CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The research is concerned with the types of slang and gender influence on the use of slang among teenagers. This chapter contains the background of the research, research questions, purposes of the research, scope of the research, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper.

1.1. Background of the Research

The development of technology and foreign cultures nowadays are very influential to the life of teenagers'. With that development their attitudes, behaviors, and habits are changing not only the way they dress, but also the way they interact and communicate to another. Thus, the variety of language used by them may also change.

According to Owen (2006: 1), language can be defined as a socially acceptable code or conventional system to deliever concepts through the use of symbols and combinations of the desired symbols that are governed by the provisions. The opinion above is similar to the statement of Tarin (1989: 4) who gives two definitions of language. First, language is a systematic symbol that may

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be also as a generative system. Second, language is a set of arbitrary symbols which is expressed by the speaker (as cited in Siroj, Badrus. 2011).

Nowadays, the development of technology and foreign culture in Indonesia generates a language variation which is raised by certain community (Wartagunadharma Article, 2011:1). That variation becomes popular and spread among teenagers. It can also be understood by members of the community. It does not form a new language, but it develops into slang.

According to Ellis (2005: 53), slang is a variety of language used in certain contexts by meaning of which people express their sense of belonging to a particular group within the community which is not specific to any geographic location. Swan (1996: 22) notes that:

"slang is a word, expressions or special use of language found mainly in very informal speech, especially in the usage of particular groups of people. For example nick 'prison; whitey' white men".

In Indonesia, slang has been popular since 1970 and people started to use it. This phenomenon is widely spreads among children from the transition's age to teenagers (Wartagunadharma Articles, 2011: 2, line 2-3). Firstly, this language variation was originally known as the "street language or language thugs" because it is usually used by gangsters as a code and only understood by their own group. In addition, this variation is also used by teenagers to follow a number of media such as from television, radio, movies, magazines, and others, or to convey something in secret without being known by their parents or teachers.

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Slang continues evolving from time to time. There are some words that has been introduced since 1970s. Those words are still often used, but not a few of them are replaced by another term to be more "funky". Later this kind of language is popular and widely used in everyday conversation by the teenagers (Meilinawati, 2011).

Basically, there are two main concerns of teenagers those are identity and recognition (Wartagunadharma Article, 2011:2). Pronunciation and writing the language with their own style could be the formation of both concerns. Evans (1968, as cited in Berger, 1968, 8-10) states that teenagers use such inappropriate language (slang) because there is something they should hide from their parents or teachers. Furthermore, Thome (2004, cited in WKSU News, 2004: 24) says that teenagers want to introduce their independence from adults and identity with unique culture.

Based on Thongkamdee (1998: 3-4) new slang words are always invested by teenagers. Teenagers use slang in order to make sentences shorter, faster, and easier to say. Those slang expressions are used in different ways and different meanings from literal or dictionary meaning. Teenagers classify themselves by introducing their language use in order to show their group identity. Wartagunadharma (2011: 3) argues that in every countries teenagers have their own slang words.

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Teenagers who are unstable and like to imitate, are easy to catch and use slang instead of using the right and correct Indonesian. Moreover, they think that this language is "funky". So, those who do not use this language will be considered to be outdated or obsolete. According to Owen (2004), teenagers begin to sense the words that have double meanings. They like to use metaphor, irony, and play with many words to express opinions, even their feelings. Sometimes they create the new expressions that are not standard which is then known by the term slang (Papalia: 2004).

According to Meilinawati (2011), who is a language observer in one of universities in Bandung, there are two main reasons of teenagers to use the language with its own characteristics. First, they establish themselves as a particular social group namely teenagers. Second, this is a form of resistance against the dominance of the standard language or the rules of language that has been established. It means that teenagers are creating the identity of the language they have made by themselves. Teenagers as the group of ages who are looking for their self identity have a specific style in written language on social media. There is a kind of uniformity of style that becomes their way of life (lifestyle).

