

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter mainly describes about the background of the study as well as the problem, the objectives, and the definitions of terms used in the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Each person's life is lived as a series of conversations. We make conversations with our partner, our parents, our siblings, our co-workers, and even with a stranger. We do not only talk to the same gender as in male to male or female to female, but also between different gender as in male to female or vice versa. Seeing that, there have been some distinctions in the way men and women talks. As for the linguistic forms which are used by women and men contrast in all speech communities, it is claimed that women are more linguistically polite than men, women talk more than men, and even women and men emphasize different speech functions. In addition, men are more likely than women to speak assertively, talk more in public, and interrupt conversations while women are less likely than men to speak in public and are more likely to use hesitant phrasing and to end statements with a question (“tag questions”) (Tannen, 1990).

As has been mentioned, this basic premise of the various perspectives of gender and language seems to apply in male and female in the adulthood only. However, there are teenagers, male and female, who also communicate just the

same way as men and women. In fact, within across cultures, girls and boys have different styles of play and prefer different activities (Gibbons et al. 1997). One dimension that distinguishes boys' and girls' activities is the extent to which activities are oriented toward competition or cooperation. As stated by Maccoby (1998) when it comes to a bunch of groups of boys or girls, girls' interactions are more likely to involve cooperative social dramatic activities, and boys are more likely to participate in more solitary or competitive group play. As such, Olds et al. (2009) concluded that boys are more likely than girls to engage in activities such as playing with computers and sports. In contrast, girls are relatively more likely to prefer cooperative one-on-one activities and spend time visiting friends in their homes (Garton and Pratt 1991; Olds et al. 2009). In accordance to this, boys who are oriented toward competitive activities may prefer interactions with others who are likely to have similar preferences, namely other boys and girls who are oriented toward cooperative activities may prefer interactions with other girls who are more likely to share their preferences for cooperative activities.

These gender differences in activities can also lead to gender differences in language use where boys use language to assert their dominance through commands and challenging statements, whereas girls learn to use language to create and maintain social closeness through supportive and inclusive forms of talk (Leaper, 2014; Leaper & Ayres, 2007; Maltz & Borker, 1982). From this distinction of gender characteristics in language use, the researcher's intent is to study more about it in the case of teenagers, especially in teenagers between the ages of 14 until 18 years old. There is a possibility of teenagers having their own

characteristics of language influenced by their environment. They might know which words that boys or girls should or should not speak, or when to speak the particular words, or to whom the words should be spoken, etc. It is also interesting to study whether this gender difference in language use begins from a young age or it happens from a specific age, boys and girls.

In accordance to the topic of this study, there had been several previous studies that concern about gender difference in language and in their activities. Puspitasari (2013) studied about Woman and Man's Speech Style Used by the Main Characters in *LOL (Laughing Out Loud)* Movie. As a result, there are several differences 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. 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 judgement. The uses of the conversation shows by women are nonassertive but men are assertive.

Correspondingly to the gender differences in teenagers, Styslinger (2008) studied about Gender Performance 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. In addition, 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. 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.

Another realm to explore is the conversations that happen in a talk show. A talk show or chat show is a television programming or radio programming genre in which one person (or group of people) discusses various topics put forth by a talk show host (Stelter, 2010). Usually, guests consist of a group of people who are learned or who have great experience in relation to whatever issue is

being discussed on the show for that episode. Other times, a single guest discusses their work or area of expertise with a host or co-hosts. From the researcher's perspective, the YouTube Channel named Fine Brothers Entertainment is one of these kinds of talk show, even though it is an internet based programming. As in their channel, there are videos of different kinds of people from different ages such as elders, college students, teenagers, and children being asked about their opinions as in reactions, feelings, or ideas regarding to a particular topic, and they could be considered as having a discussion in that question and answer session in the videos. Although the guest in the video is not an expert of the topic discussed, it is what the researcher's look for because it can be considered as discussion in everyday life.

Considering the title of this study is about language characteristics in teenagers based on their gender differences follows the source data which will be taken from a video of an everyday conversation about particular topics. Particularly, the video's topic that is going to be used as the source data is about bullying regarding the fact that bullying happens almost everywhere and every time especially in teenagers' life. In this video, the teenagers are being asked some questions about their opinions towards bullying, whether they've been bullied or not, what are their opinions towards a bully, and how to overcome bullying in the schools from their perspectives. Furthermore, this study is concerned with whether teenagers have a different pattern on answering those questions, based on their gender. This study will look upon the fact of how the behavior of boys is

different from girls under the premise that females do more personal conversation rather than the males, and relating that to teenagers' language.

1.2 Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the study above, the problems of this study are formulated as below:

1. What are the language characteristics shown by male teenagers in reacting to bullying?
2. What are the language characteristics shown by female teenagers in reacting to bullying?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Related to the problems of the study above, the objectives of the study are as follow:

1. To investigate the language characteristics shown by male teenagers in reacting to bullying.
2. To investigate the language characteristics shown by female teenagers in reacting bullying.

1.4 Definition of Key Terms

For a better understanding, the important key terms used in this study have been defined. The following terms are:

Gender Language Characteristics: Certain characteristics on the use of linguistic item produced based on different gender.

Teenagers: Biologically, a teenager (plural: teenagers) is a human being between the stages of puberty and maturity. By this study, the researcher pointed the age of the children for the data, between 14 until 18 years old.

Teens React To: Teens React To is the second series, off-camera, showing teenagers several viral videos or popular YouTubers and having them react to the videos launched by The Fine Brothers.

Gender: Gender is the range of characteristics belongs to, and differentiating between, masculinity and femininity. In this context, these characteristics may include biological sex (i.e. the state of being male, female, or an intersex variation which may complicate sex assignment).

Gender-Based Analysis: Gender-Based Analysis assesses the differential impacts on women and men by considering their different life situations - their different socio-economic realities. It also recognizes that the realities of women's and men's lives are different and that equal opportunity does not necessarily mean equal results.