

FE/MALE INTERVIEWING STYLES IN THE ISRAELI MEDIA

by

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The present research investigates stylistic differences and their relation to dominance. It examines women's and men's language in a situation where they have power over their addressee, acting as interviewers. An attempt is made to measure supporting versus domineering devices of female and male interviewers in the Israeli mass media. To establish relevant parameters for the measurement of power, speakers' judgements of powerfulness were obtained for the 18 interviewers examined here. These judgements were then compared with the interviewers' actual behavior as measured along seven parameters. Findings suggest that the devices of: Question, Lengthy Question, Interruption, Joking, Prodding and Minimal Response are measures of powerfulness, while only Giggling is perceived as powerless behavior. Results show that females and males talk differently. Across the board, female interviewers seem to use a powerless language, while powerful language is used almost exclusively by men. However, when confronting female interviewees, female interviewers tend to use a more powerful language. They are more powerful towards females than towards males. I suggest that we explain these findings in terms of social identity. Had the female interviewers been addressee-oriented and more supportive of women, this could be explained by a feminist awareness. However, since they are not only less powerful than men but also less supportive of women, this is explained in terms of their emerging social identity, only now evolving from their traditional roles.

1. Introduction

Under what circumstances do groups develop their own dialect? Specifically, in what conditions do/can women speak in a different voice? One answer to these questions originates from the concept of social network (Blom & Gumperz 1972): A social group tends to develop linguistic variations when the individuals are related to each other in various ways, e.g., as relatives, as neighbors, as friends, as workmates etc. that is, when its social network is highly dense (Milroy & Milroy 1978, 1985, Milroy 1980). Women, however, are only rarely involved in social networks of high density. It is men's networks that are often multiplex (men are often linked to each other in various ways, e.g., by job, by leisure activity) and dense (their contacts all know each other). The concept of social network is thus taken to explain why men tend to use more non-standard, vernacular forms than women, and why women conform to the standard, rather corrective use of language (Labov 1972, Cameron 1985, Coates 1986).

Tannen (1990) views communication between women and men as analogous to cross-cultural communication. She believes that women and men have learned their different genderlects since childhood, growing up in separate social worlds

of peers. Women have developed a culture focused on connection and intimacy, while men are interested in independence and status. As a result, men appreciate asymmetrical communication centering in hierarchical relations, while women speak in the spirit of symmetrical connection and support (see also Morgenthaler 1990). The stylistic differences Tannen detects between report-talk (men's style) and rapport-talk (women's style) are viewed as different genderlects reflecting equal but different cultures.

Both views ignore the relation between power and linguistic variation. The cross-cultural view of gender differences does not acknowledge that men's style allows them to dominate, while women's style makes them concede (Troemel-Ploetz 1991, Freed 1992). Could the concept of social network be extended to explain the difference between women and men in terms of conversational dominance? For example, could the speaker-oriented versus addressee-oriented distinction drawn between men's and women's language respectively (e.g., Holmes 1984), or the difference between powerful and powerless language (e.g., O'Barr & Atkins 1980, Haden Elgin 1982) associated with men's and women's style respectively be accounted for in terms of social networks? Probably, if women and men could be shown to belong in different multiplex and dense networks. Though the present study will support the above distinctions, it will show that they are independent of social networks.

The present research investigates stylistic differences and their relation to dominance. It examines women's and men's language in a situation where they have power over their addressee, acting as interviewers. A number of questions are raised: Will female interviewers develop a style of their own? Given that an interviewer's position is powerful relative to that of an interviewee's, will female interviewers in the Israeli media practice powerful strategies? Who will they practice them on? An attempt is made to explain the various findings in terms of social identity theories.

2. Social Identity Theories and Language Variation

Social identity theory is concerned with intergroup relations, especially relations between groups having unequal power. It focuses on the conditions under which people feel motivated, either individually or collectively, to maintain or change their intergroup situations. A major assumption is that individuals strive for a positive self-identity, and would rather belong to a high status than to a low status group. Individuals determine whether their own group provides them with a distinct and positive social identity by comparing it with other groups. Changes are possible where cognitive alternatives are perceivable.

