio-historical context into a consideration.

Another studies, on the other hand, treated CAT as a means to scrutinize the communication dynamics in diasporic community (Dorjee et al., 2011; Wu et al., 2023), family (Dumanig et al., 2013), and intergenerational communication (Omori et al., 2024). Dorjee et al. (2011) and Wu et al. (2023) have analyzed the diasporic

communication using CAT as framework. Both works elucidated that the indigenous accommodating their communication style is perceived more positively. As such, high-quality contact between the indigenous and the diasporic can enhance the confidence while reducing the negative perception regarding intergroup communication. Despite the valuable support provided by previous studies for CAT, the researchers determined that this field requires further expanded qualitative research. To date, there is limited study which analyses the communication accommodation motives, especially with the consideration of socio-historical context through the forms of accommodation. In accordance with the previous studies, therefore, this research examined the affective motives by analyzing the forms of accommodation in the characters of 8 Mile taking socio-historical context into consideration.

Prior to the research method, the researchers consider that the theoretical framework of CAT along with its forms and affective motives need to be explained. As such, in an effort to analyze the affective function of CAT in the movie dialogue, the researchers invoke the forms of accommodation. It is considered important to support in-depth analysis of affective motive of accommodation. Referring to the accommodation's form, this research can analyze the affective motive that is correlated with the social value, symmetry, modality, and duration as regulated in the forms of accommodation. In the next following sections, consequently, the researchers indulge the reader with the further explanation of CAT and its relational aspect to support this research.

1.2 Communication Accommodation Theory

Speech accommodation theory (henceforward SAT) was the first name for CAT (Zhang & Giles, 2018). In its first stage, SAT primary focused on how, when, and why people adjust their speech behavior to appear more similar to the interlocutor. This speech similarity process, further, is called as convergence (H. Giles et al., 2023). SAT, then, changed into CAT because of its deeper focus on the communication process which may involve the analysis of intergroup communication and the communication between generations (Gallois et al., 2005). In the intergroup communication, the group salience often emerges resulting in the speaker accentuating his or her communication style to make his or her seem different (Palomares et al., 2016). In this second stage, additionally, H. Giles (2016) asserts that CAT focuses more on the way speakers make social discrepancy so called divergence and non-accommodation.

Both first and second stages, however, focused on the objective behavior of the speaker to accommodate (or non-accommodate) his or her communication style. In its third stage, for that reason, CAT focused on the subjective parameters of communication adjustment (H. Giles et al., 2023; H. Giles, 2016). Along with that, the construction of motives for accommodation happened in this stage which asserts that speaker accommodates because of affective and cognitive motives. In the fourth stage, further, CAT focuses on the intergenerational communication along with over- and under-accommodation.

In order to adjust the communication style, there are three ways speakers can use namely convergence, divergence, or maintenance (Dragojevic et al., 2016). **Convergence** is a circumstance in which the speaker increases the similarity of the communication behavior to the interlocutor in order to gain approval or to become similar. Moreover, this kind of adjustment is utilized when the speaker wants to be accepted in particular generation or culture. On the other hand, if the speaker desires dissimilarity to the interlocutor's communication style, the speaker diverges the language. Thus, **divergence** refers to a state where the speaker decreases the similarity of the communication style deliberately. Moreover, there is a strategy that is similar to the divergence. This strategy leads the speaker to persist his/her communication style neither converging nor diverging, this strategy so called **maintenance** (Gallois et al., 2005). What is more, those communication adjustments can be manifested in various forms. Those forms, further, can be beneficial resources to analyze the dialect change through the accommodation form taking duration into consideration (Dragojevic et al., 2016), as well as the perceived value of various cultures in intercultural communication.

1.3 Forms of Accommodation

The types of accommodation can take multiple forms influenced by social value, degree, symmetry, modality, and the duration of the behavior. In agreement with social value, convergence and divergence can take either upward or downward. Furthermore, they can be described as full or partial taking degree into a consideration. Moreover, it can be symmetrical or asymmetrical accommodation in the viewpoint of symmetry. Then, unimodal or multimodal in the case of modality. The last is short-term or long-term in terms of duration (see Dragojevic et al., 2016 for further reading).

Based on the social value, both convergence and divergence can take form of upward or downward. **Upward convergence** is characterized by the speaker from non-standard accent adapting the communication style of a standard accent speaker. For instance, the French-Canadian worker adopts his/her more prestige English speaker manager (see Sachdev & Giles, 2005). However, when the speaker from standard accent adjusts his/her communication style to non-standard accent is called as **downward convergence**. In addition, **upward divergence** points out to a situation where a speaker with standard accent accentuates his/her style of communication while communicating with non-standard speaker. In a contrasting manner, a circumstance wherein a speaker from non-standard variety accentuates their communication style while communicate with a standard accent speaker is termed as **downward divergence** (Dragojevic et al., 2016; Elhami, 2020).

