THE ANALYSIS ON MALE AND FEMALE TALK IN OPRAH WINFREY SHOW (SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROACH)

Asih Tri Yuliananingrum, Suparno, Sujoko

English Education Department
Teacher Training and Education Faculty
Sebelas Maret University of Surakarta

asih37yuliana@gmail.com

Abstract: This article reports the result of research on male and female talk in Oprah Winfrey Show. The objectives of this research are to find out (1) what are the differences between males and females' speech in Oprah Winfrey Show, (2) what are the similarity characteristics of educated people's speech in public performance. The method used in this research was descriptive method using sociolinguistic approach. The research data were collected through downloading videos from website and watching them several times. The data were analyzed in four elements including grammar, intonation, turn taking system, and register. The result of the research shows (1) there are not many differences between males and females' speech in Oprah Winfrey Show, (2) there are some characteristics of educated people's speech in public performance. The findings of this study are expected to give some benefits in language study, especially English and English teaching. These differences styles of male and female in talk show give side-effect conversation in society.

Keywords: *males and females' speech, educated people, public performance*

INTRODUCTION

Male and female speakers have unique different characteristics in their language and their language shows some clues that make male and female speak differently. Coulmas (2005: 36) says that women and men speak differently is only natural. It is similar to Andersen's (1992: 26), "There are substantive phonological, grammatical, and lexical differences in the nature of language used by men and women." It shows that the differences are natural. The differences between male and female language cover family, job, strata, age or surrounding.

Coulmas also explains that "Men and women have different conversational norms as a result of interacting in single-sex per groups as children." He adds that different socialization patterns cause boys to be concerned with status and self-assertion, while girls are more geared to involvement and understanding. It seems very clear that male and female are different.

Some linguists explain the differences between male and female characteristics. According to Fasold (1996: 92) male speakers are often found to use socially disfavored variants of sociolinguistic variable and men

are almost effortlessly raised topics for talk. It is similar with Chaika (1997) "men are persistent and men are being forceful." Also Coulmas (2005) says men have more opportunities to interact in work-related environment, men consistently use more non-standard forms than women, and men are found to have a higher proportion of unique words.

One of the language research done by Lakoff stated in Janet Holmes (1997: 314) explain that women have characteristics: (a) Lexical hedges or fillers (e.g. *you know, sort of, well, you see*), (b) Tag questions (e.g. *she's very nice, isn't she?),* (c) Rising intonation on declaratives (e.g. *it's really good*), (d) 'Empty' adjectives (e.g. *divine, charming, cute*), (e) Precise color terms (e.g. *magenta, aquamarine*), (f) Intensifier such as *just* and *so* (e.g. *I like him so much*), (g) 'Hypercorrect' grammar, (e.g. *consistent use of standard verb forms*), (h) 'Superpolite' forms (e.g. *indirect requests*, *euphemisms*), (i) Avoidance of strong swears words (e.g. *fudge, my goodness*), and (j) Emphatic stress (e.g. *it was a BRILLIANT performance*.) Other research language and gender also reveals the differences between male and female in using language for communication. Andersen (1992: 41) says that women use: (a) intensifiers (*so, quite, vastly*, or *such*), (b) 'meaningless' particles (*Oh, dear!* or *Goodness!* in place of the swear words that frequent men's speech), (c) politeness markers, (d) non-basic color terms (e.g. *mauve, lavender*), (e) expressive adjectives (*adorable, lovely, tiny,* or *cute*), and (f) euphemisms (e.g. *He passed away* vs. *He died.*). Those characteristics make male and female different.

On the other hand, there is similarity in the male's and female's language research. Most women are more likely to use certain phonetic forms, such as the *-ing* of *talking*, but men are likely to use the *–in* of *talkin-*. The *–ing* variant is considered prestigious, while the *–in* variant is the vernacular form. Coulmas (2005: 40) adds that male and female speakers of the lowest social group choose *–in* more frequently than their counterparts of the highest social group. But, the differences of male and female are not only in pronunciation, but also in some aspects such as social network, occupation, education, or age.