Tajfel (1974, 1978, 1981) discusses the options available to members of an inferior social group (a minority group, for instance) when they either accept or reject their inferior position in society. If they accept it they will try to achieve

a positive self-identity by operating as individuals, not as a group. Two strategies are possible for such people: First, they can measure themselves against members of their own group, not members of the superior group. Second, they can try individually to join the superior group. If, on the other hand, they refuse to accept their inferior position as just, they will attempt, as a group, to change things.

Tajfel outlines three ways they can do this. First, they will try to gain equality with their superiors by adopting their values (The assimilation strategy). Second, they will try to redefine characteristics which have previously been defined negatively and assign them a positive value. Third, they will try to create new dimensions for comparison with the superior group. They will define their own values and create a positive distinct image for themselves. The difference, then, between those who accept and those who reject their inferior status is a matter of awareness.

In terms of linguistic behavior, Tajfel's proposal allows us to view language change as a measure of levels of consciousness. The question is which levels of awareness are reflected in language use. Tajfel's and particularly Giles' (1984) theory of social identity allows us to hypothesize that women who reject their social inferiority and undergo the first phase of assimilation will try to speak like men. They will not develop a women's language, since they have not developed a distinct social identity. However, two other groups might develop a distinct genderlect: Women who accept their inferior status at one extreme, and women undergoing the second and third phase of rejection of this inferior status, at the other end. Since these groups are aware of their distinct social identity, this awareness might be reflected in their language use.

Group identity theories further predict bias in favor of one's ingroup members and against outgroup members (e.g., Stephan 1985, Wyer and Gordon 1984). According to this view women are expected to support women and exert power over men, and men are expected to support men and exercise power over women (see also Ariel and Giora 1992b, 1995 ms.). Particularly, in terms of powerful as opposed to powerless linguistic behavior, males are expected to adopt a powerful (speaker-oriented) style while conversing with females, and a supportive (addressee-oriented), rather powerless style while conversing with males. Females, on the other hand, are expected to adopt a powerful style while conversing with males, and a supportive, rather powerless style while conversing with females.

However, given their inferior social status, women might not be willing or able to adopt their own viewpoint. They might either identify themselves with the norms of the dominant social group, i.e. men, and as a result, support men rather than women, and exercise power over the latter (Tajfel's assimilating strategy). Or they might accept their inferior social status and exercise the stereotypic, i.e., powerless behavior across the board.

This research aims at testing these somewhat conflicting predictions by looking into female and male interviewing styles. Given their equal position of power

as interviewers, it is possible that interviewers of both sexes will use equally powerful language. On the other hand, it is equally possible that the female interviewers, being members of an inferior social group, will not assume a powerful self-identity, and as a result will not adopt a powerful style. If, however, the female interviewers have reached a level of feminist awareness, they will practice a powerful style upon male interviewees only.

3. *Prior Research on Women's and Men's Conversational Strategies*

Though TV and radio interviewing is not exactly naturally occurring conversation, it is necessary, nevertheless, to look into female and male interlocutors participating in unplanned discourse. The aim of this section is to review supporting (addressee-oriented) vs. powerful (speaker-oriented) strategies in conversation.¹

How do people converse? Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) for instance, proposed a model of normal, or rather ideal, conversation structure. Given the conversation situation, the current speaker may select the next speaker (by asking her/him a question, for example, or by addressing her/him by name), in which case the person selected must speak next. If s/he does not, then the current speaker has the option of continuing. An ideal conversation, then, is characterized by uninterrupted turn taking.

3.1. *Overlap and interruption*

How much do we deviate from the above norms while performing? Sacks et al (1974) identified two sorts of irregularities: overlap and interruption. Overlaps are instances of slight over-anticipation, while interruptions are violations of the turn-taking rules of conversation. As such, interruptions often result in silencing or disrupting the participant.

Zimmerman and West (1975) found that men and women differ in the extent to which they deviate from the ideal model. In same-sex communication, both male and female speakers use overlaps. In mixed-sex interaction, men use interruptions more often than women.

In contrast to these findings, a recent review of gender differences in simultaneous talk (James and Clarke 1993) does not provide evidence that men are more likely than women to use interruptions. James and Clarke suggest that these findings might result from the fact that measurement of what has counted as interruption has not been uniform. For instance, a number of studies have excluded overlaps (e.g., Schegloff 1973), or requests for clarification (e.g., Duncan 1973), while others have not. The result is that not all instances of simultaneous talk that do not have dominance implications have been excluded. Other studies have indicated that some interruptions, rather than functioning to dominate turn-

taking, indicate interest and build up interpersonal rapport (e.g., Edelsky 1981, Coates 1989, Murray 1987, Tannen 1983, 1990, Makri-Tsilipakou 1994, Murata 1994). In the context of same-sex interaction, females, but not males, were found to produce a high degree of simultaneous talk of the kind that implies a deep involvement.

