CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   The Background of Study

Language and gender issues always exist within the society. Society consist of many cultures. People are constantly coming into contact with these issues in the course of daily lives, so they are unavoidable. In social life, gender difference issue or cultures can cause miscommunication between male and female. Therefore, being familiar with language and gender concepts and understanding language and gender issues can help people acquire clearer and deeper understanding of gender differences in society.

In the study of language and gender, there are numerous studies that have been described and raised many issues on the differences between males and females in their way take communications. Tannen (1990:85) stated that male and female have different ways in communication, males tend to use language to gain the status, while females use the language to negotiate closeness and intimacy. Females use rapport talk to build and maintain relationships, while men use report talk to communicate factual information. It can be inferred that male and female have different objectives in using the language and they differently treated the language in their communication. Males use the language to gain the status while females use the language to negotiate closeness and intimacy.

In generalizing about sex differences, all cultures set up social norms for the sexes, which go beyond the biological differences, although societies differ in

the way traits are assigned to men and women. Lury (1995) also emphasis on the fact that culture is not gender neutral. According to Burman & Parker (1993:1), Language contains the most basic categories that we use to understand ourselves, affecting the way we act as women or as men and reproducing the way we define our cultural identity. "Sex" is a biological category that serves as a fundamental basis for the differentiation of roles, norms, and expectations in all societies, whereas "gender" is the term used to describe socially constructed categories based on sex (Coates, 1986; Eckert, 1989).

In reality, not all women communicate to gain status and not all men communicate to negotiate closeness and intimacy. Not all people communicate in accordance with its cultural identity background. Each person has different character to communicate. It could be gender and culture influence the way people communicate but may not. For instance, not all of Sundanese people get communication inclosed way. And not all of the Bataknese people use language directly and straight to the point.

Electronic communication has blurred the boundaries of spoken and written languages. The boundaries between the two genres are merging to such an extent that a new 'Lingo' is emerging causing distinction between formal and informal language is vanishing. Naughton (1999) tells us that this 'New Lingua' which is emerging has similar effects on society as print, the railways, the telegraph, the automobile, electronic power and television. While Raacke and Bonds-Raacke (2008) did not find gender differences in the most popular uses and gratifications for social networking sites (i.e. keeping in touch with friends), they

do note several differences in the way men and women use online social networking sites. This phenomena also occur in twitter. Twitter is one of social media, it is a place of expressioning peoples' daily life. The latest information and real time news make teenagers always foremost among his friends. As a social network, Twitter users come from different cultural , social and gender background and also different language characteristics.

Twitter is a wide variety of language which is not the language standard (informal). The usage of language thus has the aim to talk more communicative, relaxed, and intimate. Wijana and Rohmadi(2006: 169) found "The use of informal language is usually followed or adapted to the circumstances and the situation of communication. Communication on twitter i.e: in whom question, to whom, what issues and for what purposes the communication was made". The communications were conducted in Twitter is about the daily life and other small talk that leads to the another topics or communication. So it will be more communicative when users choose a wide informal language.

The aim of investigating language and gender is to find out the varieties of speech associated with a particular gender, or social norms for such gendered language use. Tannen (1990:17) claimed that it is necessary to identify them in order to avoid needlessly blaming. Learning the others' way of talking is a leap across the communication gap between men and women, and a giant step towards genuine understanding. This statement implies that learning gender differences is useful to understanding the other gender's way of communication in order to

prevent miscommunication. This study also aims to find out how the cultures affect the way male and female use language, especially in twitter.

Indeed, the phenomenon above is available in Media social habit. It can be in many forms of media social including in twitter. In terms of twitter, there are many status and comments of their participants. For instance, tweets and comments from Sundanese male to Bataknese male:

@atepalisaque: moal kang RT*"@rajasinaga_*: Mau kupecahkan aja kepalanya kalo ku dengar cakapnya RT *@ atepalisaque:* : Farhat Abbas ini mah,lieur eta.

The tweets written by Atep Muhammad Al-Ishaque, he is a Sundanese male. In his twitter account *@atepalisaque* and then retweeted by Raja Sinaga, a Bataknese male uses his account @rajasinaga_. Both of males are active in offering opinions about Farhat Abbas. But the Bataknese male uses the offensive language while Sundanese uses polite language and he mixing the language with his vernacular language.

Tweets and comments from Sundanese male to Bataknese female.

"@tarigan_rose: Pengen aj. Ga boleh y???!?!hahaa :D RT *@atepalisaque:* Naon eta neng? RT*"@tarigan_rose*: hihihiiiiii….☺RT *@atepalisaque:*: glory glory akang MU! "

The tweets written by Atep Muhammad Al-Ishaque, he is a Sundanese male. In his twitter account @atepalishaque and then retweeted by Rosita Tarigan, a Bataknese female uses her account @tarigan_rose. In the status Sundanese male

uses language inclosed way but the Bataknese female comment the tweet with laugh and used some symbols and emoticon to retweet the status. It shows that there are different ways and characters when they do the communication.

From the communication above, it can be known that twitter participants have own different character to get communication. In relation to the study, there are some previous researches. Basirah Nazir (2012) in her study Gender Pattern on Facebook: A Sociolinguistic Perspective. This paper is summarized of tracing differences and similarities among the way sexes use internet particularly social networking site, Facebook. The differences exist on multiple levels and research shows that even on internet one is not a human being rather a 'man' or a 'woman'. All these have been exhibited through language and the choices they make. The findings show that women are into facebook for maintaining existing relationships by being polite while men are more likely to go for new relations and all.

Based on the previous researches and the phenomenon, however male and female use the language in the way they are, the researcher interested to be studied the gender language characteristics of twitter participants of different cultures.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the study above, the problems were formulated in questions as the following:

1. What are the language characteristics of male and female on Twitter?

2. How do the cultures affect the way male and female communicate on Twitter?

3. Why do males and females on Twitter use the language in the way they are?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

Based on the problem of the study, the objectives of the research are to find out:

1. to investigate the language characteristics of male and female on Twitter

2. to describe how the cultures affect the way male and female use language on Twitter.

3. to explain why males and females on twitter use language in the way they are.

1.4. The Scope of the Study

This study is talking about language and gender; the way of males and females communicate in social media. In this study, the researcher focuses on the different ways of males and females use the language on Twitter. The researcher observed the different gendered language characteristics of male and female of different cultures on twitter through their status and comments.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

Findings of the study were expected theoretically and practically to give much contribution in the world of children language acquisition research.

1. Theoretically, this study became the basic of the further research for researcher who also interested in investigating the same area with different focus and object.

2. Practically, findings of this study became some sort of information for the social media users about gender language characteristics of social media.

3. Linguistically, findings of the study are expected to be an additional reference of male and female's linguistics features in communication.