The speaker adjusting the communication style to his or her interlocutor can accommodate fully or partially. **Full adjustment** indicates that the speaker uses entirely different language for the purpose of making himself or herself similar to the interlocutor. Nevertheless, when the speaker only adjusts for a few words or phrases, it is called a **partial adjustment**. The partial adjustment, moreover, is different from code-switching taking social, psychological, and cultural significance into consideration (Sachdev & Giles, 2005). In addition, there are certain circumstances wherein the speaker adjusts partially because of particular constrain such as his or her ability in the hearer's language. As a result, the speaker with inadequate ability to use the hearer's language will tend to adjust partially (Dragojevic et al., 2016).

The speaker's adjustment can also be investigated in the scope of symmetry, i.e. **symmetrical accommodation** and **asymmetrical accommodation**. The former happens when both speakers adjust their speech style reciprocally. This type of accommodation, further, can be seen in the intercultural communication whereby both groups perceive interdependency with each other. Further, symmetrical accommodation triggers the positive language climate within the language groups in society. However, the latter is a condition within which there is one speaker who converge and the other does not, resulting in negative language climate; thus, can be termed also as unidirectional accommodation (Farzadnia & Giles, 2015). Asymmetrical accommodation, furthermore, typically be found when a convergence which is directed toward someone who has a greater power.

The communication adjustment that is carried out by the speaker can emerge either in one dimension or more than one dimension within a certain time. A circumstance when the adjustment only involves one variable or dimension, for example only the accent, it is called as **unimodal accommodation**. However, **multimodal accommodation** is when a speaker adjusts more than one dimension, for example the accent, vocabulary, or any non-verbal language (Song & Shan, 2014). In relation to its time, **short-term accommodation** occurs temporarily and only within one social interaction. On the other hand, **long-term accommodation** occurs continuously over time. The long-term accommodation, therefore, can lead to a dialect or language change for the speaker who accommodates.

All of the accommodation forms, to sum up, can be utilized to analyze the specific motive of communication accommodation that is undertaken by the speaker. For instance, to have insight into the most frequent forms of accommodation in terms of social value, the researchers are aware of the higher-valued culture within one conversation; thus, the speaker converges to secure social rewards (Dragojevic et al., 2016). In addition, this principle also applies in terms of symmetrical and asymmetrical accommodation. Understanding the distribution of accommodation symmetry, the researchers are able to construct the inference about the interdependency (or dependency) among cultures. Within this vein, M. Giles et al. (2021) found that the interactants tend to accommodate when the interdependency is perceived as high. Conversely, the interactants perceiving de-interdependency tend to be less accommodative to the. Consequently, analyzing the forms of accommodation serves as a means to assist the researchers in examining the affective motives of CAT.

1.4 Affective Motives of CAT

From its origin, “affect” means to have an influence on someone or something (Editors of Cambridge University Press, 2009). Furthermore, Merriam-Webster (n.d) states that affective means relating to (or influencing) someone’s feelings. Holmes (2013) also stated that when people communicate one and another in order to express a feeling, then they use language’s affective function. Given the context of CAT, to add to that, affective function of CAT is defined as a function to make the interlocutor like or feel sympathy for the speaker by appearing similar or likeable (Gallois et al., 2005; Dragojevic et al., 2016).

Following Dragojevic et al. (2016) the affective function of CAT can be represented as cooperative accommodation or non-cooperative accommodation. The speaker who seeks for the approval of his/her interlocutor tends to become communicatively more similar to the discussant. Furthermore, by converging the communication style, the speaker desires the social reward. Subsequently, someone who wants to be accepted by cooperating in the communication style does the **cooperative accommodation**. However, **non-cooperative accommodation** is derived from the desire to emphasize the distinctiveness and to differentiate from one’s communication style. In this similar vein, Gallois et al. (2005) described the non-cooperative accommodation is utilized when the speaker desires to show dissatisfaction to his/her interlocutor.

Regarding this matter, Nabila & Munir (2020) discovered that the classroom setting also utilizes the affective motives of communication accommodation. Cooperative accommodation with affective motive has a tendency to be utilized to build the closeness between students and teachers and to avoid the social distance between them. Building the closeness along with avoiding the social distance, teacher ensures the student feels less nervous in classroom conversation. However, previous study examined the communication accommodation motives in the classroom interaction and did not examine its forms. As such, there appears a question about how do the affective motives influence the accommodation’s forms exhibited by the characters in 8 Mile movie, considering the socio-historical context of the film? This research question is supporting the suggestion by (Gallois et al., 2016b), who assert that analyzing accommodation in different contexts and methodology is required for advancing theoretical development. With respect to analyzing the movie dialogues, the researchers took several research procedures, as elaborated in the next section.

2. Method

This study aims to discover the motives of accommodation in the 8 Mile movie through the forms of accommodation that are used by the character. Therefore, this research implemented the qualitative research method since qualitative research method tries to discover the motive of phenomena (Morissan, 2019). Additionally, Tracy (2013) asserts that qualitative research method is a useful tool for examining the social issues such as ethnicity and race. Therefore, according to these experts, the qualitative research method is a useful method in order to discover the characters’ communication accommodation throughout the movie.