Therefore, based on the explanation above, it is interesting to study male and female's talk, but this study is only limited in five videos from Oprah Winfrey Show. *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, often referred to simply as *Oprah*, is an American syndicated talk show that has aired nationally for 25 seasons from 1986 to 2011. Produced and hosted by its namesake, Oprah Winfrey, it remains the highest-rated talk show in American television history. Winfrey uses the show as a platform to teach and inspire, providing viewers with a positive, spiritually uplifting experience by featuring book clubs, compelling interviews, self-improvement segments, and philanthropic forays into world events. *Oprah* is one of the longest-running daytime television talk shows in history. The show has received 47 Daytime Emmy Awards before Winfrey decided to stop submitting it for consideration in 2000. (wikipedia.com)

This study tends to sociolinguistic approach because this study does not only analyze the language but also the relation of language and society. Sociolinguistics is that subdiscipline of linguistics which examines relationships between language and culture and language and society. Lesley Milroy (1995: 155) and Holmes (1997: 1) also say that sociolinguistics is concerned with the relationship between language and the context in which it is used. Thus, it can be said that sociolinguistics cannot be separated from language or society. Also, sociolinguistics studies the culture and education indirectly.

By using this approach, it is found the differences between males and females' speech in Oprah Winfrey Show and the characteristics of educated people's speech in public.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses qualitative method in sociolinguistics. It can also be said Sociolinguistics approach. Sutopo (2002: 6) explains 'Penelitian kualitatif cenderung bersifat kontekstual, yang hasilnya tidak mudah bisa digeneralisasikan hanya dengan patokan umum yang bisa diartikan sebagai suatu "pemaksaan" terhadap suatu yang bersifat khusus.

This research also is named a descriptive study. It is collecting data are from words, phrases, sentences or utterances, and symbols to be analyzed. The data sources in this research are videos from youtube.com and summary script from oprah.com. There are five videos that shown Oprah Winfrey with her guests including: Donald Trump Family (Donald Trump, Melania Trump, Ivanka, Don. Jr, Eric Trump, Tiffany and Barron), Barrack Obama and Michelle Obama, Michael Jordan and Charles Barkley, Ricky Martin and All hosts (Phil Donahue, Geraldo Rivera, Sally Jessy Raphael, Montel Williams and Ricki Lake). This talk show is produced by Harpostudios.

In this research, the researcher analyzes the data into the four elements: a. grammar (utterances and short terms), b. intonation (fall, rise, fall-rise, rise-fall and level), c. turn taking system, and d. register (sex and topics). In the beginning of researcher watched videos in several times, and then she made scripts. After that, the researcher found the script from website to make it well. Then, she gave marks in some utterances as examples to be analyzed. Again, she watched videos and read the scripts. Finally, she analyzed data in four elements and drawn conclusion.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The research finding discovered some points as follows: (1) the differences between males and females' speech, (2) similarity characteristics of educated people's speech in public performance. The next paragraphs show the brief explanation of four elements discussed.

The first element is grammar. Brazil (1995: 1) says that a grammar starts from the assumption that canons of correctness have somehow been established, and/ or that well-founded explanations are actually there to be found. He also explains that an exploratory grammar is useful if one is seeking possible explanations of the many still unaccounted-for observations one may make about the way

language works. Grammar is analyzed from the utterances and the short terms (*gonna, wanna* and *gotta*). The utterances having accuracy grammatical show the standard and glib language from speakers. Thus, the researcher used those utterances to find the accurate grammar and used short terms to show who was being more standard in the conversation, males or females.