In an interviewing or cross-examination situation, overlaps do seem to impinge upon the speaker's turn. Mendoza-Denton (1992) examined exchanges in the Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas trial, in which Hill accused Thomas of sexual harassment. Both were cross-examined by the US Senate. Mendoza-Denton looked into the senators' responses to their utterances. She showed that the minimization of gap and overlap in the senators' responses to Anita Hill's utterances as opposed to the longer gaps preceding their responses to Clarence Thomas's statements contributed to the systematic undermining of Hill's testimony. Short gaps and overlaps reflect lack of respect and do not allow for the statement to 'sink' in or to get enough attention.

It seems, then, that the mechanism of distinguishing between the various types of interruption is still not clear (see also Schegloff 1987). Thus simultaneous talk is ambiguous as between a speaker-oriented (powerful) behavior and an addressee-oriented (powerless) behavior.

3.2. *Minimal responses*

Minimal responses, such as 'mhm', 'yeah', have been recognized in the literature as a way of indicating the addressee's positive attention to the speaker (e.g., Coates 1986). The addressee has an active role in conversation, and her or his active attention is signaled by minimal responses, as well as by paralinguistic features such as smiling, nodding, and grimacing. Absence of or delayed minimal response disrupts the speaker.

Zimmerman and West (1975) found that in mixed-sex conversations women use minimal response often. Male speakers, however, often delay minimal response. This signals lack of understanding or interest in the current speaker's topic.

Fishman's (1980) study seems to support Zimmerman and West by providing evidence of men's lack of cooperation as active listeners. Fishman shows that women signal malfunction in turn-taking more often than men by using 'you know'. In interactional terms, 'you know' is an attention-getting device: The speaker checks that the addressee is attentive and comprehending. Fishman shows that uses of 'you know' occur immediately before or after pauses, at points where the woman expects (but does not get) some response from the man. The use of 'you know' thus reveals that the man is not participating in the conversation in that he rejects the topic under discussion.

Zimmerman and West seem to suggest that women are silenced by men. They

found that the average silence in single-sex conversation lasted only for 1.35 seconds, while the average silence in mixed-sex conversations lasted for as long as 3.21 seconds. However, silence can be interpreted differently as suggested by Mendoza-Denton (1992) mentioned above.

3.3. Questions

Women use more questions than men (Brouwer et al 1979). Men are reluctant to appear in need of information (Tannen, 1990). However, in interactive terms, Fishman (1980) argues, questions are stronger than statements, since they demand a response from the addressee. Indeed, where asking a question is a powerful behavior, as in a discussion session following a lecture, men contribute most of the questions. Furthermore, their questions are much longer than the women's (Swacker 1976).

Studies of female and male interactive styles imply, not unequivocally though, that interruptions and questions tend to manifest a powerful, speaker-oriented behavior, while responding minimally functions as a supportive, addressee-oriented reaction. An interview, however, is not a conversation between equally powerful participants. On the contrary, the interviewer is in a dominating position. The present research is thus concerned with the options made available to women for employing dominating strategies.

4. Interviewing styles

Though this research is concerned with the correlation between gender and interviewing styles, it does not assume a one to one correlation between the two variables. The difference between the sexes is absolute. Style, however, is a matter of degree. The findings are thus expected to be measurable on a scale rather than as either/or.

4.1. Method

Materials: The corpus reported here consists of 178 interviews lasting 31 hours which were broadcast in Israel during 1989-90. They involve radio and television dyadic situations of news and talk show interviews. Most of the interviewers were males – 10 out of 18² (due to the lack of female interviewers in the Israeli media), and so were most of the interviewees.

Procedure: Seven parameters were selected (to be defined and discussed below) to measure male as opposed to female interviewing styles: Question, Lengthy Question, Interruption, Joking, Prodding, Minimal Response and Giggling.

