CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

As now we live in globalization era, the Internet has been the main media for people to communicate to each other and to obtain information from around the world. The arrival of the Internet has given such an impact on language that Crystal (2005) proposed a field of study called 'Internet linguistics'. Internet linguistics is basically the study of language on the internet. Crystal (2011) discovered that the name 'Internet linguistics' is the most convenient name to represents the scientific study of all signs of language in the electronic medium. William (2003) also stated that the mass media are changing how people communicate to each other by using the technologies because the Internet combines features of mass with traditional or face to face interaction.

Since Internet gave such a huge impact on how people communicate, there have been a number of researchers studying the Internet language. Nevertheless, the wide area of the Internet language makes it still opened for other research. It refers to any kind of interaction that happens via computer or other technology such as email, instant messaging, or social media like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Those kinds of communication then become interesting subject for the writer to be studied.

Currently, people in the world often communicate using social media. According to Kietzmann et al. (2011) social media create highly communicative

platforms via which people share, co-create, discuss, and modify user generated content by utilizing mobile and web-based technologies. This has given a huge exposure of social media in the present popular press, it might seems that we are in the midst of a new communication area. Some of the popular social media often used by people are Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

From those social media mentioned above, Instagram becomes the research interest in this thesis. According to Frommer (2010) Instagram is an online mobile photo-sharing, video-sharing and social networking service that enables the users to take pictures or record videos. In comparison to other famous social media like Facebook or Twitter, Instagram considered as the fastest growing social media site. As mentioned by Herman (2014) that since being launched in 2012, it only took three and half years for Instagram to reach 200 million monthly active users, while facebook took 5 years and twitter took six and a half years to hit the same milestone. She also added that in general, Instagram users tend to be more active and more engaged than any fans on other social media sites, its users give like and comment on many posts than they give on another site. Those facts above then become the reasons why the writer chooses Instagram above other social media as the object of this study.

Instagram is also popular among Indonesian. There are a lot of celebrities who use Instagram, like famous solo singers, Raisa, Syahrini, Tulus, or actress like, Pevita Pearce, Dian Sastro, and many more. Other than celebrities, there are also Instagram accounts which gain popularity among Indonesian Instagram users, *Indovidgram* and *Dagelan* are some of the examples. Both of them have reached

more than one million followers. By the time this thesis was written, *Indovidgram* has already hit 1.2 Million followers while *Dagelan* has reached 3.4 million followers. In this study, the writer focus on examine *Dagelan*'s account on Instagram.

Dagelan is an account from Indonesia with more than 3 million followers which posts humor content post with the tagline "*asikin aja lagiii :D*". Other than *Dagelan*, there are also some humor content accounts from Indonesia, such as, *justparody* (220k followers), *rajaparodi* (404k followers), *keepsmileindooo* (173k followers), etc. However, *Dagelan* has the highest number of followers compared to those kinds of accounts; it also has the most likes and comments, so that is why the writer chooses *Dagelan* to be examined.

Talking about humor, as we know that humor has become part of our daily life. It is one of an important thing in order to reduced stress. Lots of researches have also proved that people who laugh a lot are happier and more productive than people who less laugh. In general, people define humor as something that is funny or amusing which can makes people laugh or smile. But according to Ross (1998) it is also possible to count something as humor although no one laugh or smile at it. An example of a humorous statement is the one by Bierce who said that "Love is a temporary insanity curable by marriage." Some people might consider it as humor because that sentence makes them smile or laugh, or others would say that it is not funny.

Ross (1998) also mentioned that response is an important factor in considering something as humor. So it is important to examine the language on

how people react to humor. We can find humor whether it is spoken or written through any media such as television, magazine, or simply in our daily conversation.

In order to create and receive humor, it is important to think about the social context. It is difficult for humor to cross boundaries of different time and social groups, it is dependent on specific attitudes and cultures (Ross, 1998). So it can be assumed that humor is created by a certain culture or phenomenon. Humor from a particular social groups or time may have not received the same response in a different time and by a different social group. For an instance, when the writer said to her brother a conversation taken from *examples.yourdictionary.com*: "Doctor, when my hand gets better, will I be able to play the piano?" "Of course" said the doctor. "That's great. I could never play the piano before!", he did not show any expression and said "what is that?"; it shows that he might not understand the context or did not find it humorous. While when the writer told the same thing to her friend, she did smile and giggle. It can be inferred from those situations that what appears humorous to a person may not be humorous to others, in this case by different social group.

As we talk about language on Internet, the writer focuses on how males and females give comments or response on humor in online setting, specifically in *Dagelan*'s comments on Instagram. According to Herring (2003) the illustration of smiles and laughter (e.g., emoticons, lol, hahaha, hehe, etc.) are three times more often typed by women than by men in chatrooms. The writer assumes that

gender differences influence the language used in giving response to humor in online setting.