Based on the above statements the use of slang is more flourishing among teenagers because they are fragile, easy to replicate and infected by something new. Moreover, it is supported by the environmental conditions that provide the

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opportunities for teenagers to obtain slang, either through internet, television, or another media.

In terms of a language variation in a particular place in a group of a society, this present study gives a contribution to sociolinguistics. It present the information of teenage language specifically teenage slang in junior high school group. Furthermore, this study identified types of slang used by male and female teenagers in one of Islamic boarding school, Lembang and also investigated gender influence on the slang performed by them.

1.2. Research Questions

Based on the above statements, there are two research questions that were investigated by the researcher as follows:

1. What types of slang are used by male and female teenagers at school area in the Islamic boarding school?
2. Does gender influence the use of slang performed by the teenagers?

1.3. Purpose of the Research

According to the above questions, the purpose of this research are to:

1. Identify the types of slang used by male and female teenagers in the Islamic boarding school, Lembang.

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2. Investigate gender influences on the use of slang performed by the teenagers.

1.4. Scope of the research

The research was conducted in the area of an Islamic boarding school, Lembang during learning and daily activities. It is limited to identify types of slang used by male and female early teenagers of 7th grade junior high school. Early teenagers are them who are in the earliest stage of teenagers' in the age of eleven, twelve, and thirteen years (Douvan and Andelson, 1979). The research also investigate gender influence on the use of slang among them. To identify the slang types it applied the theories proposed by Potter (1975) and Kahn & Illson (1985) while, to investigate gender influence it applied the theory of Diekman and Eagly (2000).

The subjects were observed to collect the data by giving a questionnaire containing questions concerning their understanding of slang. They were also interviewed which was intended to collect the depth information and direct answer of their understanding on slang that given in the questionnaire. The data of the research were compared between male and female teenagers.

1.5. Clarification of Terms

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To avoid the possibility of misunderstanding to the problems investigation, some terms are clarified as follows:

1. Communication

   According to Achramm (1983), the word "communication" comes from Latin word, namely communis. It means common. When people communicate with others, they try to establish "commoness" with others and try to share information, an idea, or an attitude (as cited in Hodge, 1983, p.3)

2. Slang

   The slang in the present study means an informal words used by male and female teenagers in their daily conversation. There are some meanings of the term slang by experts:

   a. According to Swan (1995), slang is a very informal kind of vocabulary, used mostly in speech by people who know each other well (p.534);

   b. Spolsky (1998) defines slang as a special kinds of intimate or in group speech and associated with peer group and gang speech to obtain some degree of privacy and to show the solidarity among the members (p.35)

3. Teenager

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The teenager in the present study menas an early male and female teenagers in 7th grade students in one of Islamic boarding school, Lembang. It is suggested by the expert:

a. Douvan and Andelson (1979) distinguish three stages of teenager; they are early, middle, and late. In the earliest stage include teenager in the age of eleven, twelve, and thirteen years. In the middle stage is fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen years, by late stage is seven years and over (as cited in Coleman, 1980, pp.92-93)

b. Labov (1966) said that the limitation of teenager is young children who were at up 13 years old.

1.6. Organization of the Paper

The study will be presented into five chapters:

a) Chapter I Introduction

This chapter consists of the introduction of the research problem. It contains 8 issues, those are Background of the Research, Research Questions, Purposes of the Research, Scope of the Research, Research Methodology, Clarification of Terms and Organization of the Paper.

b) Chapter II Theoretical Foundation

This chapter connects the problem with available theories. It contains of definitions, related theories, and opinions of the previous research.

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c) Chapter III Research Methodology

This chapter describes the process of the investigations. It contains of

Reearch Design, Sample, Data Collection, and Data Analysis.

d) Chapter IV Findings and Discussions of the Research

This chapter describes the findings of the research and discussion.

e) Chapter V Conclussion and Suggestion

This chapter gives the conclussion of the research and give some

suggestion for further research.