Some of these have been discussed in the literature while others have not. It is thus necessary, first, to establish which parameter is a speaker-oriented activity, and thereby powerful, and which parameter is addressee-oriented and thereby powerless.

To do this, speakers' intuitive judgements of powerfulness (weak = 1, strong = 2, very strong = 3) were obtained from 12 raters with regard to the 18 interviewers. As shown in Table 10, 2 men and 1 woman were rated as very strong, 2 women and 6 men were rated strong, and 5 women and 2 men were rated weak.

These judgements were then correlated with the interviewers' behavior along the seven parameters (Tables 1-7). Though the total number of interviewers is 18, only 16, 8 females and 8 males, have been selected for calculating the average of the whole group, in order to prevent male bias. The 16 interviewers were equally divided between matching radio and television programs. The 2 who were dropped were television interviewers who could not be compared to radio interviewers of matching programs.

In order to measure interviewers' behavior, an average per minute was calculated for each interviewer's behavior along the seven parameters. These were then averaged across 16 of the 18 interviewers, to yield a group average for each parameter. The individual average of each interviewer was then compared with the group average for each parameter, which represented the median finding. Interviewers who scored above the group average along a powerful parameter were taken to exhibit a powerful behavior along that parameter. Interviewers who scored above the group average along a powerless parameter were taken to exhibit a powerless behavior along that parameter.

A parameter was considered powerful either if it was practiced only by the intuitively powerful interviewers, or if at least 50% of the intuitively powerful interviewers practiced it to an extent above the group average, while less than 50% of the intuitively powerless interviewers practiced it to an extent above the group average. A parameter was considered powerless either if only the intuitively powerless interviewers practiced it, or if at least 50% of them practiced it to an extent above the group average, while less than 50% of the intuitively powerful interviewers practiced it to an extent above the group average.

Findings (Tables 11-12) suggest that the first six parameters (Tables 1-6): Question, Lengthy Question, Interruption, Joking, Prodding and Minimal Response are powerful measures. They are mostly practiced by the powerful interviewers and are hardly practiced by the powerless interviewers. Only Giggling (Table 7) is found to be a powerless parameter. It is hardly practiced by the powerful interviewers but is more common among the powerless interviewers:

1. The parameter of number of Questions per minute is found powerful. Six out of the eleven powerful interviewers (55%) as opposed to three out of the seven powerless interviewers (43%) practice it extensively. Asking a question is indeed a controlling device. It compels the interviewer to respond and enables

the interviewer to select the topic for discussion (cf. Swacker 1976). The greater the number of the questions, the more powerful the interviewing style.

2. The parameter of number of Lengthy Questions, where a Lengthy Question is one that exceeds three utterances, is found powerful. Six powerful interviewers (55%) as opposed to two powerless interviewers (29%) practice it extensively. Indeed, the length of the question/turn allows the interviewer to be more dominant and more central in the dyadic situation (cf. Swacker 1976). The greater the number of lengthy questions, the more powerful the interviewing style.

3. The parameter of number of Interruptions is found a powerful measure. Ten powerful interviewers (91%) as opposed to one powerless interviewer (14%) use it extensively. Interruptions of all kinds (overlaps and interruptions) are measured here. Supportive, explanatory and disturbing interruptions are all considered as manifestations of power (cf. Section 2) as they impinge upon the interviewee. The greater the number of the interruptions, the more powerful the interviewing style.

4. The parameter of number of Joking turns is found powerful here. Though only four powerful interviewers (36%) practice it extensively, it is not practiced by any of the powerless interviewers (0%). A joke is a mode of aggression even when destined to relieve tension. It was found to be a stylistic feature of the powerful (Coser 1960). The greater the number of jokes, the more powerful the interviewing style.

As illustration, consider the following example taken from a night radio talk show 'Night Birds'. The interviewer (male) is Gideon Rycher, and the interviewees are casual phone callers. The following excerpt discusses a blind date between a female interviewee and a man who, she realizes afterwards, used to be her sister's boy-friend. The excerpt contains two joking turns (in italics):

Caller: My shock was on Friday evening...

Rycher: So you spent the night with him?

Caller: I spent the night with him. And it was very gentle, and very, mmm, what is called decent, and all right

Rycher: *I don't know what this is, but if you say so.*

Caller: (laughs)

And then, if I

Rycher: What is decent?