Within similar vein, Gallois et al. (2016a) stated that mainly research for CAT was conducted in experimental studies. According to them, on the other hand, qualitative research is important in CAT framework because it emphasizes linguistic behavior in situ (within the natural setting). Further, sociolinguistics’ scholars often use qualitative study with CAT framework to analyze the language changes indicating social group’s linguistic movement whether it converges to or diverges from (Gallois et al., 2016a). As a result, the data in this research were not in the form of numerical data.

2.1 Data Collection and Analysis

All the of data, which were in the form of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences from the characters’ conversation, were obtained from several stages. Firstly, the researchers watched the movie in order to comprehend the story line. Secondly, the researchers transcribed the movie dialogue into written discourse to ease the analysis process.

Then, the researchers listed the conversation which contains the communication accommodation. Finally, the researchers symbolized the conversation. These stages facilitated researchers to analyze the data.

In order to analyze the data, the researchers applied the theory from Miles & Huberman as stated in Morissan (2019). There are three stages in order to analyze the data. Firstly, the researchers reduced the data. All of the unnecessary data, therefore, were neglected. Secondly, the researchers displayed the data. The last stage is data conclusion in which the researchers associate the theories and the research result.

3. Results

This research applied Dragojevic et al. (2016) with regard to exploring the forms of linguistic accommodation within the chosen movie. With this theory, further, the researchers examined whether the character from higher social prestige will converge or diverge and vice versa. On the other hand, the researchers did not examine the full or partial accommodation. It is because the characters of the movie utilize one language with different dialect. Additionally, there are 68 speech events throughout the movie. Further, the communication between SE speaker (Jimmy) and AAVE speakers (Jimmy's friends and rivals) appeared as much as 45 conversations.

Given the **social value** of accommodation forms, SE speaker converges downwardly as much as 26 times. From affective perspective, SE speaker wants himself to be accepted in the African-American culture. Extract 1 demonstrates how white person in this movie tries to converge downwardly to the African-American people.

EXTRACT 1 (00:15:37)

Jimmy : Yo, don't tell nobody I'm living back here^v, **man**^
 Wink : **Aight, dawg**. What happened last night I heard you got caught out. People (*are*) saying some fucked up shit.
 Jimmy : Yeah?
 Wink : Yeah.
 Wink : Man why (*are*) you still going to The Shelter, **dawg**? There's nobody there but a bunch of clowns.

Jimmy, in this exchange, converges to the AAVE dialect because of the double negative feature. Double negative, moreover, can be marked on the auxiliary and indefinite pronoun (Green, 2002). In the SE, the double negative means that the sentence has a positive meaning. Jimmy, which comes from the white community, utilizes this feature to communicate with the AAVE speaker. This means that Jimmy wants to be accepted in the African-American society by adjusting his interaction style to be more similar.

In an attempt to be accepted, the SE speaker does not only converge downwardly, but also does the trans-convergence. The trans-convergence can be depicted when the SE speaker wants to be regarded as the one who comes from the same cultural background as he regarded himself and thus his anger is validated. One conversation of trans-convergence is presented in extract 2.

EXTRACT 2 (01:09:28)

Future : Jimmy, you know Papa Doc won last week, so he'll be defending his title. You gotta try to take that shit man. You win battles, you get respect
 Jimmy : I don't give a fuck^v, man^[^]. I'm sick of you thinking you know what's best for me, **dawg**^[^]. You **ain't** my fucking father. **Imma** grown man.
 Future : Look, Jimmy--]
 Jimmy : --[Look, nothing! Fuck you, I told you not to **fuckin'** sign me up!
 Future : Yo, what the fuck so you wanna fight me now?
 Jimmy : Yo, you **ain't** the future of shit

In this scene, Jimmy has a high-tension of exchange with Future. He, furthermore, does not do the upward divergence given that he comes from the higher cultural value. However, he converges to the AAVE speech style by using its feature *ain't*. Further, he also applies the structure of AAVE that is *Imma* and he accentuates his

accent. Given the affective function as a consideration, this indicates that Jimmy wants his anger and utterance to be validated by the targeted culture; thus, he trans-converges his speech style.

Conversely, this movie's conversation also shows us that the African-American people refuse the outgroup member to join them by diverge downwardly. This kind of divergence highlight a point that some of African-American speakers realize that there is no urgent prominence in converging to the higher social valued dialect. Extract of the movie dialogue number 3 demonstrates how downward divergence occurs within the movie.

EXTRACT 3 (00:03:24)

Men on the hall : The fuck^v, **man**[^]. Who the fuck is you, **nigga**? Where's you going?
Jimmy : Backstage. I'm in the battle.

In this scene, two men in the hall use the feature of AAVE especially the sentence structure. The subject-verb agreement of the utterance does not follow the SE pattern and is typically common in AAVE. Moreover, the use of the addressee term *nigga* in this utterance clearly to show identification of one's cultural background. However, Jimmy is from white culture and thus this greeting is clearly to emphasize that Jimmy does not belong to them.

In addition to the previous extract, there appears also a circumstance in which the African-American speaker adjusts their communication style to white people. They do this in order to show the empathy toward SE speaker. This finding is in line with the theory from Dragojevic et al. (2016) that invokes the initial orientation as the factor of decision whether the speaker will accommodate or non-accommodate.

