CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of the present study that covers background, research questions, aims of the research, significance of the research,clarification of key terms, and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background

There is a phenomenon of self-reference which occurs among young adults in Indonesia. Indonesian young adult speakers have several alternatives for saying 'I',such as*aku, saya, gua/gue*, proper names, kinship terms (e.g. *aa* 'older brother', *teteh* 'older sister'), ethnic terms (e.g. Sundanese pronouns such as *abdi, urang,*and*aing*), and the avoidance self-referring term, or zero anaphora.

Those self-referring terms are realized by Indonesian speakers in different contexts or situations including formality, intimacy, and kinship relations. In terms of formality, self-reference (first person pronoun) is divided into formal and informal pronouns (Mintz, 1994). Meanwhile, in terms of intimacy, self-reference falls into two classifications including close (intimate) and distant pronoun forms. For example, *saya*is considered a formal form which indicates distant relationships while *aku*is considered an informal form which indicates intimate relationships between speakers and interlocutors (Djenar, 2007; Mintz, 1994).

In relation to*formality and intimacy, kinship relations appear to influence the use of self-reference among Indonesian speakers (Djenar, 2007; Sneddon, 2006). For instance, when talking with family, the speakers tend to use informal pronoun forms such as *aku*, proper names and kinship terms (e.g. *teteh*, *aa*) rather than the formal forms such as pronoun *saya*as self-reference.

Furthermore, within the same speech situation, variation can occur between speakers as well as by the same speaker. Djenar (2007) examined the use of self-reference and its variation such as the pronouns *aku*, *saya*, *gua/gue*, and

proper names by using examples from the speech of celebrities. The variation of self-reference is also associated with the issue of power and politeness. Saragih (2012) identified how Papuan Malay speakers use self-reference, address-reference and third party reference in their daily conversation and why they do that.

Another factor underlying the phenomenon of self-reference is gender. Gender is one of the social variables which influences the use of language variation and indicates the characterization of gender markings, namely men's language variety and women's language variety (Jendra, 2012). The factors that influence the varieties found between men's and women's language are believed to be more of social than biological nature (Jendra, 2012). In accordance with the statement, Wardhaugh (2006) also stated that gender is socially constructed, involving the whole scope of psychological, social and cultural differences between males and females.

Among those previous studies, none of them investigatedthe use of self-reference across contexts and gender influence towards the use of self-reference in Indonesian. Therefore, the present research aims to examine how young adults realize self-reference in different contexts of conversation including formality, intimacy, and kinship relationsand also to identify gender influence (i.e. gender preferential) among young adults in using self-referring terms.

1.2 Research Questions

There are two questions underlying this study:

1. How do young adults realize self-reference in conversation within different contexts and or situations?
2. Does gender influence the realization of self-reference? If so, what are the underlying reason(s) for those variations?

1.3 Aims of the Research

This research aims to:

1. Investigate the realization of self-reference in different contexts or situations including formality, intimacy, and kinship relations among young adults by using DCT questionnaire
2. Identify gender influences (i.e. gender preferential) in using self-referring terms and the underlying reasons.

1.4 Significance of the Research

This research is useful to investigate how social variables such as formality, intimacy, kinship relations, and gender influence the realization of self-reference among young adults. Henceforth, itmay give some contributions to the study of sociolinguistics in Indonesia.

1.5 Clarification of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, some of important terms are clarified as follows:

a) **Self-Reference**

Self-reference is the way in which a person refers to him/herself. Self-reference is realized in pronoun 'I' or its equivalence. In Indonesia, there are several pronouns 'I' used as self-reference, such as *saya*, *aku*, *gue*, proper names and so forth (Djenar, 2007).

b) **Formality**

Formality refers to one of the language varieties.This language variety falls into two classifications, namely formal and informal language varieties. Formal language variety is referred to the language used in official occasions such as in college lecturers, academic seminars, and so on, while informal language variety is used in everyday situations and or casual conversations (Jendra, 2012).

c) Intimacy

Intimacy is defined as "a relational process in which we come to know the innermost, subjective aspects of another, and are known in a like manner" (Chelune et al., 1984 as cited in Djenar, 2007, p. 26). Intimacy also refers to the personal relationships between the speaker and the interlocutor in which the speaker considers the interlocutor as a member of a social group, a friend or a person, who shares some commonalities with the speaker (Moghadam et al., 2013).

d) Kinship Relations

Kinship relations refer to people who are members of the same family (Yule, 2010). Related to kinship relations, there are terms used by speakers to refer to relatives, namely kinship terms. The terms describe how people in various parts of the world refer to relatives by age, blood, gender, generation and marriage (Wardhaugh, 2006).

e) Gender Preferential

Gender preferential is defined as the features of language which can be used by both sexes but are preferred by one of them (Holmes, 2001; Meyerhoff, 2006). These features consist of lexical varieties, the pitch of speech, and the standard use of language features of male and female speech (Yelkenac, 2001).

1.6 Organization of the Paper

The research paper consists of five chapters. The first chapter introduces the present studies that provide the background of the research, research questions, aims of the research, significance of the research, clarification of key terms, and organization of the paper. The second chapter presents literature review that covers the related concepts and theories relevant to the research questions. The third chapter discusses the research design and procedures for data collection and analysis. The fourth chapter presents the analysis, findings, and interpretation of the findings. Finally, chapter five concludes the present study and offers some suggestions.