Caller: If you don't mind me expressing myself, sort of, intimately, well, then, he did not put me into his bed the moment he saw me.

Rycher: *Well, he had plenty of time – a whole night!*

Caller: mmm?

(pause)

Anyway, yes, something in him looked familiar to me.

5. The parameter of number of Proddings is found powerful here. Seven powerful interviewers (64%) as opposed to no powerless interviewer (0%) practice it extensively. Prodding is a tool used exclusively by the interviewer for curbing the interviewee. When an interviewer pressures the interviewee and urges her/him to end her/his turn for lack of time, this is considered a manifestation of power. The greater the number of prodding turns, the more powerful the interviewing style.

As an illustration, consider another excerpt from the same talk show as above. The interviewer's turns are proddings (in italics): He pressures his interviewee to accelerate and even makes her cut her turn short:

Rycher: *And now.*

Caller: It was an unplanned blind date. And I started to feel angry about that friend who had not given me more specific details... (she goes on).

Rycher: *And now, as in all such dramatic stories, we jump forward, and then what happens, your sister?*

Caller: Now, he goes to The States... he meets her...

6. Surprisingly, the parameter of number of Minimal Responses is found powerful here. Eight powerful interviewers (73%) as opposed to no powerless interviewer (0%) use minimal response extensively. Minimal Responses are believed to signal active listening (cf. Section 2). However, they might have a different function in an interview, such as pressuring the interviewee to conclude her/his turn. The greater the number of minimal responses, the more powerful the interviewing style.

7. The parameter of number of Giggings is a measure of powerlessness. Two powerful interviewers (18%) but four powerless interviewers (57%) practice it extensively. Giggling is an addressee-oriented behavior considered appeasing and mitigating in effect. The greater the number of giggling responses, the more powerless the interviewing style.

An index of power was built for each interviewer to measure her/his position on a scale of powerful style. It was built as follows: For the powerful parameters, a behavior exceeding the group average along the six (1-6) parameters was graded as 1. A score below the average was graded as 0. The reverse was applied to the addressee-oriented parameter (7): A behavior exceeding the group average along this parameter was graded as -1. A score below the average was graded as 0. The more powerful the interviewer, the greater her/his score.

5. Results

Female initials in italics

*Questions (average 1.93)**Female interviewee*

R	3.08	
A	2.70	2.00
W	2.45	
F	2.42	
G	2.33	
N	2.23	
E	2.20	1.90
Ma	2.16	
D	1.95	2.25
M	1.88	
Gay	1.87	1.85
H	1.80	
Dayan	1.80	2.30
Mi	1.58	1.80
Ry	1.53	2.10
Y	1.40	
B	1.28	2.50
Gin	1.10	

Table 1: Number of Questions per minute

Lengthy Questions (average 0.25)

A	1.60
Gay	0.54
G	0.51
N	0.51
F	0.50
H	0.42
Gin	0.31
R	0.26
Dayan	0.24
E	0.23
B	0.17
Ry	0.16
Mi	0.16
M	0.12
D	0.06
W	0.05
Y	0.04
Ma	0

Tables 2: Number of Lengthy Questions per minute

Interruptions (average 0.47) Female interviewee

A	0.95	1.10
H	0.82	
G	0.68	
Dayan	0.64	0.20
F	0.61	
B	0.61	1.14
M	0.60	0.45
D	0.54	
R	0.52	
N	0.51	
Mi	0.50	0.68
Gin	0.38	
W	0.37	
Gay	0.30	0.42
Ma	0.27	
E	0.24	0.03
Ry	0.17	0.23
Y	0.08	

Table 3: Number of Interruptions per minute

*Joking (Average 0.23)**Female interviewee*

M	1.90	
Dayan	0.90	
A	0.43	
Ry	0.25	0.33
G	0.16	
Ma	0.11	
B	0.08	0.20
Mi	0.06	0.16
N	0.05	
F	0.04	
D	0.04	
R	0.03	
H	0.02	
Y	0.02	
W	0	
Gin	0	
Gay	0	
E	0	

Table 4: Number of Jokings per minute

Proddings (average 0.03) Female interviewee

A	0.30	0.37
G	0.15	
F	0.10	
H	0.09	
Ry	0.08	0.09
M	0.03	0
B	0.03	0
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Dayan	0.02	0
D	0.02	
Mi	0.01	0
E	0.01	0
R	0	
W	0	
Gin	0	
N	0	
Gay	0	
Y	0	
Ma	0	