EXTRACT 4 (01:24:54)

Sol : What's up, man? What the hell is happened to you?
Jimmy : I'm fine--]
Sol : --[Wink said crazy **shi**^v, man[^].

In this extract, Jimmy's friends are worried about Jimmy's condition. Then, one of his friends named Sol asks Jimmy *what's up, man?* which follows the sentence structure of SE; However, throughout the movie, all the characters always use the structure of AAVE. As a result, it can be seen that the upward convergence in this movie's dialogue is utilized in order to show the empathy to the hearer which comes from the culture that has higher social prestige.

The forms of accommodation in regard to the social value illustrate us that there is an imbalance between the value of the culture in the interaction. One culture is regarded as higher while the counterpart is lower. To add to that, the **symmetry of accommodation** shows us the perceived cultural value of the exchange. The symmetrical accommodation implies that there is a balanced perception of interlocutors in regard to the prestige of the culture; thus, there is downward convergence and upward convergence simultaneously as extract 5 illustrates.

EXTRACT 5 (00:04:48)

Jimmy : Yo, can I get some fuckin' privacy here^v, **man**?[^]
Future : Alright, c'mon. My bad, man.
Jimmy : If something's gonna happen with this shit, it needs to happen now
Future : I feel you. I know exactly what you (**are**) talking about

In this speech, Jimmy accommodates his communication style to the AAVE dialect in the level of accent and pronunciation. Jimmy, furthermore, change the pronounce of *fucking* /'fʌkɪŋ/ to *fuckin'* /'fʌkɪn/. On the other hand, Jimmy's interlocutor, Future, also converges his communication style to SE dialect. He uses alright with a standard pronunciation instead of just saying aight' like the AAVE typical. However, this symmetrical accommodation only occurs temporarily.

On the contrary, there are also conversations wherein one of the speakers converges while the counterpart diverges. As a consequence, this leads to the asymmetrical accommodation. In this movie there are 44 conversations to which the characters accommodate asymmetrically while communicate with the interlocutor. The extract number 6 demonstrate how asymmetrical accommodation is carried out in the exchange.

EXTRACT 6 (00:19:01)

- Jimmy : What (is) up, Manny?
 Manny : You **was** late today, Smith.
 Jimmy : Yeah, it wasn't my fault. My car wouldn't start--]
 Manny : --[It **ain't** never your fault. I don't wanna hear.
 Jimmy : I guess **proolly** isn't the best time I really need some extra shift, man--]
 Manny : --[Are you shittin' me? You just started working here.

In the exchange above, Jimmy converges his language to AAVE by the deletion of *be* in his first utterance. However, his interlocutor, Manny, diverges his response. He emphasizes the difference between them by using the feature of AAVE, that is the non-standard verb agreement *you was late today, Smith*. In the next following utterances, Manny emphasizes their distinctiveness to a greater extent by using another feature of AAVE, which is the negative form of *ain't*. This kind of conversation is considered as asymmetrical accommodation since one party converges and another, however, diverges.

In **modality** perspective, the adjustment in someone's communication can be either unimodality or multimodality. In the extract 7 below the researchers provide one conversation in which the character only adjusts one element.

EXTRACT 7 (00:59:33)

- Sol : Dawg, we sign a deal, you can take the mother fucking benefits. We (**are talking**) Bentleys and **Benjamins**, not blue cross --]
 Future : --[I don't give a fuck about that, Man. I swear I wanna hear Three One Third on the box, you know what I'm sayin', one of them songs on JLB --]
 DJ Iz : --[All we need is to save that shi' up and put it into savings bonds and build our own stu --]
 Future : --[Saving bonds--]
 Sol: --[Lemme ask you some questions. How the fuck are we brothers?
 Jimmy : All we ever do is talk(**ing**) shit! "*we need find bitches and phat rides, we need to invest in savings bonds, we need to get our songs on JLB*" Shut the fuck up! And we never do shit about **nothin'**. We're still broke and live at home with our mums. **Imma outta** here, I'll catch you guys later.

In this conversation, Sol, Future, and DJ Iz talk in AAVE dialect communication style. It can be seen by the use of slang "*benjamins*" in Sol's first utterance which, according to Widawski (2015), means money. However, in the last utterance of this exchange, Jimmy converges his language to the AAVE dialect. Further, he utilizes only the non-standard structure which becomes the typical in AAVE dialect. Jimmy uses double negative never do shit about *nothin'* in his sentence.

Assuming that Jimmy converges his structure as well as the accent, he then converges with multimodal. This multimodal accommodation Extract number 8 provides the example of multimodality accommodation within the movie dialogue.

EXTRACT 8 (00:26:48)

- Future : Yo, Rabbit, what's happen in that **damn hood**^v, **man**[^]--]
 Jimmy : --[Yo, just a short, man. Chill out^v
 Sol : I **ain't** getting back to tha' piece of shit. It's a death trap
 DJ Iz : I think Jimmy's mum **trynna** kill '**im**
 Sol: She's so **God damn** --]
 Jimmy : --[Hey don't **be saying** shit about my mom, **man**. I hear everything
 Sol : --[fine.
 Sol : He (*is*) a ninja now.