Speaking is only words come out when we react-without no long time or opportunity to make plan-from the listeners. We often hear *'You now',' you see', 'I mean'*, and *'mind you'* in conversation every day. The researcher found that most dialogues use accuracy grammar. Stylist words such as *'you know',' I mean'* or *'mmmhmmm'* were uttered by speakers. Both males and females speakers were mostly using *'you know'* or *'I mean'* in their utterances. But few persons were using repetitions and incorrect grammar but the meaning was clear, like the examples below:

Oprah (female)   : So, it's interesting what everything we seen-- and heard about you.— We don't think of you as-- **you-- know** we think of you as power house;-- think of you as a visionary,-- we think of you as big billionaire tycoon of all that.-- We don't think of you as a family man. Are you?

Donald Trump (male): **I love my family**. **I do love my family**. It's all about family. It just such a wonderful think when you have-- whether children, wives, -- boyfriend, whatever. So, it the same thing, it's a family and-- **I love family**. → (Using repetition)

According to the Cambridge Advance Learner's Dictionary the word *gonna* is the short form of the word *'going to'*. This word usually uses in US and not included in informal word. The word *wanna* is short form of *'want to'* or *'want a'* and this is not standard word. While, *gotta* also is not standard word and it is short form of *'have got to'* or *'have got a'*. So, it can be concluded that those three words are not standard expressions and as an informal words.

The recapitulation all data showed that males used *gonna* 46 times while females 22 times. Males used *wanna* 25 times while female 13 times. But, only one male used *gotta* and no women used *gotta.*

The researcher concluded that educated people use accuracy grammar in speaking. It maybe because they are educated people, public figure or well-known and have high prestige. So, they really care of what they said in public and understand how to speak well. It can also be said that males are as standard as females in speaking. Businessmen, politicians and athletes who have high education speak in accuracy grammar, but athletes are more casually talk than businessmen and politicians.

While, by using those short terms, it can be concluded that females tend to use standard language in that interview or women's talk is

more standard than men's talk. It is dealing with Labov (1990: 210) in Coulmas,"women tend to choose the standard variants more frequently than men."

The second element is intonation. According to Brazil (1997: 1), intonation is traditionally equated with variations in the perceived pitch of the speaking voice. He explains that pitch varies continuously from the moment anyone begins speaking to the moment they end. Variations in tone are high, low, rise, and fall. These variations express the condition of the language-user. On the other hand, he also explains that there are categories of tone unit such as fall, rise, fall-rise, rise-fall and level. The researcher used those five tones to analyze male and female's talk. In this part the researcher also found which is called *pause*. Brazil explains that it is not difficult to find samples of recorded data in which pauses of some kind segment the stream of speech into units that hearers can readily agree about.

Most of the falling tone occurred in the end of utterances. It implied that they stop or make pause in their utterances or they think that their utterances are not really important to be explained. Also, this tone showed casually conversation between interviewee and interviewer. See the examples below:

male ⎰ Michael Jordan: Before I came to Chicago, -- I had a normal life. I could walk down the streets. I could do a lot of things. But now I'm starting to do

more things as **my kids get older.**↘

Phil : Come on down and people were screaming at the open talk politician. --We knew that in order to get attention, we had to be controversial. --So, we have to do something and that makes break about this, and **my first guest was Madalyn Murray.**↘

female ⎰ Michelle : This is an honor and it's a duty.-- And you know we take this responsibility very seriously,-- and—a ((pause)) if there are things that we can continue to do—and I think this president has a lot more to get done—then-- we let **the American people decide.** ↘

Melania : No. -- Because I was always myself. -- And I know who I am-- and no matter what my last

name is. **I am who I am.**↘

Rising tone were mostly found in some expressions, not in a long utterances or explanations. This tone was used to stress point on a word or a phrase. The speakers expected that the listeners know and understand what the speaker means. See the examples below:
1. Don Jr. (male) : **Very awkward.**↗

2. Obama (male) : **The eyes of the price.**↗

3. Michelle Obama (female) : **Or citizenship.**↗

4. Oprah (female) : You had one before you became **Michael Jordan.**↗

Falling-rising tone was found in the end of utterances. The speakers used this tone to express the important things and to make their utterances clear, so the listeners could be easy to get the point of their explanations. Because this tone usually is in low and easy on the ears. Some speakers used this tone to express joke. See the examples below:
1. Donald Trump (male) : I think so.-- I think people surprise to hear that.-- But I think I am a man and I could said I've always said I've been a great great father. Less of a good husband-- but I'm gonna be a good husband.↻

