

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

When life exists, language exists, this statement was the linguistic principle of human language. Language has a very important role in human life. There are four language skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Susanto, 2015). In this case, speaking is one of the language skills which is a means of communicating ideas that are compiled and developed according to the needs of the listener. And it can be said that human beings use language in their lives for various purpose such as humans use language to speak experiences, to ask questions, provide information, describe events or provide knowledge. And also humans will not be able to convey the results of their thoughts to listeners if not expressed language in a spoken or written way.

The language used verbally and in writing has different characteristics of each human. Humans also have differences in gender. Eggin (2004) discussed that gender refers to values, rights and responsibilities socially and culturally given to someone due to the consequence of the fact that she/he is male or female. In simple terms, it can be seen that gender can be distinguished by their socio-cultural behavior, including speech and if it looks masculine, then he is male and if it looks feminine, then she is female. Males and females are not only different in their physical appearance, but also in the way men and women use their language. Gender differences in language are not only a linguistic phenomenon but also a social phenomenon.

Gender differences in human life are a basic fact of social life. In social life there are several factors for differences in the language used, so that they can affect the way people communicate with other people. According to Potter & Perry in Purwaningsih (2013), in communication, there are several factors that can influence the communication process, namely, age development factors, perceptions, values, socio-cultural background, emotions, knowledge, roles, environment, gender, distance, self-image, and physical condition. And it can be concluded that one of the factors that affect the way a person communicates is gender. When women and men communicate, interactions can occur, so that these interactions can affect the language characteristics of men and women.

Men and women have different language characteristics. In certain contexts, the characters of the language used can be classified as polite, precise, intimate, or functional as in their communication. Judging from his linguistic elements, Lakoff (as cited in Holmes, 2013) suggested that women are supposed to speak more politely than men. It is commonly known that males usually are more direct and demanding in their way of communicating, while females tend to be more modest and polite.

Lakoff (2004) stated that there are many things that form the basis for the emergence of differences between women and men in language. Where, male language is more assertive, mature, and likes to speak openly with the right vocabulary. And, the language women use is indecisive, non-open, and women more often use more refined and polite words or through gestures. In addition, according to Lakoff, if a woman feels unsure of a problem, she will question herself and not have confidence in themselves. Therefore, many problems that arise end in question marks (Lakoff, 2004; Kuntjara, 2004).

In the use of language, men and women have differences in their use. The differences in language usage are in accordance with the following statement Rasekh & Saeb (2015) emphasizing that men and women are also different in linguistics. It has been agreed by linguists that the differences in the characteristics of the language used between men and women can be observed and distinguished. It is believed that it cannot be contested in people's lives. Intersexuality is an anomaly in people's lives.

Coulmas (2013) defines, sociolinguistics emphasizes the importance of how men and women speak differently in various social contexts, and how men and women can also use specific functions in language to convey social meaning or as a means to express their identities. This statement implies that the goals of women and men when speaking can be seen from their chosen vocabulary. And the way men and women speak different languages is very much determined by the context, namely time, place, event, social environment in society.

In communication between men and women, there are several stereotypes in society that women are more polite than men who communicate directly and assertively. This is an arena in society that has become inherent in social practice, and the roles of men and women have been reflected. In physical appearance, women are weaker than men, so women do housekeeping and household chores.

This phenomenon affects the using of language, and affects the language, according to Eggins and Martin (2004) there are four factors that affect the using of language differences, such as status, formality, affect and contact. Gender differences in language are one aspect of linguistic differences that are widespread in society, reflecting the social status of differences in power. For example, if a community has a high level of

the hierarchy, and the levels of men or women are higher in each hierarchy, then the language differences between what women and men say will reflect the broader differences in the overall social hierarchy.

Padmadewi, Merlyna, & Saputra (2014) stated that language variation is a type or variety of language whose use is adjusted to its function and situation. This statement states that men and women will use the language according to their situation. In situations of social interactions, men and women have different interests in choosing topics. According to Tannen (2013), men are more interested in choosing topics related to politics, economy, sports, and the latest news, while women are more interested in choosing topics about family activities or family matters, such as children's education, clothing, food, and fashion.

According to Chandra, D, & Yulia, M (2018), the language used by men and women is different, men tend to maintain masculinity, while women maintain femininity. In speaking, women are full of consideration because the language used by women shows the characteristics of women's behavior. Therefore, women avoid speaking taboo words in speaking (Hidayat, 2014). However, men tend to swear more than women. So it can be concluded that in language use, women use more polite forms and more compliments than men.