In this extract, Jimmy accommodates his communication style to his friends' communication style. Further, he uses the accent and also the sentence structure of AAVE dialect. The use of *chill out* also indicates that Jimmy converges with the African-American culture. In *Hey don't be saying shit about my mom, man. I hear everything*, Jimmy wants to emphasize that Jimmy does not want his friend to talk about his mother regularly or repeatedly.

The conversation accommodation, to add to that, has the potential to be either short-term or long-term if take the **duration** as the evaluation. The exchange of this movie reveals that the short-term accommodation is implemented to show empathy to the interlocutor as extract number 9 exemplifies.

EXTRACT 9 (01:22:04)

Manny : **Are** you alright?
 Jimmy : I feel down some steps
 Manny : You've been doing much better here. Still want those extra shifts?
 Jimmy : Yeah
 Manny : You got them. I need you to work tonight.
 Jimmy : Tonight?
 Manny : Is that a problem?
 Jimmy : No problem
 Manny : Good (...) get back to work

In the first utterance of this conversation, Manny uses the typical feature of SE which follows the grammatical rule although mainly uses the AAVE non-standard grammatical form (see extract number 6). He does this in order to accommodate his communication style to Jimmy to show his empathy. Nevertheless, at the end of this communication, Manny uses the accent of AAVE dialect. Therefore, this is regarded as short-term accommodation because the adjustment only happens for a short time.

The adjustment that happens for a long time, conversely, is called as long-term accommodation. The long-term accommodations in this movie are mainly employed by the white character. Extract number 10 highlights the way white character continuously utilizes the feature of AAVE in his rap style.

EXTRACT 10 (00:55:16)

Jimmy is trying to rap in his work place

Jimmy : Hey, why (*are*) you fuckin' with the gay guy, G?

In this rap battle, Jimmy also uses the feature of AAVE. He uses the call G. This call is used to mark the secrecy call between the member of African-American culture (Widawski, 2015). Furthermore, Jimmy utilizes this to show his membership and belonging to the group of African-American culture. He converges in every part of his rap battle and communication with his fellow worker. Therefore, this accommodate is viewed as long-term accommodation.

From all the forms of accommodation that have highlighted, some data show that by accommodating the communication style, the speaker desires social reward (see extracts number 1, 5, 6, and 10). However, as datum number 2 demonstrates, the speaker also accommodates their speaking style to show anger and he wants their anger to become validated by the culture of black people. Affective function, in contrast, is utilized also to diverge the conversational approach to the interlocutor (see data numbers 3 and 6). For this reason, the researchers assume that the general discussion is required in order to do in-depth analysis.

4. General Discussion

Dragojevic et al. (2016) assert that the form of accommodation may vary, firstly, because of the social value of the language. Those variations of social value are upward divergence, upward convergence, downward divergence, and downward convergence. In the movie entitled 8 Mile, the most frequent form of accommodation is downward convergence consisting of 26 occurrences. Then, this is followed by downward divergence in quantity on 22 occasions. Further, for upward convergence occurs in as much as only 3 conversations. Upward divergence, furthermore, does not appear within the conversation of the movie. In the viewpoint of affective function, the desire of SE speakers to be acknowledged by the black people community becomes the reason of why downward convergence is the most frequent form of accommodation.

The predominance of downward convergence in this movie contrasts with the findings from Taqavi & Rezaei (2021). Albeit previous study did not invoke CAT as a framework, the result of their study is close related to the

way people choose language variation to communicate in regard to the perception of social value. Further, the previous study has attested that when Azerbaijani bilinguals in Iran want to be perceived as an educated people, the higher variety of languages is favoured. As such, some of bilinguals contended that when they are using lower variety, they will be judged as low-class people and have low-level of education. As a result, it can be concluded that the choice of the dominant language is based on the societal pressure. Opposed to the previous study, recent study shows that the speaker might be accommodate or choose lower prestige of language to communicate. The white character in this movie named Jimmy chooses to accommodate his communication style to African-American language wherein this language variety is a lower variety. According to Dragojevic et al. (2016), someone who adjusts to socially marked communicative behaviour, such as dialect, can be motivated by the intention to signal the shared group identity and thus categorized as affective motive. Consequently, the researchers postulated that the language choice to accommodate is affected by the societal pressure or personal intention.

The adjustment to the higher prestige of language can be manifested in upward convergence. The upward convergence in this movie, to add to that, is under the theory of group-identity accommodation. According to Bernhold & Giles (2020) group-based identity is an adjustment of communication that emerges when one of the "family member" belong to another social group which is not shared with other members. The multi-ethnic and multi-religions solidarity, further, can be constructed by taking group-based identity accommodation into evaluation. For this reason, the upward convergence is germane to the finding of this research which members of the rap community who converge upwardly to Jimmy want to show solidarity of their shared membership albeit in intergroup (i.e. multi-ethnic) communication. Conversely, there is no occasion for upward divergence is because the SE speaker perceives that there is no point in doing that. On the contrary, it may lead to the prevention of his goal to be accepted in the black people community.