Table 5: Number of Proddings per minute

Minimal Responses (average 0.33) Female interviewee

A	2.20	1.60
M	0.80	1.90
G	0.69	
Dayan	0.52	1.30
R	0.52	
Ry	0.49	0.55
F	0.42	
H	0.41	
Gay	0.36	0
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B	0.27	0.04
D	0.25	
W	0.25	
Mi	0.09	0.09
E	0.09	0.35
N	0.07	
Y	0.06	
Ma	0.05	
Gin	0.01	

Table 6: Number of MRs per minute

Giggings (average 0.1) Female interviewee

Mi	0.31	0.08
Gay	0.30	
Ma	0.27	
G	0.19	
D	0.12	
Y	0.11	
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Ry	0.09	
W	0.07	
F	0.06	
B	0.04	0
M	0.03	0
Dayan	0.03	0
R	0.02	
Gin	0	
N	0	
A	0	
E	0	
H	0	

Table 7: Number of Giggings per minute

A	6
F	5
G, N, H, M, B, Ry	4
W, E, Dayan, R, Gin	3
Gay, Ma, Y, D	2
Mi	1

Table 8: Index of power where MR is a powerless measure

A	7
F, H	6
G, M, Ry	5
R, Dayan	4
B, N,	3
W, E, Gay	2
Ma, D, Gin, Y	1
Mi	0

Table 9: Index of power where MR is a powerful measure

A, N, H	3
F, G, R, M, <i>Dayan, D, Ry, B</i>	2
E, W, <i>Gay, Ma, Mi, Y, Gin</i>	1

Table 10: Judgements of power (1-3)

Tab												Total
I	A	N	H	F	G	R	M	<i>Dayan</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>Ry</i>	<i>B</i>	11
1	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	6
2	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	6
3	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	10
4	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	-	4
5	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	7
6	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	8
7	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	2

Table 11: Correlation between judgements of powerfulness and findings in Table 1-7 (Tab=Table, I=Interviewer)

Tab									Total	Total (11+12)
I	E	W	<i>Gay</i>	<i>Ma</i>	<i>Mi</i>	<i>Y</i>	<i>Gin</i>	7		
1	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	3		9
2	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	2		8
3	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	1		11
4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0		4
5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0		7
6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0		8
7	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	4		6

Table 12: Correlation between judgements of powerlessness and findings in Table 1-7 (Tab=Table, I=Interviewer)

Results show that across the board female interviewers seem to use a powerless language, while powerful language is almost exclusively used by men. Tables 1-6, which measure dominance, show fewer female than male interviewers above the average (indicated by the solid line): three females (37.5%) as opposed to six males (60%) in Table 1 (Questions), three females (37.5%) as opposed to five males (50%) in Table 2 (Lengthy Questions), four females (50%) as opposed to

seven males (70%) in Table 3 (Interruptions), one female (12.5%) as opposed to three males (30%) in Table 4 (Jokings), and no female (0%) as opposed to seven males (70%) in Table 5 (Prodding), two females (25%) as opposed to seven males (70%) in Table 6 (Minimal responses). However, Table 7 (Giggings), which measures affectiveness, is dominated by females. Five females (62.5%) as opposed to one male (10%) score above the average.

That most male interviewers are more powerful than most female interviewers is further illustrated by the index of power (Table 9). Six males (60%) scored 5-7, one male (10%) and one female (12.5%) scored 3-4, one female (12.5%) and two males (20%) scored 2, and five females (62.5%) scored 1-0. Note that findings correlate with speakers intuitive judgements (Table 10). For instance, the five most intuitively powerless female interviewers are also most powerless according to our findings (Table 9 where minimal response is a powerful measure and even Table 8 where minimal response is a powerless measure). The same is true of the most powerful males.

Though females and males speak differently, they are more alike when it comes to interviewing women. Findings show that some male but more female interviewers tend to use a more powerful language than (their) average (dominance) when interviewing women.³ They are more powerful towards females than towards males: Out of the four females who interview women in Table 1, three (75%) are more powerful than they usually are. Out of the three females who interview women in Table 3, two (67%) are more powerful than they usually are. Out of the two females who interview women in Table 4, one is more powerful (50%) while the other is less powerful than her usual score. Table 5 shows that the two females interviewing women are less powerful than usual. Out of the three females who interview women in Table 6, one is more powerful (33%) one is less powerful (33%) and one behaves the same way. Both the two females who interview women (100%) in Table 7 are less supportive than they usually are. In sum, female interviewers are more powerful along three measures (1, 3, 7), less powerful along one measure (5) and equally powerful along one (6).

