

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

In terms of a social relationship, people are connected by language. A language in one society will differ in other society. Chomsky (1988) argues that every human being speaks a variety of language which different languages, different style, different dialects in different setting (as cited in Fasold and Preston, 1997, p.50). The variation of language is influenced by several factors. Edward (1985) states that the differences of language in society is based on age, sex (gender), social class, geography, religion, occupation and power (p.3).

Agha (2007) argues that the differences of language in society are differentiated into distinct register (p.79). He gives some examples of registers; they are register of business and bureaucracy, journalism and advertising, technical and scientific register, register of religious ritual, magical incantation, criminal argot, and varieties of slang (p.146). These particular groups will tend to have their own characteristics in ways of using language.

Furthermore, at the age of teen, teenagers have their own register. Hockett(1959) argues through his theory “Age Grading” that language of language user will change based on the age of language user. Children, teenagers, and adult have their own language and they will speak differently each other. The “Age Grading” theory also argues that teenager will not use language when they were in childhood anymore, which usually similar to their parents. They also try

to make their own click and create encryption language. This language is only understood by them and their groups (as cited in Hudson, 1980, p.16).

Kahn & Illson (1985) state that teenager are receptive to new ideas and words, they consider some old ideas as new and formulate new words to fit them and they may want to establish their individuality and independence by using terminology that older people have not yet adopted (p.567). This register becomes their secret language and symbol to communicate with other members of group, so adolescent and people who are not belonging to the group will not understand the language. Furthermore, students or young people tend to use slang as their register.

Thorne (2006) says that teenagers feel empowered in using slang if they can use words that older people and outsiders can't understand. He adds that it is very important to create a kind of powerful, attractive, and sophisticated identity (as cited in BBC news, 2006, para.6). Furthermore, slang usually changes every month. Thorne argues that slang changes so fast (as cited in Collins, 2005, para. 4). In addition, teenagers often create such unique and creative words. Thus, this study expects to investigate the usage of slang in teenagers' life, especially in the first year students of senior high school (SMA) in Bandung. It investigates the use of slang among students at the first years of SMA in their daily communication. The choosing of them as a sample is based on the Age Grading theory by Hockett (1959). Furthermore, they belong to teenager. According to Labov, the limitation of teenage is young children who were at up 13 years old. Mostly, students at the

first years of SMA can be classified to teenage group (as cited in Downes, 1984, pp.191-192)

Moreover, students at the first years of SMA are in transition period from junior high (SMP) school to SMA. It can be assumed that they bring several slang words when they were at SMP and their vocabulary will increase through interaction among their peers or their senior.

### **1.2. Statement of Problems**

The researcher formulates the problems in the following questions:

1. What kinds of slang are used by students at the first years of senior high school?
2. Where do they usually use slang words?
3. With whom do they usually use slang words?
4. Why do they use slang words?

### **1.3. The Aims of the Study**

The study will bring some benefits such as:

1. To find out the kinds of slang are used by students in senior high school level in their daily conversation;
2. To find out the places where the students usually use the slang words;
3. To find out the hearer (addressee) when the students use slang
4. To find out the reason of using the slang words; and

#### **1.4 Limitation of the Study**

This study focuses on the language varieties in a particular group in a particular social community. Yet, it concerns with one of social distance aspects, specifically in group solidarity.

This study focuses only on the slang words used by Senior High School students. It particularly focuses on the kinds of slang. These kinds of slang incorporate elaboration from Potter (1975), and Khan and Illson (1985). It also investigates the places where the students usually use slang and investigates the addressee whom usually invited by them. The student's motivation in using slang is also investigated

#### **1.5 The Significance of the Study**

In term of language variation in a particular place in a particular group in a particular society, this study gives contribution to sociolinguistic. The result of this study presents the information of teenage language specifically teenage slang in senior high school group. Furthermore, this study also gives contribution in kinds of slang that appear among the students. The result of this study also informs "where", "with whom", and "why" the students use slang.

#### **1.6 Method of the Study**

This study uses a descriptive case study method, which applies descriptive and qualitative in nature. The aim of descriptive is to explain, classify and analyze the data from some instruments. Moreover, the qualitative is used to investigate

the social phenomenon. This study applies qualitative method that uses natural setting to describe the factual phenomenon. Thus, this study investigates the data without any treatment to respondents and records their conversation naturally and spontaneously. Furthermore, this study also records their responses based on the question in the interview section purely.

There are several procedures in conducting this study, namely preparing the investigation, selecting the respondents, collecting the data, and analyzing the data. Moreover, in analyzing the data, this study uses some procedures, namely transcribing the data, reducing the data, coding the data, displaying the data and interpreting the data. In constructing the trustworthiness, this study uses triangulation, member check, and quasi-statistics.

Moreover, the subject of this study is the first year of the SMA in Bandung. Students who are at the XA class as sample in this study. This study uses three instruments, they are, recorded observation, questionnaire, and recorded interview. It involves 20-recorded observations and 21 respondents. This method of study will be elaborated in chapter 3.

### **1.7 Clarification of the Main Term**

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

#### **1. Communication**

According to Schramm (1983), the word “communication” comes from Latin word, namely *communis*. It means common. When people communicate to others, they try to establish ‘commonness’ with others and

try to share information, an idea, or an attitude (as cited in Hodge, 1983, p.3).

## 2. Slang Words

There are some meanings of the term slang;

- 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 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

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

## **1.8 Organization of the Paper**

The paper of study is presented in five (5) chapters. They are:

### **Chapter I. Introduction**

Chapter 1 provides background, formulation of problems, limitation of the study, hypothesis, the aims of the study, methodology of investigation, clarification of the related term, and the organization of the paper.

**Chapter II. Theoretical foundation**

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical foundations that provides a basis for conducting the study problems

**Chapter III. Research Methodology and Data Presentation**

Chapter 3 discusses methodological of the research, the steps and procedures of the study, and the data resources.

**Chapter IV. Findings and Discussion**

Reporting result of the study is presented in this chapter. It contains finding and discussion

**Chapter V. Conclusions and Suggestions**

The last chapter of the paper provides the interpretation toward the study in the form of conclusion and suggestion in accordance with the study.