Based on the writer's experience in the school, the findings of male students did not perform specific language characteristics, and female students did not perform specific language characteristics as suggested by theories. In the school environment, male students sometimes used female language characteristics, and female students used male language characteristics. Female students use direct sentences and short sentences

when female students talk to male students. In this case, it can be seen when the teaching and learning situation in this case, it can be seen when the class situation is not conducive or noisy, and one of the female students makes a greeting, "*Jangan ribut*" to the students. The utterances, "*Jangan ribut*" are formed in command sentences. A command can directly control different aspect of another person's thinking or behavior.

Female : Jangan ribut!(Be quiet!)

Male : Siapa yang ribut?(Who is noisy?)

Female: Kau, siapa lagi? Kau yang paling keras suaranya (You, who's anything else? You're the loudest)

Male : Jangan langsung marahlah, ka.(Don't be angry,sist)

Meanwhile, when the teaching and learning situation takes place in the classroom but the classroom conditions are not conducive or noisy and male students will say "*Jangan ribut, tolonglah teman-teman*". Male avoided the using of direct and more polite when he ordered something. The characteristics of male language are not realized in his utterances. The male used the super polite form in their utterances.

Male : Jangan ribut, tolonglah teman-teman. (Be quiet, please)

Female: Iihhh, bukannya suaramu paling kuat. (Iihhh, your voice is the loudest)

Male : Aku dari tadi diam. Jadi tolonglah jangan ribut, nanti aku yang dimarahin Maam. (I have been silent. So please be quiet, Ma'am will scold me).

Based on Lakoff's (2004) proposed theories on the existence of women's language, this contrasts with the data above, where in that conversation, women do not use the characteristics of women's language. And vice versa, men also do not use male language characteristics like the opinion of experts. Whereas one of the male language

characteristics, as Crawford (1997) suggested that men are more direct than women because men use communication to show power. It contrasts with Crawford (1997) who stated that in their communication, men use less of politeness and seldom to keep someone's feeling. And, it contracts Lakoff's claims about women's speech '*will you please close the door?*' as an imperative construction, where Lakoff in Holmes (2013) suggested that women's speech can be distinguished from the men's speech in a number of language characteristics, such as lexical hedge/fillers, tag question, empty adjective, etc.

There are some recent research and expert opinion that has been done to investigate language differences. And what is unique in this study from previous studies is that in previous studies (Indriany, 2016), which examined gender speech styles in debate, however, there is still minimal research conducted in schools. Leoni (2018) researched with a theory about women language features to answer one problem in the study. However, there are still minimal who have researched with two theories. And there are previous studies conducted by (Park, 2016) that researched through social media platforms and (Putra, 2018) by studying through an event television; however, there is still minimal research conducted in schools. Rizki (2019) conducted researchers by contributing to society in general. However, this topic still has minimal contribution to education. Although these studies were conducted in different ways, they have revealed gender using in language.

Based on the research findings through preliminary data, the researcher is interested in investigating the characteristics of gender language in different phenomena, as seen in the preliminary data found by the researcher, where female students use direct

sentences and short sentences while male students use less direct sentences and more polite. In fact, based on the theory that men and women use different language characteristics such as women should speak more politely than men, and men use direct sentences, but this is not entirely true. It was found that the language characteristics used by male and female students are sometimes not language characteristics found in boys and girls, therefore this phenomenon is important to be studied.

B. The Problems of the Study

Based on the background in previous part, the problems of the study are formulated as following:

1. What are the gender language characteristics used by students in school?
2. Why do students interact using the characteristics of the gender language?

C. The Objectives of the Study

Based on the problems, the objectives of the study are:

1. To analyze the gender language characteristics used by students in school.
2. To explain the reasons why do students interact using the characteristics of the gender language.

D. The Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is focused on the different ways of males and females in using language characteristics in daily conversation. Different gender characteristics used by male and female students in school of SMP Negeri 1 Sibolga will be observed and studied through their utterances.

E. The Significances of the Study

Findings of the study are expected to be useful theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study is expected to give further information and theories about gender language characteristics used by students in school. Meanwhile, practically this study is expected to:

- a. Theoretically, findings of this study are expected to give contribution to linguistic theories about gender and language in different phenomena. In other words, the findings can add up horizons to the adding of sociolinguistics.
- b. Practically, findings of this study are expected to contribute more information about gender and language that can be practiced or to avoid misunderstanding on differences in language characteristics in the male and female.
- c. Furthermore, this finding can be a source for English teachers who want to get a lot of information related to differences in language characteristics in male and female students.