There are certain circumstances wherein the speaker does not diverge upwardly to the interlocutor, albeit there is a negative sentiment to the interlocutor's belonging group. For example, in the condition that requires the role-governed such as the interview of scholarship (see Palomares et al., 2016 for further reading). Moreover, upward divergence does not emerge in this movie dialogue when SE speaker is angry toward the AAVE speaker. However, according to Gasiorok & Giles (2013), speaker will non-accommodate or diverge his or her speech style to signal disrespect or anger to the interlocutor in a conflict situation. Since intergroup relation is the key predictor for the emergence of divergence (see Palomares et al., 2016) the conversation between white character (SE speaker) and the black characters in this movie indicates that this does not invoke the intergroup relation between interlocutors.

Equally important, if two cultures have been involved in violence event in the past, the speaker tends to diverge from one and another to highlight group identity. In this vein, to achieve group distinctiveness, speaker is likely to consider group vitality subjectively consisting the reflection of group's status, demographic, and institutional support (Giles et al., 2021; Dragojevic et al., 2016; Gallois et al., 2005). This construction asserts that the speaker tends to non-accommodate including diverge upwardly. The character of SE speaker (higher prestige) in this movie, on the contrary, accommodate his speech style in the conflict situation due to his self-need toward the lower prestige group.

The white identity of SE speaker in this movie does not bring any advantage (Wang, 2021) and thus he desires other people to perceive and verify him as an African-American person. Moreover, as Franzese (2013) states, the self-need for verification can influence how people behave. Self-verification itself refers to the desire of individual who wants other people to perceive himself or herself as the way he or she perceives himself or herself (Talaifar & Swann, 2020). What is more, the social categorization of the speaker, i.e. ethnic group, can be measured by the language variety that he or she utilizes (Dragojevic et al., 2019).

From the communication accommodation standpoint, this can be interpreted as trans-convergence. Trans-convergence, hence, points out under which an individual acknowledges himself or herself as the part of one particular culture and tries to converge further despite certain condition. This, further, is feasible when an individual desires other people to identify himself or herself as a part of a culture that he or she converges to. This new discovery validates the researchers' former assumption that the individual's group membership will not be evaluated in intergroup communication if it does not provide any benefits, and thus, the conflict between two

people from two different groups might be accommodate one and another taken self-need as the greater consideration than the past or current relation of the group.

Apart from the social value, another form of accommodation can be in the form of its symmetry. Asymmetrical accommodation becomes the most frequent form of accommodation with total 44 occurrences, followed by symmetrical accommodation with only 1 occurrence. This distribution discrepancy, further, shows us that there is an imbalance perception toward one social group and another in this movie. Considering its social relation, following Gallois et al. (2005), vitality becomes the strongest reason for social prestige imbalance. There exist structural factors that consist of status, demography, and institutional support that influence the establishment of vitality. According to these three factors, it is noticeable that the SE speaker has higher social prestige in practice, and as Dragojevic et al. (2016) attest, there is an expectation that speakers of lower social prestige will converge toward those of higher prestige; however, AAVE speakers in this movie diverge more, even though the SE speaker converges his speech style, resulting in asymmetrical accommodation.

The discovery corresponding to accommodation symmetry is in line with (Lindell et al., 2023) which analysed the role of ethnolinguistic vitality in language climate. The higher ethnolinguistic vitality is perceived, according to them, the more likely they create negative language climate. The negative language climate refers to the undesirable relation between minority and majority language group. This research, thereafter, defines the negative language climate will trigger asymmetrical accommodation. In brief, African American community in this movie perceived high vitality, and thus creates negative language climate which led to the domination of asymmetrical accommodation.

Another research, in addition, has described the willingness to accommodate the communication style (Giles et al., 2021). They state that when the speaker perceives greater interdependency on other groups, his or her attitude towards communication with members of those groups tends to improve and accommodate easily. However, if the speaker does not see any interdependency toward outgroup members, his or her language use becomes more abstract and less concrete. Given these propositions, the researchers argue that the character of white people in this movie perceives higher interdependency toward African-American culture in order to be acknowledged as a member of that particular culture. African-American people in this movie, on the contrary, observe that there is independence in their culture taking economic ties as a parameter. In other words, they think that there is no urgency to accommodate to the higher prestige culture.

Following modality, the most frequent form of accommodation is multimodal accommodation. In communicating their thoughts, wants, or feeling, the character desires warmth and therefore they accommodate in many aspects such as accent, sentence structure, and lexical level. This finding, in addition, can support the research that was conducted by Svensson (2023) that analyzed the linguistic discrepancies in the refugee settlement. Although this research did not invoke CAT framework directly, but the results are close related. She reveals that linguistic accommodation or the lack thereof can lead to feelings of exclusion, as refugees struggle to participate in interactions. This finding is supported by the recent study which demonstrates that the use of multimodal accommodation in the conversation can give warmth to the interlocutor and thus conjures feeling of inclusion. As such, when speakers adapt their communication style, they create an environment of greater empathy and inclusivity which likely improves social cohesion. In short, through the lens of affective motives, the use of multimodal accommodation can enhance positive social relations and diminish the exclusion by the lack of adjustment.