To examine the language on how males and females give response to something which consider as humor in *Dagelan's* comments on Instagram, the writer uses Internet language features by Danet (2001) and Crystal (2006). There are ten Internet language features by Danet, they are: mulitple punctuations (ex: what???), eccentric spelling (ex: whaaaaat?), capital letters (ex: WHAT?), asterisks for emphasis (ex: i *hope* she will come), written-out laughter (ex: hahaha), music/noise (ex: argh), description of actions (ex: *grin), emoticons (ex: :D), abbreviations (ex: LOL), and rebus writing (ex: 2nite). The writer also uses Internet language features by Crystal which is lexical features to determine the vocabulary used by both male and female commenters.

In *Dagelan*, the writer found in the comment section that male and female commenters are using some kind of unique features of written language. For example, in a post of picture of a text "*SARI PUDING, Saking Rindunya Pukul Dinding*", female commenter give comments with unique features, such as "*Bahahaha tuhan lah lagi yang tau sari puding :D :D :D SUMPAH NGAKAK NIAN.*" Male commenter also give comments with such kind of unique features like "*Wkakaka!! Duileehh ni baru pulang langsungg pudding aku!! Wkakaka*". The examples above are contrast with the statement of Herring (2003) that in a conversation of gender-mixed groups, men tend to post longer messages, while women tend to post relatively shorter messages. This phenomenon shows that

different setting might influence how males and females communicate especially in online setting.

There is a previous study by Dahlstrom (2013) who examined typical features of Internet language found in user-generated comments. This study is concern in gender issues. She focused on typographic and orthographic features as well as syntactic and stylistic features resembling spoken language. The results of this study shows that adult men wrote the longest comments, followed by adult women, young men and young women. Concerning typography and orthography typical features, it is found that adult men and adult women used them sparsely, young men used them occasionally and young women used the features most frequently. Then she concluded that the young men used a style that is closer to spoken English than the three other commenting groups (adult men, adult women, young women).

The next study is by Mersandy (2012) entitled *The Used of Internet Language Features of Male and Female Indonesia Adolescents on blogspot www.blogspot.com*. She examined the used of Internet language features by Indonesian male and female adolescents in their blogs. The study found that Capital letters, Abbreviations, and Ways of expressing emphasis are top three Internet language features used by both female and male adolescents. She also found that female adolescents used more Internet language features compared to male adolescents. From the findings, she concluded that Internet language features used by female adolescents are higher than male adolescents indicates that female adolescents are more expressive in their blogs compared to male adolescents.

In this study, the writer identifies the Internet language features found in male and female comments on humor content posts in *Dagelan* on Instagram. The Internet language features used are by Danet (2001) they are: multiple punctuations, eccentric spelling, capital letters, asterisks for emphasis, written-out laughter, music/noise, descriptions of actions, emoticons, abbreviations, and rebus writing. The writer assumes that those features above are the most common features found in the comment section of *Dagelan*'s account on Instagram. Also, the writer identifies the Internet language features by Crystal (2006) which is lexical features or the vocabulary of a language used both by male and female commenters. Then the writer examines who use more Internet language features to identify who is more expressive between males and females in giving response to humor content posts in *Dagelan* on Instagram as some of the features above are signs of expressiveness. The use of emoticons denotes a unique feature of the electronic language register and has been interpreted as an indicator of emotional expressiveness and a means of expressing nonverbal interaction in the absence of paralinguistic or extralinguistic signs (Crystal, 2001 in Danet & Herring, 2007).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of the studies, the writer states the research problem of male and female commenters in *Dagelan*'s account on Instagram as follows:

1. What are the Internet language features used by male commenters?

2. What are the Internet language features used by female commenters?

3. What are the similarities and differences between male and female comments?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem, the objects of this study are as follows:

1. To determine the Internet language features by Danet (2001) and Crystal (2006) used by male commenters in *Dagelan*'s account on Instagram.

2. To determine the Internet language features by Danet (2001) and Crystal (2006) used by female commenters in *Dagelan*'s account on Instagram.

3. To show the similarities and differences between male and female comments in *Dagelan*'s account on Instagram.

1.4 Significance of the study

By conducting this study, hopefully it can contribute theoretically to the area of Internet linguistics or the study of language on the internet since nowadays people also communicate to each other in online setting. Also the findings of this study can enrich our knowledge in understanding how males and females communicate in online setting. The writer also hopes the findings help us to understand how males and females express their thought through comments on humor content post in online setting.

1. 5 Definitions of Key Terms

- **Internet linguistics** : The scientific study of all signs of language in the electronic medium (Crystal, 2011).

- **Internet Language Features**: Features that are used to provide the absences of non-verbal signs in online setting to make the meaning of a context clear due to the lack of visual contact (Crystal, 2006).

- **Gender** : A system of meaning; a way of construing notions of male and female (Eckert and McConnel-Ginet, 2003).

- **Instagram** : An online mobile photo-sharing, video-sharing and social networking service that enables the users to take pictures or record videos (Frommer, 2010).

- **Comment** : Something that you say or write which gives an opinion on or explain sb/sth (OALD8, 2010).