CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the background of the research. It also explains the statements of problem of the research, purposes of the research, scope of the research, significance of the research, the clarification of terms, and the organization of the paper.

1.1.   Background of the study

The field of sociolinguistics has frequently addressed many issues concerning the relationship between gender and language. According to some researchers in this particular topic, men and women have been proven to talk and behave differently (Coates, 2004; Graddol & Swann, 1989). The differences that these researchers refer to is regarding the use of certain linguistic forms within the English language. The employment of swear words, in this case, is one of the instances. A swear word is defined by Swan (1995) as a strong language that expresses the speaker's powerful emotion. The act of swearing itself is an interesting aspect of language because as Andersson and Trudgill (1990) argue, it is often used as a tool to express strong emotions and attitudes in society.

Swear words are often associated with taboo words. This is because both are studied under the scope of bad language, which means that these words are considered indecent and inappropriate in polite context (Aditia, 2011). The act of swearing, as Jay and Janschewitz (2008) argue, may involve the use of taboo language in order to express the speaker's emotional feeling. However, not all swear words are considered taboo, and vice versa. Thus, to distinguish swear words from taboo words, the degree of how taboo a swearing expression is has to be taken into consideration. The consideration here depends on the context. Ningjue (2010) has stated that social and cultural context affects the employment of taboo words. In some cultures, for instance, taboo words and phrases are considered very sensitive to talk about, especially when they are used in polite or formal settings, such as church, media, or education field. Meanwhile, in other cultures, swear word expressions have become common since they have been

used for such a long time. Therefore, several swear words are no longer considered taboo when it comes to the use outside formal or polite contexts.

Discussing the use of swear words, some scholars have pointed out that gender might be one of the factors which influence it. Lakoff (1975), for instance, discovers that there is a linguistic disparity between how men and women speak. She states that women's speech is regarded as more polite, refined, and 'ladylike'. The use of polite forms and avoidance of swearing, in this case, often limits women's opportunity to display their strong emotions. This somehow contributes to women's inferior role in society (Lakoff, 1975). Knyazyan (2015) also mentions that gender has an impact on the vocabulary used when swearing. She argues that swearing is another aspect of daily life where double standards exist: when men swear, it is mirthful or tough. When women do it, it is coarse and uncouth (Knyazyan, 2015). Men and women also have different tendencies in using types of swear word. Certain types of swear words, as Jay (2009) asserts, are used more frequently by women rather than by men (e.g. *oh my god, b**ch, p*ss, and r*t*rd*). Despite this, Coates (2004) claims that the stereotypes that males are more tough-talking while females tend to never swear should be now be rejected. This is because, according to her, female speakers have currently become more familiar in using a wide range of taboo words.

A specific setting where swear words are often used by both males and females in present days is YouTube. YouTube is one the largest video-sharing websites which are daily accessed by billions of people in the internet. The videos that are uploaded to YouTube are restricted by several specific rules. One of the rules is regarding the use of language. Stude Braker (2016) the staff writer of YouTube, states that videos depicting violence, hard language or other taboo subjects would be receiving less revenue from advertisements. However, apparently, those rules are not exactly followed by some YouTubers. Both male and female YouTubers still constantly use swear words in their videos, regardless of the content types. This becomes worth noticing considering that YouTube users are mostly in the age range from 18-49 year olds. Since many of them seem to

view some YouTubers as their role models, the bad words and attitudes shown on their YouTube videos can be easily imitated by the audience.

The use of swear words in different genres have been previously studied by some scholars (Aditian, 2011; Susetyaningsih, 2014; Permadi, 2017). Conducted within the scope of movies, these studies have shown that swear words were used to: 1) express the speaker's emotion, 2) emphasize intention of the talk, and 3) the use of swear words were mostly caused by linguistics motive. In the case of YouTube, the use of swear words has previously been studied by Timur (2017). She found that mostly the speaker used swear words idiomatically in order to attract the viewers without offending them. In terms of the reasons for swearing, she discovered that the use of swear words could be used as the most effective way to express feelings to other people in a funny way. These previous research on swear words have indeed provided a comprehensive understanding regarding the motives of swear words use. However, these studies have not specifically focused on the use of swear words between male and female.

Therefore, this research is conducted to investigate the use of swear words by male and female YouTubers. With regards to this purpose, two YouTube videos by male and female YouTubers which contain swear words are used as the research data. The male YouTuber observed in this study is MR, while the female YouTuber is TM. Both MR and TM have more than 3.000.000 subscribers on their YouTube channels. Therefore, it is assumed that both of them can be good examples of how swear words are used on YouTube. This study employs two different theoretical frameworks. The first theory is based on Andersson and Trudgill (1990), which classify swear word into four categories, namely expletive, abusive, humorous or auxiliary swear word. The second theoretical framework is proposed by Andersson and Hirsch (1985), who generalized the categorizations of motives for swearing into three motives: psychological, social, and linguistic motives.

1.2. Statements of Problems

In accordance with the introduction above, the study raises these research questions:

1. What swear word types are used by the male and the female YouTubers?

2. What motives are found that affect the use of the swear word types?

1.3. Purpose of the Research

In line with the research questions, this study aims to investigate the types of swear words that are used by male and female YouTubers. This study also attempts to identify possible motives that influence the use of swear words by male and female YouTubers in their YouTube videos.

1.4. Scope of the Research

In this research, the analysis will be limited on the types of swear words that are used by male and female YouTubers in their videos and their motives for using these swear words. The types of swear words in this study are based on Andersson and Trudgill's (1990) theoretical framework, which consist of: (1) expletive, (2) abusive, (3) humorous, and (4) auxiliary. Meanwhile, to analyze the motives for using swear words in male and female's YouTube videos, the researcher uses Andersson and Hirsch's theory (1985) which classifies the motives into three categories: (1) psychological motives, (2) social motives, and (3) linguistic motives.

1.5. Significance of the Research

This research is expected to give some contributions to the field of sociolinguistics. The researcher expects that the result of this study will contribute to existing studies on language and gender, especially regarding swear words. The researcher also expects that the findings of the study will be useful for some students who are interested in investigating swear words. This study can then be used as a reference for further research.

1.6. Clarification of Terms

Some of the terms are used in this research:

1. Swearing

   Swearing, in this study, is "a type of language use in which the expression can refers to something that is taboo and/or stigmatized in the culture; should not be interpreted literally; and can be used to express strong emotions and attitudes (Andersson & Trudgill, 1992).

2. Swear Words

   Swear words refer to strong strong language that expresses their powerful emotion. Swearing itself is an interesting aspect of language, which involves emotional and linguistic expressions (Swan, 1995).

4. Taboo Language

   Taboo language is "a culturally conditioned response to the experience of certain conditions" (Montagu, 1967).

1.7. Organization of the Paper

In this paper the study is divided into five chapters as follow:

1. Chapter I Introduction: This chapter describes the background of the research. It also explain the statement of problem of the research, purposes of the research, scope of the research, significance of the research, the clarification of terms, and the organization of the paper.

2. Chapter II Theoretical Background: This chapter presents literature review that explains the relevant theories for the present study, those are: sociolinguistics and language variety, swear words, types of swear words, swearing context, swear words and gender, and socio-pragmatic functions. Previous studies are also provided in this chapter.

3. Chapter III Methodology: This chapter presents all elements regarding the research method applied in conducting this research. The discussion in this chapter includes research design, data collection, and data analysis.

4. Chapter IV Findings and Discussion: This chapter explains the findings and the discussion of the study.

5. Chapter V Conclusion and Suggestion: This chapter explains the conclusion and suggestion regarding to the results of the study