The long-term accommodation that is used mainly by SE speakers might lead to the dialect-change. The dialect-change that is created by the long-term accommodation, further, correspond to the acculturation and assimilation as postulated by the previous research (Omori et al., 2024). Their research elucidated that the young and middle-aged speakers judged older speakers as outgroup members and tended to non-accommodate to them despite that the older have a cultural commonality. However, the young and middle-aged accommodate and adopt dominant culture even more. As such, this kind of behavior can be termed as avoidant communication and has negative implications in intergroup communication. This previous study, furthermore, is in line with the recent study wherein speaker of SE accommodates to the dominant culture albeit certain conditions and thus downplayed his

own. The domination of long-term exceeding the short-term accommodation denotes that the motivational background of accommodation is to enhance the social liking and gain approval by the dominant culture; thus, speaker of SE acculturates to the African-American culture. This commonality highlights important point that the long-term accommodation is a linguistic strategy to acculturate and eventually leads to permanent dialect-change.

5. Conclusion

Of all the 68 speech events in this movie, 45 of them involve the intercultural communication. These communications lead to particular affective function of each speaker. Taking social value as consideration, downward convergence occurs as many as 26 with 1 trans-convergence. The case where upward divergence is expected, on the other hand, the character of SE speaker converges even more taking his self-verification as a consideration. This means that the SE speaker tries to join an African-American social group and thus he has to converge his speech style to that culture. There is an imbalance, further, taking symmetry as scrutiny. Asymmetrical accommodation arises 44 occurrences with only 1 symmetrical accommodation. This implies that there is an imbalance of considered value among the speakers. In addition, both of multimodal accommodation and long-term accommodation become the most frequent form of accommodation. This suggests that all the characters prefer more than one aspect to adjust while communicating with interlocutors coming from different cultures.

What is more, this research is limited in its scope; thus, the researchers offer two recommendations for the subsequent research. Firstly, the next research should be focus on the social psychology of the characters to their behavior of communication accommodation. This leads to the expansion of the communication accommodation theory from intergroup relation to individual's self-needs to accommodate the communication style. The next researcher, further, can utilize the self-conception theory that constructs the communication behavior of the speaker in intercultural communication. Secondly, beside its affective motive, communication accommodation theory has its cognitive motive. The next research, to add to the recommendation, should pay attention to the cognitive motive of the communication accommodation behavior of the character. These two recommendations facilitated to the enlargement of the communication accommodation theory with its possible changes taking self-need as a consideration.

Author Contributions: All researchers contribute to the conceptualization, methodology, investigation, resources, writing original-draft preparation, review and editing, and supervision.

Funding: This research received no external funding

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Informed Consent Statement/Ethics approval: Not applicable.

References

- Bernhold, Q. S., & Giles, H. (2020). Group-based identity accommodation in older adults' romantic relationships. *Communication Quarterly*, 68(4), 417–437.
- Cavallaro, F., Seilhamer, M. F., Chee, Y. T. F., & Ng, B. C. (2016). Overaccommodation in a Singapore eldercare facility. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 37(8), 817–831.
- Dorjee, T., Giles, H., & Barker, V. (2011). Diasporic communication: Cultural deviance and accommodation among Tibetan exiles in India. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 32(4), 343–359.
- Dragojevic, M., Gasiorek, J., & Giles, H. (2016). Accommodative strategies as core of the theory. *Communication Accommodation Theory: Negotiating Personal Relationships and Social Identities across Contexts*, 1(1), 36–59.
- Dragojevic, M., Tatum, N. T., Beck, A.-C., & McAninch, K. (2019). Effects of accent strength expectancy violations on language attitudes. *Communication Studies*, 70(2), 133–150.

