

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, the researcher discusses some theories related to the study such as sociolinguistics, language and gender, differences between women and men language, and also some previous studies related to the language and gender.

2.1 Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is definitely part of language studies. It is the study to identify the relationship between language and their important role in society. It also related to the use of language itself in the society. Yule (2010) argues that sociolinguistics is the study of relationship between language and society. It has strong connection with anthropology of language and culture, sociology of the role language plays in social group and social, and psychology on how attitudes and perceptions are expressed.

From that, sociolinguistics is the study of language which deals with connection between language and society. Yet, it is not only deals with language but also with many kinds of societies who have different character in using a language itself, such as dialect, accent, and many other. In addition, it also observes the function of language as tool of communication and also examines the way people communicate in different form, context, and situation. This sociolinguistics theoretical approach is an applicable theory to support this

research, especially in order to analyze about the teenagers' language characteristics based on their gender. In the sociolinguistics discussion, there are some theories regarding to language and gender theory.

2.2 Language and Gender

The term gender that is being used in this study, rather than sex, is because sex has come to refer to categories distinguished by biological characteristics, while gender is more appropriate for distinguishing people on the basis of their socio-cultural behavior, including language (Holmes, 2001).

Lakoff (1975) says that language is used as much as we use language. As much as our choice of forms of expression is guided by the thought we want to express, to the same extent the way we feel about the things in the real world governs the way we express ourselves about these things. She believes that there is a hidden meaning behind our linguistics form. She feels that there is inequity that has been claimed to exist in our society: the roles between men and women.

The socio-cultural differences between men and women may cause other differences in their language feature, especially in terms of lexical, grammatical, and pragmatic problem. In terms of lexical differences (the choice of words), women are considered less assertive than men. Women are considered to use fewer taboo forms and more euphemisms than men. In grammar and phonetics, it is said that women have a more advance pronunciation than men.

Janet Holmes (2003) states that the organization of conversation reflects the power discrepancy between men and women, especially when we compare the

empirical findings about the distribution of turns between males and females with the traditional stereotypes about who does more talking than whom. She also found that in many speech communities women use more of linguistics form than men; it is generally standard form – the overtly prestigious form – that women favour. When men use a form more often than women, it is usually a vernacular form, one which is not admired overtly by the society as a whole, and which is not cited as the ‘correct’ form.

Those patterns have been described by Trudgill (cited from Holmes, 1992) called a ‘women linguistics behavior’. There are three different explanations why women tend to use more standard forms than men. Firstly, women have a role as a guardian of society’s value. Society tends to expect ‘better’ behavior from women than from men. The second is women’s status as subordinate group. Women are demanded to be polite. Consequently, they have to speak carefully and politely which can be seen through their use of standard speech form when they are speaking to someone. According to Holmes, women’s greater use of standard speech forms may then simply be a reflection of their sensitivity to contextual factors.

Other researcher also mentions that men and women have different way of speaking in pairs and mixed conversation. According to Yule (1996, p.242) in same gender conversations, women tend to express their feeling than men do. On the other side, men usually talk more about non-personal topics such as sports, news, politics, etc. Yule also mentions that in mixed gender conversation, men interrupt more than women do.

2.3 The Differences between Women and Men Language

There are some theories reviewed by the writer concerning with this issue. The first theory is the recent theory introduced by Yule (2005) in his book *The Study of Language*. The second theory is Adelaide Haas (1979) in Psychological Bulletin entitled *Male and Female Spoken Language Differences: Stereotype and Evidence*.

Yule (2005: 242) states “In same gender having pairs conversations, women generally discuss their personal feelings more than men.” It means that women tend to be more open about their feelings than men do. Women usually share their personal feelings, but men usually prefer non-personal topics such as sports, news, and jokes to share. In mixed gender having conversations, the rate of men interrupting women is substantially greater than the reverse. Women are likely to use more expressions associated with tentativeness such as ‘hedges’ (sort of, kind of) and ‘tags’ (isn’t it, don’t you).

Table 2.1 Gender Differentiation in Conversation

Males	Females
1. Prefer non-personal topics.	1. Prefer discussing personal feeling.
2. Give response to an expression or feeling by giving advices or solution.	2. Prefer to mention personal experiences in order to response an expression or feeling.
3. Interrupt more than females do.	3. Prefer to use more expressions associated with tentativeness, such as ‘hedges’ and ‘tags’.