2. Michael Jordan (male) : What's that mean? – I'm playing hard.↻

3. Oprah (female) : Ok, so, you wrote email – and then you sent it and then what happened?↻

4. Sally (female) : Ohh, I am immediately I went to Hollywood where people asked for me – and the ((pause)) they also say no!↻

Rising-falling tone means that rising tone is in the first utterance and falling tone is in the end of utterance. By seeing data, most the rising tones followed pause of speakers. This falling tone used in the end of utterances. The speakers thought that the listeners have understood their explanation in the beginning, so the speakers used low pitch or falling tone in the end of utterance. See the examples below:
1. Eric : …anything that's why we are ground out.⌢

2. Obama : …how to make the lives of the American people better.⌢

3. Ivanka : … what the true this and hopefully they can proper it.⌢

4. Ricki Lake : …., so we were always taking it from the younger person's voice.↷

Most speakers also used level tone when they explained something, instead of using rising or falling tone. They wanted to use level tone to make their conversation were not monotonous or this level tone showed that they enjoy and seem casually in the talk show. It could be seen from the topic they talk. See the examples below:

1. Donald Trump (male): Well, I think Melania made it a lot easier-- →because-- she's really very smart, and she understands life and she understood what she was coming into-- →and I think she made a concerted effort to get along with the kids. It's not very easy. -- Now, the good thing is ((pause))→

2. Ricky (male) : Maybe,-- may be yes,-- →but sometimes I felt that I really did,→ I felt in love with woman, →Oprah.-- I had I had long relationship with woman, instead be my friend today,→

3. Melania (female) : But we're great. We're all so busy within own staff-- →and everybody has, you know, business to do.→-- And you know, it's most like for me. My life is normal I just, you know its ((pause))→

4. Ricki Lake(female): It was at terrific night.→-- I mean, it was like suddenly thing or just thing. I walked out of the house. -- →I didn't think anything. I had more the time and I am sure I can spend there,→-- but I actually can see my kids in the surrounding, and quickly-- changed in other family.-- And everything and I'm really get fear.-- I didn't know who asked us of the day,-- but we went out of our life.→

Then, it can be concluded that (1) the falling tone is not used to express the great or important things in their dialogues. It may to explain detail information in a common thing and also males and females as often as use this tone. (2) The speakers usually use rising tone in very clear pronounce and voice. It is to

make clear the point of utterances, thus listeners are easily to understand. Both males and females tend to use rising tone to stress the point but females use rising tone more often than males. (3) Males and females use falling-rising tone in jokes or it is to express casually situation. (4) Rising-falling tone is used by males and females to make utterances clear and not monotones in talk show. (5) Talking about family and experiences are ordinary topic, which it will be casually in speaking style. But, women often use level tone more than men do.

There were found some pauses, filler words and repetition in data, these were; -- means *short pause*, ((pause)) means *long pause*, *you know, then, a…, mmmhmmm, repetition*, and *correction words*. The pauses used by those men imply some reasons; (1) they would use the correct diction, (2) they were public figure and famous, and (3) they were in hesitation to answer or their pause implies their wisdom. Also, it was found pauses named *'laugh'* and *'clap hands'*. It happened to Ricky Martin and Geraldo's talk. Men's talk uses pause more than women's talk.

The third element is turn taking system. Tsui (1995: 6) said that a turn is seen as everything one speaker says before another speaker begins to speak. Dealing with Tsui, Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974.pp.700-701 in Ford (1993: 3) explains that turn taking system is occurrences of more than one speaker at a time are common, but brief …Transition (from one turn to a next) with no gap and no overlap are common. It means that there is turn in conversation by speaker one to other speakers.

