

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Communication is a very significant instrument in people's life. People usually communicate with others in a community by using language. Each person uses his/her own style in speaking in order to build social relationships, share or convey information, signal their social identity, and express their feelings, emotions, admiration or respect. People may use different styles while they are talking according to their backgrounds, health, moods, topics, purposes of talking, and especially, the demand of the social situation or the context of situations. Nobody speaks exactly the same at all times (Gleason, 1973, p. 354). In other words, the way people speak is not the same as one another at all times even though they speak about the same language.

The different styles that people use to communicate with others are known as speech styles. According to Holmes (2001, p. 223), the term style belongs to the language variation that people use which is characterized by the degree of formality and influenced by the situational factors (such as participant, setting or social context, task or topic, and function); also the social factors (such as the social distance between participants, their status, the functional scale, and the formality of the context). The speech style, which is used by a bus driver, for example, is different to the speech style used by a university student. The style of speech which is used by a manager in an office, as another example, is different from the style used by those who work as administrative staffs or office boys. As the writer found speech style very important in people's daily communication, she would like to conduct further observation on this topic.

In this present study, the writer chose *Office Boy*, a sitcom (situation comedy) program broadcasted on *RCTI*, as her research object. This program was chosen because of some reasons.

Firstly, sitcom is very famous in almost all television networks in Indonesia and other countries. In the United States of America, for example, 25 percent of the prime-time network schedule is devoted to the sitcom program

(Taflinger, 1996, pp. 1-2). The writer also believes that many people in Indonesia like to watch sitcoms. This might be because this type of program has unique features related to the setting and plot of the story. The sitcoms are genres of comedy performance in which recurring characters take part in humorous story lines centered on a common environment, such as a family home or workplace (The British Sitcom Guide, 2009, p. 1). Since the sitcoms are only thirty minutes long, the plot line is quite tight and resolvable. Successful plots will typically fall within a family or workplace setting or some combination of the two (Metz, 2008, p. 3).

Secondly, among many sitcoms which are broadcasted in Indonesia nowadays, *Office Boy*, that describes the daily working situation problems in a television office named *OK-TV*, has the second higher rank than other sitcom programs in television, such as *Bajaj Bajuri*, *Extravaganza*, *ExtravaganzaABG*, *Ujang Pantry*, *Suami-suami Takut Istri*, *Jinny oh Jinny*, *Tuyul dan Mbak Yul*, and *Salon Oneng* (Suara Karya Online, 2007, p. 1).

The third reason is because the present writer noticed that *Office Boy* has several different characters who have different social statuses. This is interesting to be investigated because the characters will definitely use different speech styles in their communication.

There are eight main characters in this sitcom. They are Taka, Saschya, Hendra, Gusti, Sayuti, Susi, Ma'il, and Odah. However, for this research, only one character, i.e. Gusti is chosen as the research object. Gusti is an administrative staff in *OK-TV*. He is notorious as a playboy. Gusti is chosen to be the research object because he has his own unique style when speaking with others, for example, he always makes his hand likes a gun with a sound 'ctak' and sometimes uses slang words.

For this study, the present writer chose Taka, Hendra, and Sayuti as Gusti's interlocutors. Taka, who always gives push up punishment to his staffs, is a strict, temperamental, and dictator manager of *OK-TV* whose social status is higher than Gusti's. Hendra, who is cynical and jealous to Gusti, is an administrative staff whose social status is equal to Gusti's. Sayuti, who is honest and natural, is an office boy whose social status is lower than Gusti's. Taka,

Hendra, and Sayuti were selected as Gusti's interlocutors because their characters are unique. Taka always speaks in loud and mad voice to his employees, except to Sascha. Hendra always speaks like a woman and yells loudly when he meets famous actors or actresses who visit the *OK-TV*. Sayuti always speaks in Javanese accent. These three characters indeed make each episode become funny and interesting.

As the data is in Indonesian, the writer used Nababan's theory of speech styles as her main theory. Nababan (1991, pp. 22-23) classifies speech styles into (1) *gaya* or *ragam beku* (frozen style), (2) *gaya* or *ragam resmi* (formal style), (3) *gaya* or *ragam usaha* (consultative style), (4) *gaya* or *ragam santai* (casual style), and (5) *gaya* or *ragam akrab* (intimate style). This theory would be explained further in chapter two.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The present study is about the speech styles used by Gusti in the sitcom *Office Boy* when he talks to his interlocutors namely Taka (a manager) whose social status is higher than Gusti's, Hendra (an administrative staff) whose social status is equal to Gusti's, and Sayuti (an office boy) whose social status is lower than Gusti's. The study tries to answer the following research questions:

1. What types of speech style are used by Gusti when he talks to Taka, Hendra, and Sayuti?
2. What type of speech style is mostly used by Gusti when he talks to Taka, Hendra, and Sayuti?

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The writer chose this study because she realizes the importance of speech style in people's daily communication. The purpose of this research is to identify the types of speech style used by Gusti in the sitcom *Office Boy*, when he talks to different addressees of different social statuses, namely Taka (a manager) whose social status is higher than Gusti's, Hendra (an administrative staff) whose social status is equal to Gusti's, and Sayuti (an office boy) whose social status is lower

than Gusti's. In addition, the writer also wants to find out the types of speech style which are mostly used by Gusti in speaking to these three interlocutors.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that this research can give the readers a better understanding of speech styles used by Gusti in the sitcom *Office Boy*. They can recognize the types of speech styles that take place in the conversations among Gusti and his interlocutors namely Taka, Hendra, and Sayuti. It is also hoped that the readers would acquire more understanding that the social status may affect their language so that they could reflect it to their own language experience. The writer is also pleased if this research can give some inputs for those who are interested in doing further research on this field.

1.5. Scope and Limitation

In this research, the scope of this study is more on sociolinguistics area because it deals with the speech styles used by Gusti in the sitcom *Office Boy*. In this study, the writer analyzed the speech styles in terms of the social status.

The limitation of this study is the writer chose only one character that is Gusti to be analyzed. As Gusti's interlocutors, the writer chose only three characters; namely Taka (a manager) whose social status is higher than Gusti's, Hendra (an administrative staff) whose social status is equal to Gusti's, and Sayuti (an office boy) whose social status is lower than Gusti's.

In addition, the data was taken from seven episodes, i.e. eighty two up to eighty eight. The length of each episode was thirty minutes. The writer picked these episodes because they had interesting comedy stories especially because there were famous guest stars named Timbul, Dennis Adishwara, Bolot, Malih, Ine Sinthya, Tina Toon, Willy, Aldo, Salsa, Ungu, Anisa Bahar, Conny Nurlita, and Uut Permatasari played roles in these episodes.

1.6. Definition of Key Terms

The following key terms are necessary for the readers to have a better understanding about this present study:

- a. Speech style: “The form of language variation that people use which is characterized by the degree of formality and influenced by the situational factors, such as participant, setting or social context, task or topic, and function; also the social factors, such as the social distance between participants, their status, the functional scale, and the formality of the context” (Holmes, 2001, p. 223).
- b. Social status: “A system of social stratification defined in terms of occupation, income, position, and education” (Brown and Attardo, 2001, p. 366).

1.7. Organization of the Study

This research is divided into five chapters. Chapter one is about the introduction which consists of the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation, the definition of key terms, and the organization of the study. The second chapter presents the review of related literature including the review of theories and the review of related studies. The third chapter is the methodology in which the writer discusses the research approach and how the writer collects, classifies, and analyzes the data. In chapter four, the findings and discussion are presented. The last chapter is about the conclusion of the overall study. The writer also includes the bibliography and appendices.