Source: Yule (2005: 242)

Both casual and serious observers of the human condition have long recognized that communication between the sexes is often frustrating. A possible cause of the difficulty is that men and women may in fact not really be speaking

the same language (Jong, 1977; Reik, 1954). The language that men and women used may be different in the terms of their aspects. According to Haas (1979: 616), male and female language has been observed to differ in their form, topic, content, and use. Aspects of form, topic, content, and use of spoken language have been identified as sex associated. Either men or women are more likely to produce specific utterances.

2.3.1 Form

According to Haas (1979), the form of utterances can be described in terms of their acoustic, phonetic shape, in terms of the units of sound, or *phonology*, the units of meaning that are words or inflections, or *morphology*, and the ways in which units of meaning are combined with one another, or *syntax*. In this research, the researcher decided to analyze the phonology aspect because the objective of this study is to look upon the language characteristics of the teenagers which reflected in their utterances.

The most widespread belief about men's language as compared with women's is that it is coarser and more direct. Meanwhile, women's language reputed to be more polite than the form of men's. Furthermore, Lakoff (1975) informally observed longer sentence forms in women than in men, possibly resulting in the impression of more speech. For example, women are more likely to compound a request: "Will you help me with these groceries, please?" is more characteristic of women than "Help me" or even "Please help me with these groceries." Empirical evidence, however, suggests that at least under certain conditions women's sentences are shorter than men's. For example, at professional

conferences, the meantime used by women asking a question was reported to be less than half that used by men (Swacker, 1975).

From the theory above, the researcher highlighted that the using of coarse words, direct or indirectly in delivering the opinions, and short or long answers will be used in order to analyze the data under the category of Form.

2.3.2 Topic

Topic refers to the subject matter of the spoken utterance, to what the conversation is about. Mulcahy (1973), using a self-disclosure questionnaire with 97 adolescents, reported that female same-sex disclosure was greater than male same-sex disclosure. Major topics for girls were "tastes, interests, and personality" (p.343); for boys high disclosure clustered about "tastes, and interests, work (studies), and attitudes and opinions" (p.343). In accordance to that, Kramer (1974) captured much of the folklore related to topics of male and female conversations through her study based on *New Yorker* cartoons:

Men hold forth with authority on business, politics, legal matters, taxes, age, household expenses, electronic bugging, church collections, kissing, baseball, human relations, health and—women's speech. Women discuss social life, books, food and drink, pornography, life's troubles, caring for a husband, social work, age, and life-style. Several of the students who rated the cartoon captions said they considered all statements about economics, business or jobs to be male. (p. 83)

2.3.3 Content

Content refers to the categorization of the topics that are encoded in messages, such as "object in general," "actions in general," and the "possession

relation in general" (Bloom & Lahey, 1978, p. 11). This content differs from topic, since topic refers to particular objects, events, and ideas, whereas content refers to the more general concept of how the topic is referenced.

Lakoff (1975) himself writes a list of female adjectives which includes adorable, charming, lovely, and divine. Whereas male adjectives includes great, terrific, and neat. Moreover, Kramer (1974, p.22) suggested that "words of approval" such as nice, pretty, darling, charming, sweet, lovely, cute, and precious are used more frequently by women. In fact, Barron's (1971) study of speech by teachers and pupils during regular classroom activities showed similar patterns that women used more participative and purposive cases and men used more instrumental and objective cases. Specifically, women talked more about how people felt and why they behaved in certain ways while men's language focused more on objects and actions related to these objects. Furthermore, Gleser, Gottschalk, and Watkins (1959) studied the speech of 90 white adult men and women who were asked by a male examiner to tell about "any interesting or dramatic life experiences you have had" (p. 183). revealed that women used significantly more words implying feeling, emotion, or motivation (whether positive, negative, or neutral); they made more self-references and used more auxiliary words and negations. Male subjects referred more to time, space, quantity, and destructive action.

From that, the researcher highlighted that the using of words will be used in order to analyze the data under the category of Content. Whether it is hostile value judgement which referred to the instrumental cases like time, space, and

quantity or positive value judgement which referred to adjective and interjection that is usually being used by women.