Based on the data, when the host, Oprah, asked questions to men, the men answered the questions well. Then, the talked runs well. It implied that educated people follow good normatively in conversation. Also, the conversation between males and females were running well. Each speaker knew when she or/ he talks and listened to others. In contrast with men's turn taking system, women's talk showed less good turn taking system in conversation. Women often tent to interrupt in conversation. See the examples below:

1. Male and female's turn taking system

Oprah (female): Even though, other differences that you have with the public's employee in partic. -- Do you believe that there in tense is also-- for well being and the good country?

Obama (male): Absolutely. -- I think it's very important to understand that we can—disagree -- without questioning each other's intentions or-- patriotism.

2. Male's turn taking system

Michael Jordan: I'm only three days older.

Charles Barkley: He says he's my older brother, but he's only three days older.-- That's what he always says.

3. Female's turn taking system

Oprah : Do you it was a pressure at first because now six years. -- The marriage youth, -- the relationship mellow and changes, and for being big thing, but at first do you feel-- pressure to be Mrs. Donald Trump?

Melania : I didn't because ((pause))

Oprah : You didn't?

Melania : No. -- Because I was always myself. -- And I know who I am-- and no matter what my last name is. I am who I am.

So, it can be concluded that men's turn taking system is running so well, but women's turn taking system is more interruptions than men's turn. Thus, it can be said that men's turn taking system is better than women's turn taking system.

The fourth element is register. Based on Andersen (1992: 6), the use of the term 'register' to describe this form of variation was introduced by Reid (1956) who first analyzed the phenomenon in the context of bilingualism. (Other terms- most notably 'speech style' ,'variety', and 'code'- have also been used, but register seems preferable to them). Register seems what the way use language and make it different with others such as register by sermons, repertoire, etc. Register also can be governed by sex, age, occupation, and education.

Men's talk show as men but women's talk only expresses the simple utterances of what they heard. According to the data above, men talked about their work and what they did. It was to show that they are as men in men's activities and their style in speaking. The expressions used by female showed politeness. On the other hand, female expressions were not often used by male. Meanwhile, Barrack Obama was dominant in talking about his job (president's duty) and family. But, Michelle Obama was more enthusiastic in talking about family than politics. As an athlete, Michael Jordan was dominant in talking about his passion (basketball), his hobby (riding motorcycle) and his addiction (golf). While, Ricky Martin talked about his living when he knew he was a homosexual man until he became a father with his twins. All Hosts talked about their experiences as a host in a talk show and their activities after they resigned from the show.

Based on the register about sex, it can be concluded that women's talk is more polite than men's talk. Also, male is not only talking about men's talk and female is also not talking

about women's talk. However, men tend to talk about things showing Masculinity and women tend to talk things showing Femininity. It can be seen on the data that men are more interested in talking about their job than talking about family, while women are more interested in talking about family than talking about job. As Coulmas explains "…women are more focused on the family, whereas men have more opportunities to interact in work-related environments."

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research findings presented above, it can be concluded that there are only few differences between male and female's speech, and there are similarity characteristics of educated people' speech in public performance. The differences of male and female's talk as follows: (1) male and female as standard as in speaking, (2) females tend to use standard language than male or women's talk is more standard than men's talk, (3) male and female as often as use falling tone, (4) both of male and female tend to use rising tone to stress the point of utterances but females use rising tone more often than male, (5) male and female use falling-rising tone to show jokes or it is to express casual situation, (6) rising-falling tone is used by male and female to make utterances clear and not monotones in talk show, (7) women are often to use level tone more than men do, (8) men's talk uses pause more than women's talk, (9) men's turn taking system is better than women's turn taking system, (10) men tend to talk about things showing Masculinity and women tend to talk things showing

Femininity. Sometimes, men and wom 414 not talk as men and women only.

Similarity characteristics of educated people's speech in public are: (1) educated people use accuracy grammar in speaking, (2) they use intonation more than one in their utterances, (3) they use most pauses in their utterances, (4) they have a good turn taking system, especially men's turn taking system, (5) men and women do not talk as men and women only.