- Dumanig, F. P., David, M. K., & Shanmuganathan, T. (2013). Language choice and language policies in Filipino-Malaysian families in multilingual Malaysia. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 34(6), 582–596.
- Editors of Cambridge University Press (2009). Affect. In *Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary* (1st ed. P.15)
- Elhami, A. (2020). Communication accommodation theory: A brief review of the literature. *Journal of Advances in Education and Philosophy*, 4(05), 192–200.
- Farzadnia, S., & Giles, H. (2015). Patient-provider interaction: A communication accommodation theory perspective. *International Journal of Society, Culture & Language*, 3(2), 17–34.
- Franzese, A. T. (2013). Motivation, Motives, and Individual Agency. In J. DeLamater & A. Ward (Eds.), *Handbook of Social Psychology* (2nd ed., pp. 281–318). Springer.
- Gallois, C., Gasiorek, J., Giles, H., & Soliz, J. (2016b). Communication Accommodation Theory: Integration and New Framework Developments. In *Communication Accommodation Theory: Negotiating Personal Relationship and Social Identities Across Context* (pp. 192–210). Cambridge University Press.
- Gallois, C., Ogay, T., & Giles, H. (2005). Communication Accommodation Theory: A Look Back and A Look Ahead. In *Theorizing About Intercultural Communication* (pp. 121–148). Sage.
- Gallois, C., Weatherall, A., & Giles, H. (2016a). CAT and Talk in Action. In *Communication Accommodation Theory: Negotiating Personal Relationship and Social Identities Across Contexts* (pp. 105–122). Cambridge University Press.
- Gasiorek, J. (2016). Theoretical Perspective on Interpersonal Adjustment in Language and Communication. In *Communication Accommodation Theory: Negotiating Personal Relationships and Social Identities Across Context* (pp. 13–35). Cambridge University Press.
- Gasiorek, J., & Giles, H. (2013). Accommodating the interactional dynamics of conflict management. *International Journal of Society, Culture & Language*, 1(1), 10.
- Giles, H. (2016). The Social Origins of CAT. In *Communication Accommodation Theory: Negotiating Personal Relationship and Social Identities Across Context* (pp. 1–12). Cambridge University Press.
- Giles, H., Edwards, A. L., & Walther, J. B. (2023). Communication accommodation theory: Past accomplishments, current trends, and future prospects. *Language Sciences*, 99, 101571.
- Giles, M., Pines, R., & Giles, H. (2021). Testing the communication model of intergroup interdependence: the case of American and Canadian relations. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 42(1), 97–107.
- Green, J. L. (2002). *African American English*. Cambridge University Press.
- Holmes, J. (2013). *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (Fourth). Routledge.
- Lindell, M., Näsman, M., Nyqvist, F., Björklund, S., Nygård, M., & Hemberg, J. (2023). The role of ethnolinguistic identity, vitality and trust in perceived language climate change: the case of Swedish speakers in Finland. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 1–19.
- Mahadhir, M., Nor, N. F. M., & Azman, H. (2014). Communication accommodation strategies in Malaysian multiracial family interactions. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 118, 259–264.
- Merriam-Webster (n.d). Affective. In *Merriam-Webster*. Retrieved July 16, 2024, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/affective>
- Morissan. (2019). *Riset Kualitatif*. Prenada Media.
- Nabila, A. R., & Munir, A. (2020). Teacher's Motives in Applying Communication Accommodation Strategies in Secondary ELT Class. *Linguistic, English Education and Art (LEEA) Journal*, 3(2), 373–384.
- Omori, K., Ota, H., & Stark, R. K. (2024). Intergenerational communication satisfaction among Japanese Americans through communication accommodation. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 45(4), 1068–1081.
- Palomares, N. A., Giles, H., Soliz, J., & Gallois, C. (2016). Intergroup Accommodation, Social Categories, and Identities. In *Communication Accommodation Theory: Negotiating Personal Relationship and Social Identities Across Context* (pp. 123–151). Cambridge University Press.
- Putra, I., Lestari, Y. B., Isnaini, M., & Wilian, S. (2024). The Analysis of Code Switching and Code Mixing in 99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa Movie: A Sociolinguistic Study. *Education Quarterly Reviews*, 7(2).
- Rittenour, C., Kromka, S., Pitts, S., Thorwart, M., Vickers, J., & Whyte, K. (2018). Communication Surrounding Estrangement: Stereotypes, Attitudes, and (Non)Accommodation Strategies. *Behavioral Sciences*, 8(10). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3390/bs8100096>
- Sachdev, I., & Giles, H. (2005). Bilingual Accommodation. In *The Handbook of Bilingualism* (pp. 353–370). Blackwell Publishing.
- Song, Z., & Shan, D. (2014). Communication Difficulties and Accommodation Strategies of the Mainland Chinese Students in Hongkong. In *Current Communication Difficulties* (pp. 86–104). Zip Publishing.
- Sumarsono. (2002). *Sosiolinguistik*. SABDA (Lembaga Studi Agama, Budaya dan Perdamaian).
- Svensson, H. (2023). Language dimensions of social cohesion: the significance of linguistic inequalities in the context of refugee settlement. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 1–14.
- Talaifar, S., & Swann, W. B. (2020). Self-verification theory. *Encyclopedia of Personality and Individual Differences*, 4813–4821.

- Taqavi, M., & Rezaei, A. (2021). Language choice and identity construction of Azerbaijani bilinguals in family and friendship domains. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 42(4), 383–397.
- Tracy, J. S. (2013). *Qualitative Research Methods*. Blackwell Publishing.
- Uly, J. A. R., & Nurhayati, I. K. (2024). Dynamics of Indomi: Language Use and Adaptation among Minangnese Students in Tanah Rantau. *The International Journal of Communication and Linguistic Studies*, 23(1), 125–140. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.18848/2327-7882/CGP/v23i01/125-140>
- Wang, Y. (2021). Hip-Hop Music and Social Identity-An Analysis on the Construction of Jim Smith in the Movie '8 Mile.' *Asian Journal of Social Science Studies*, 6(4), 13.
- Wardhaugh, R., & M. Fuller, J. (2015). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (7th ed.). Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Widawski, M. (2015). *African American Slang A Linguistic Description*. Cambridge University Press.
- Wu, X. I., Occhipinti, S., & Watson, B. (2023). Mainland Chinese students' psychological adaptation to Hong Kong: an intergroup communication perspective. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 1–16.
- Zhang, Y. B., & Giles, H. (2018). Communication accommodation theory. *The International Encyclopedia of Intercultural Communication*, 1, 95–108.