2.3.4 Use

Bloom & Lahey (1978, p.20) stated that language use consists of the socially and cognitively determined selection of behaviors according to the goals of the speaker and the context of the situation. By this, men are stereotyped as the conveyors of information and fact, as in other word called assertive whereas tentativeness has been stereotyped as female.

Deborah Tannen described several differences about women and men language characteristics. Men grow up in a world in which conversation is competitive - they seek to achieve the upper hand or to prevent others from dominating them. Men, concerned with status, tend to focus more on independence. For women, however, talking is often a way to gain confirmation and support for their ideas. Women often think in terms of closeness and support, and struggle to preserve intimacy. Men see the world as a place where people try to gain status and keep it. Women see the world as “a network of connections seeking support and consensus”.

Assertiveness was observed as part of the male stereotype by Kramer (1974) in her study of cartoon captions. Lakoff (1975) suggests that women's speech is nonassertive. As in making request, men and women do that in different ways. She observed that women state requests and men issue commands. Tentativeness has been stereotyped as female. She also suggests that tag questions (e.g., "It's cold, isn't it?") are used far more often by women than by men. This

form of question avoids assertion and gives the addressee the option of agreeing or disagreeing. Women's speech is said to be "hedge marked". Women tend to say *you know, well, sort of/sort a, you see, I guess, or it seems like*. Women also are likely using tag question "John is here, isn't he?" to show their less assertiveness.

Concerning to the writer's study, the writer tends to use Adelaide Haas' theory (1979) because she provides the details on her theory rather than Yule's theory. The writer wants to explore more about her theory on the different language used by teenagers, both male and female, especially in matter of form, topic, content, and use. In this way, the characteristics between women and men language could be figured out clearly.

2.4 Previous Studies

The first previous studies that the researcher review is conducted by Puspitasari (2013) entitled *Woman and Man's Speech Style Used by the Main Characters in LOL (Laughing Out Loud) Movie*. Using Haas (1979) theory about gender differences in language, this study emphasized that there are several characteristics between woman and man's speech. Based on the form, female characters more use swears and slang words, but male character does not show it. It may cause by the different frequency of both characters, male and female, in the movie. The female characters have more scenes in interact with other characters than male character's scene. Based on the topic, women are likely to talk about life's trouble, pornography, and lifestyle. Meanwhile the topic that man built in this movie is only about life's trouble. The content of the woman shows positive value judgement whereas man shows hostile judgements which can be mean that

women are more supportive than men. The uses of the conversation shows by women are nonassertive but men are assertive. In other words, women are likely to make sure and open up option to the hearer while men are likely to say something directly. In accordance to the gender differences in teenagers, the researcher also use Styslinger (2008) journal article entitled *Gendered Performance during Peer Revision* as the second previous studies. This study purposed by the author using the mix method, both quantitative and qualitative approach. Using post-structural feminist theoretical framework, this study emphasized on the effects of gender construction on peer revision and the role of dominant ideology during peer revision. As a result, the behavior of care orientation in females makes them have less opportunity to benefit compositionally from the peer revision process rather than males with their self-fulfillment behavior. The role of dominant ideology in a society may be influencing female behaviors as certain versions of feminine are reinforced by the family and the school-that of the accommodating and caring female, so that they tend to accommodate for male organizational structure and interpersonal style more than males during peer revision. Yet, male and female students appear capable of playing a wide range of linguistic roles. The language they used doesn't appear to be sex-exclusive and may indicate performance of gender.

From above, we can see that the language difference in the first previous study emphasized on male and female in adulthood only, and the gender performances in the second study showed that they emphasized on the effect of their performances in peer revision process of the teenagers, both boys and girls.

Given that, the researcher's intention to study gender characteristics in teenagers' language is more likely worth doing because it is not only focuses on the teenagers but also emphasize on the language characteristics. Although there has been a study about how teenagers do gender in their daily life, which according to Yearwood (2009), doing gender means that they physically perform an act of the gender as in girls playing build a home or nest for they stuffed toys in quiet and boys do the "challenge" run competition with loud voices, the researcher's intention is to look whether teenagers also have that gender differences in their way of speak, like men and women in general, or they have their own characteristics in speaking.