Male interviewers can be said to be only slightly more powerful towards women than average. Out of the four males who interviewed women in Table 1, two (50%) are more powerful than they usually are. Out of the five males who interview women in Table 3, two (60%) are more powerful than they usually are. Out of the four males who interview women in Table 4, two are more powerful (50%) than usual. Table 5 shows that two (50%) out of the four males who interview women are more powerful than usual. Out of the five males who interview women in Table 6, three are more powerful (60%). Out of the three males who interview women in Table 7, one (33%) is more powerful than usual. All in all, male interviewers are more powerful than they usually are only along two measures out of six (3, 6).

On the one hand, then, women do talk differently. They are less powerful, less

dominant than men when in a position of power. However, when it comes to talking to women, they are sometimes slightly more powerful to women than men.

6. Discussion

This research examines female and male styles in a position of dominance over a conversational situation. Results show that women do not take advantage of their position of power and do not develop a powerful style. Obviously, this difference cannot be accounted for in terms of the concept of social network, since no different social networks exist here. I suggest that we explain women's powerless style in terms of their evolving social identity (cf. Section 1).

Were the female interviewers addressee-oriented or even speaker-oriented but more supportive of women, this could be explained by a feminist awareness (Tajfel's second and third phase). Such style could be considered an original contribution, reflecting women's perspective. Alternatively, if the female interviewers exerted power over both women and men, this could be explained in terms of Tajfel's (first) assimilation strategy: To achieve a positive self identity, women may adopt a masculine style. However, since they are less powerful than men, but also less supportive of women, this is explainable in terms of their social identity which is just emerging from their traditional roles. Like traditional women who have not yet reached any stage of feminist awareness, they are trying to achieve a positive self identity by individually joining the superior group. Accepting their inferiority, they exercise a powerless style typical of a powerless group. However, at the same time they try to imitate men where possible (Tajfel's first assimilation phase) by exerting power over women.⁴

Results further suggest that, contrary to what has been established in the literature (cf. Section 2), the conversational function of minimal responses is not unequivocal. Surprisingly, powerful interviewers (males primarily) made a wide use of minimal responses. This might mean that minimal response is not necessarily an addressee-oriented device. In the context of a radio and TV interview, it could be a speaker-oriented expression of the alert hearer who is waiting for her/his interlocutor to finish her/his turn so that s/he can take her/his. Alternatively, it could mean that minimal response is not entirely a feminine, supportive behavior. As in the case of Interruptions (cf. Section 2), further research should disambiguate the conversational functions of the minimal response.

Overall, the claim that women and men talk differently (e.g., Coates 1986) is given some support here. The female interviewers examined here tend to practice powerless, addressee-oriented behavior. Unlike males, they refrain from impinging on their interlocutor, and even slightly appeal to active supporting devices (Giggling).

A few reservations are in order here. First, the parameters checked here by no

means tell the whole story. Powerfulness and support can take other forms than style. Stylistic devices may convey an implicit message. But people can state their attitudes explicitly. Second, even stylistically, the list proposed above is by no means exhaustive. A number of additional parameters which I have considered but discarded for lack of sufficiently objective measures could be considered in future research. These include tone of voice: thus, e.g., the male interviewer Rycher was found rather cynical in tone of voice, yet he exhibited a relatively non-powerful behavior according to the other parameters; the studio setting: e.g., the male interviewer Gazit sat behind a desk on his TV show, while Michaeli, a female interviewer, entertained her interviewees in a living room, sitting on a cozy sofa; time allocated for each interviewer in relation to sex: e.g., Michaeli (female) allocated longer periods for female interviewees than Gazit (male) and vice versa for the male sex; facial expressions; body posture; etc. Some of these might rank among active supportive devices which do not figure on our list.

Another problem concerns the relative weight of each of the parameters. Tables 11-12 suggest that various parameters have different weights, but this is not taken into consideration here. This could be a possible direction for further research.

