

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Globalization is proportional to the level of life demand. This phenomenon increases human stress. Health Advocate in the book *Stress in the workplace* (2009) reports about three-quarters of American workers is getting stressed in the workplace based on the survey in 2007. Otherwise, people solve this problem by using humor. Humor can affect health by reducing stress chemical in human body. This is because humor is defined as an entertaining communication which produces a positive emotion in terms of laughter and the cognition of individual or groups (Romero & Cruthirds, 2006). Meanwhile, Berger (1993) argues that humor is a stimulus each incongruity of the meaning to create laughter (as cited in Schwarz, 2010). Humor is one of the way to entertain either men or women even though both of them have different sense of humor as Kramarae's (1987) assertion that men and women have different joking interest which are caused by their different perspective in seeing the world (as cited in Hay, 1995).

Humor divides into verbal and non-verbal. Non-verbal humor is characterized by doing some acts which draws any topics or situations that makes laughter. It is different from verbal humor which is characterized by some amusing utterances. A comedy show can only consist of one of verbal or non-verbal humor. Somehow, a comedy show often cannot be separated from both verbal and non-verbal humor, for instance stand up comedy show. Stand up comedy needs the aspects of verbal and non-verbal humor, such as language, gesture, mimic, and the other things which support the performance. However, stand up comedy prefers to

emphasize on the verbal humor considering the joke telling which becomes the main focus in creating the audience's amusement.

In regarding with stand up comedy, Schwarz (2010) defines that it is the genre of comedy show about which the speaker or commonly called as stand up comedian or comic opens microphone (*open mic*) on the stage and tells a joke in front of the audience. Italian *comedia dell' arte*, Shakespearean clowns, British musical hall comics, and American vaudeville entertainers are the pioneer of stand up comedy show (Double, 2005, as cited in Schwarz, 2010). Schwarz (2010) also mentions that stand up comedy in America was being the popular comedy show in 1970s until 1980s since television station, theater hall, and nightclub started to present the show continuously. Then, the comedy show is the preferred entertainment today. Moreover, the existence of internet nowadays makes stand up comedy show is very easy to be enjoyed by everyone. It speaks rapidly and becomes one of the favorite comedy show.

Furthermore, the growth of stand up comedy had been followed by the existence of many comics who were dominated by male. It was hardly any female comics found. Goodman (1992) supports the case by carrying out the statement that joke telling has been rarely used by female comics than male. In addition, Lakoff (1975) emphasizes that women have no any sense of humor and cannot tell joke. Nevertheless, that statement is contradicted slowly by some female comics who exist recently in comedy world including stand up comedy (Gilbert, 2004). Regardless of the existence of female comics today, male is still claimed to be funnier comic than female. It has been proven by Dreher's (1982) findings of his

study that men and women laugh more at male comics than female in conversational joke telling (as cited in Hay, 1995).

The stigma of female stand up comics creates the conclusion that male and female have different verbal humor used in stand up comedy. It implies that there are particular types of linguistic aspects of verbal humor which are used differently by both genders of comics while performing stand up comedy. Linguistic aspects of verbal humor used by male and female comics in stand up comedy is an interesting phenomenon to be conducted in a research for linguistic major in order to increase the proof of male and female language differences, in particular verbal humor differences. The difference has important role to be considered as a primary concern of this study. Moreover, the study which specifically discusses gender and the genre of stand up comedy is very rare (Gilbert, 2004). Therefore, this study deals with linguistic aspects of verbal humor used by male and female comics in stand up comedy show.

1.2 Statement of Research Problems

Based on the background of the study above, the writer essentially formulates some problems which are questioned to be revealed in this study.

1. What linguistic aspects of verbal humor types are used in stand up comedy show?
2. What the different and similar linguistic aspects of verbal humor types are used by male and female comics in stand up comedy show?

1.3 Objective of the Study

In this sub chapter, the writer provides some aims of this study below which can answer the research problem stated.

1. Revealing the linguistic aspects of verbal humor types which are used in stand up comedy show.
2. Discovering the similar and different types of linguistic aspect of verbal humor which are used by male and female comics in stand up comedy show.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to contribute any significance for the readers both theoretically and practically. Thus, this study is expected theoretically to enrich linguistic research and become a reference related to gender and stand up comedy. Hence, Gilbert (2004) reports that the study which specifically discusses gender and stand up comedy is very rare. Moreover, this study can be a proof that male and female stand up comics have their different way creating humor while performing stand up comedy.

Besides it, the writer expects through this study to be practiced as the technique to create successful stand up comedy show by common people either women or men who want to learn deeply how to be a stand up comics. So that, stand up comedy can increasingly develop which is supported by the characteristics of male and female comics in applying verbal humor in stand up comedy.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

Preventing to be too wide, the writer considers scope and limitation of this study. This study belongs to discourse analysis, in particular discourse and gender as the general field. Kendall and Tannen (2001) argues that discourse and gender is the part of discourse analysis which discusses the use of discourse by male and female which is created from social and cultural identities. Otherwise, the theory used by the writer as the tool of analysis in this study is a theory of linguistic aspects of verbal humor by Schwarz (2010) in order to analyze verbal humor of stand up comedy show which is used by both genders of comics in stand up comedy show.

On another hand, the writer limits this study on two aspects. Firstly, the writer uses verbal communication of linguistic aspect of verbal humor only to be the tool of analysis, therefore paralanguage and intonation of linguistic aspect of verbal humor types by Schwarz (2010) are not used considering the two types are including in non-verbal communication. Next, the data is restricted on American and British stand up comedy shows at 1990 until 2018.