The findings of this study are expected give some benefits in language study, especially English and English teaching. Possibility, daily conversation in society is influenced by notions of great, famous and educated people. Besides, this study can be a material of junior and senior high school student in their learning English. The interview material and the way to interview of educated people may be applied as additional material to improve speaking skill of students.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1Yassoua. (2012, 20 December). *Michael J. Jordan vs Sir Charles Barkley-part 01*. Retrieved January, 24, 2013, from www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_1bzGx VvJE

1Yassoua. (2012, 20 December). *Michael J. Jordan vs Sir Charles Barkley-part 02*. Retrieved January, 24, 2013, from www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTXxslT zkfY

1Yassoua. (2012, 20 December). *Michael J. Jordan vs Sir Charles Barkley-part 03*. Retrieved January, 24, 2013, from

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ykMgwNDsH8c

A TV First: Donald Trump and His Five Children. (2011, 7 February). Retrieved February,8, 2013, from http://www.oprah.com/oprahshow/Trump-Family-Values

Andersen, E.S. (1992). *Speaking with Style: The Sociolinguistics Skills of Children*. New York: Routledge.

Brazil, D. (1995). *A Grammar of Speech*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Chaika, E. (1994). *Language: The Social Mirror (Third Edition)*. USA: Heinle & Heinle Publisher.

Coulmas, F. (2005). *Sociolinguistics: The Study of Speaker's Choices*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fasold, R. (1996). *The Sociolinguistics of Language*. Oxford: Blackwell Publisher.

Fishholygrailzego5. (2012, 28 June). *SWO-November 10th, 2010 part 1/3*. Retrieved January, 24, 2013, from www.youtube.com/watch?v=-7hFYQbcZiA

Fishholygrailzego5. (2012, 28 June). *SWO-November 10th, 2010 part 2/3*. Retrieved January, 24, 2013, from www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zbj9cBF79_A

Fishholygrailzego5. (2012, 28 June). *SWO-November 10th, 2010 part 3/3*. Retrieved January, 24, 2013, from

www.youtube.com/watch?v=lWmgfay4DQ4

Ford, C. E. (1993). *Grammar in Interaction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Holmes, J. (1997). *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics.* London: Longman Group UK.

Ideasowners. (2011, 10 April). *Donald Trump with Oprah.* Retrieved January, 23, 2013, from www.youtube.com/watch?v=_vRqnuC8s3Q

Julie, A. (2012, 23 October). *Barrack Obama and His First Lady Michelle Obama*. Retrieved January, 23, 2013, from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=na8INoIeFDA, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qm9zcNJ6DiQ, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=82cm51aaRj0

One-on-One with Michael.(2005, 25 October). Retrieved February, 08, 2013, from http://www.oprah.com/oprahshow/One-on-One-with-Michael

President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama. (2011, 2 May). Retrieved February, 08, 2013, from http://www.oprah.com/oprahshow/President-Obama-and-First-Lady-Michelle-Obama_1

Ranko, R. (2012, 27 August). Ricky *Martin and Oprah Winfrey -Coming Out-CRO*. Retrieved January, 24, 2013, from

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mz
xfBQ1M_7w

Sutopo, H.B. (2002). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif (Dasar Teori dan Terapannya dalam Penelitian)*. Surakarta: Sebelas Maret University Press.

Talk Show Hosts—Where Are They Now?. (2010, 10 November). Retrieved May, 11, 2013, from http://www.oprah.com/entertainment/ Talk-Show-Hosts-Where-Are-They-Now

The Oprah Winfrey Show. (2011, 31 May). Retrieved July, 08, 2013, from en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Oprah_Wi nfrey_Show

The Real Ricky Martin. (2010, 2 November) Retrieved May, 10, 2013, from http://www.oprah.com/oprahshow/Ric ky-Martin-on-Coming-Out

Tsui, A.B.M. (1995). *English Conversation.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Walter, E. (Ed). (2005). Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary *(Third Edition)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.