Other factors could have interfered with our research. Though we tried to examine naturally occurring interviews, this was not always possible. A number of the interviews had been edited. Moreover, various programs are of different genres which (might) render a comparison between them hardly possible. Finally, the population investigated here is rather small, because of the small number of female interviewers in the Israeli media. The mass media in Israel are male-dominated: There are hardly any women in either decision-making positions, or in positions of power and prestige. As a result, there are few female interviewers and (consequently?) a small number of female interviewees.

These reservations, however, do not call into question the findings reported here. Since we wanted to examine female as opposed to male interviewing styles in the Israeli media, we had to make do with what there was to look into. Indeed, enough evidence has been adduced here to suggest that female and male interviewing styles in the Israeli media differ drastically.

7. Conclusions

The present research is concerned with stylistic differences and their relation to dominance. It examines women's and men's language in a situation where they have power over their addressee, acting as interviewers. Several questions have been raised: Will female interviewers develop a style of their own? Given that an interviewer's position is powerful relative to that of an interviewee's, will female interviewers in the Israeli media practice powerful strategies? Who will they practice them on?

Results show that female and male interviewers adopt different styles. Across the board, female interviewers seem to use a powerless language, while powerful language is used almost exclusively by men. The devices of: Question, Lengthy Question, Interruption, Joking, Prodding and Minimal Response, which have been found here to be measures of powerfulness, are used almost exclusively by men. In contrast, Giggling, which is perceived here as a powerless behavior, is used almost exclusively by women.

Nevertheless, on several occasions women do use some relatively powerful devices. When confronting female interviewees, female interviewers tend to use a more powerful language than average. They are more powerful towards females than towards males. Previous research (Ariel and Giora 1992b, 1995 ms.) has shown that, when possible, women practice power over either equals (women) or inferiors (children). But they hardly ever exercise power over superiors (men). Here, though their superior position as interviewers allows them to exercise power over men, they do not take advantage of it.

I have suggested that we explain these findings in terms of social identity. Had the female interviewers been addressee or speaker-oriented and more supportive of women than of men, this could be explained by a feminist awareness. However, since they are not only less powerful than men, but also less supportive of women, this is explained in terms of their emerging social identity. Most Israeli women are only now evolving from their traditional roles, going through Tajfel's first phase of assimilation, without yet fully accomplishing it. The present research shows that this is reflected in the relatively powerless style exercised even by women in a position of power.

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Notes

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1. In this paper, supportive, addressee-oriented = powerless, while speaker-oriented = powerful. Research into men's and women's linguistic behavior attests that members of a socially more powerful group (i.e., men) tend to be speaker-oriented, adopting their own point of view. In

contrast, members of a less powerful group (i.e., women) tend to be addressee-oriented, adopting the Other point of view (Ariel and Giora 1992a, b, 1995 ms.).

2. Key for initials*

Arbel	A
Ben-Ner	B
Dan	D
Dayan	<i>Dayan</i>
Evron	E
Fridman	F
Gazit	G
Gay	<i>Gay</i>
Ginsburg	<i>Gin</i>
Handlesalts	H
Margalith	M
Matsliah	<i>Ma</i>
Michaeli	<i>Mi</i>
Nir	N
Reshef	R
Rycher	Ry
Wilensky	W
Yairi	Y

* Female initials in italics

3. Note that the female interviewers considered powerful by native speakers (Table 10) are in fact among the weakest on the list of powerful interviewers (Table 11). They make use of only 3 powerful behaviors, while most male interviewers use between 4-6 powerful behaviors. Women, however, are not expected to behave powerfully, hence the impression of powerfulness they make, using even a small number of powerful devices.

However, special attention should be paid to Dayan. She is one of the youngest interviewers and a most successful one too. She has a relatively masculine style. But unlike her female, more 'feminine' colleagues, she is quite supportive towards women. Does she represent the next generation?

Note, too, that Dayan has been treated very critically by the press (by female journalists!) for her 'powerfulness', though, as can be seen, she is not as powerful as quite a number of the male interviewers.

4. Results would have been clearer had attitudes towards female and male interviewers been measured separately. Since the average behavior of each interviewer includes her/his attitudes to both sexes, we can see just how much a certain behavior towards female interviewees differs from the usual dominance, but not how much it differs from powerfulness towards males.

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