CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Language and Gender in the Offline and Online Settings

If we talk about male and female communication, there is a stereotype in society that females tend to be more polite than males who are straightforward and powerful. According to Holmes (2001) females and males have developed different patterns of the use of language in which female are more linguistically polite than male. Females tend to speak less forcefully than males, while males tend to swear much more than females. For example, Holmes stated that many researchers found that in male conversation, the content of that talk focused on sports, aggression, competition, teasing and doing things. On the other hand, in female conversation, it was focused on the self, feelings, affiliation with others, home and family. They agree that males speak more than females do. It is also reported that females use more polite forms and more compliments than males.

A lot of studies have shown that males often dominate a conversation compare to females. For example, in an experimental study of conversation in same and mixed-gender groups of college students, Aries (1976) found that male had more personal orientation in a mixed-gender groups setting, spoke to individuals more often, talked more about themselves and their feelings, while in all-male setting they were more focused to the expression of competition and status. While female in mixed-gender groups setting had minimum contact with

other female and let male to dominate the conversation. Female in groups with male tend not to affirm themselves or assume leadership.

Another example indicates male conversational dominance is by Pamela Fishman (1983) in a study of the private conversations of several graduate student heterosexual couples. This study depicted males dominating their partners through the strategic use of both silence and interruption. These males not only interrupted their partners during conversation; they also did not take up their partners' topics in conversation. The result was that female often failed in trying to start a conversation on a topic of their choosing. Tannen (1990) emphasized that male approach conversation as a contest; they are likely to spend effort not to support the other's talk but to lead the conversation in another direction. On the other hand, female assumes steering the conversation in a different direction is an act of violation; so they tend to be more cooperative or collaborative within a conversation.

In 1990s, when language on the Internet was first discussed by sociolinguists, it was assumed that gender roles would be more equalized as the communication form was more anonymous than traditional or face-to-face communication (Baron, 2004). This was supported by the findings of an observation of online newsgroups and bulletin boards by Burrel et al. (2010) that women were more daring and argumentative than man. He explains that some of the reasons for women to vary from the female style may have been due to the context of communication with women trying to get dominance over male users by sending messages with more effort to try and compensate for their regarded

lower status to men. This finding contrasts with traditional communication stereotype that said women are less dominant then men.

Providing another evidence that women and men have different patterns in communication, Herring (2003) found that in asynchronous computer-mediated communication or CMC which takes place in discussion lists and newsgroups on the Internet and Usenet, men tended to post longer messages and often to be the ones who started and ended conversations in mixed-gender groups. In contrast, women tend to post relatively short messages.

The fact that women write shorter messages in online setting contrasts with an analysis of American college student instant messaging (IM) conversations by Baron (2004) that shows women write longer texts than men. It was found that female took longer turns, took longer to end the conversations, and had longer overall interactions. They were also more talkative compared to male in the instant messaging (IM) conversations.

Herring (2003) also stated that women are more possible to thank, appreciate and apologize, and tend to be bothered by violations of politeness; they more often challenge those who violate online rules of behaviour. In the opposite, men generally tend to be less care with politeness; they break the online rules of behaviour and tend to be more noticed about threats to freedom of expression than appear with others' social "face". From the statement above, the writer then conclude that men and women can have different style of communication in any kind of setting.

2.2. Internet Linguistics

The emergence of the internet in the year of 1990s has influenced the use of language in communication. The internet has permitted language to develop a new medium of communication, different from traditional conversational speech and form writing (Crystal, 2005). According to Davis and Brewer (1997) traditional speech is defines as "time-bound, dynamic, transient"; it is an interaction that happened face to face directly in a present time. Writing is often seen as "space-bound, static, and permanent"; this kind of interaction happened when the writer is having distant from the reader.

The internet has developed new forms of communication. It has both sides of the speech or writing characteristics. As Davis and Brewer (1997) said that "electronic discourse is writing that very often reads as if it were being spoken – that is, as if the sender were writing talking". But even though the language of the Internet shares some characteristics of spoken and written language, Crystal (2011) said that the electronic medium limits and facilitates human strategies of communication in unique ways that have never happened before. He mentioned that some of the constraints are the limitation of message size, lag of message, and lack of simultaneous feedback. But it has also facilitates us with hypertext links, emoticons, and provides the opportunity from multiple conversations and multiply authored texts.

As we notice, the internet is largely in written form or text-based. Crystal (2006) stated that spoken language has only a limited existence on the internet, it can be found through the use of sound clips or videos as in Skype.

For written language on the internet, Crystal (2006) recognized five main types:

1. *Graphic* features: the general presentation and organization of the written language, defined in terms of such factors such as certain typography, page design, spacing, use of illustrations, and colour.

2. *Orthographic* (or *graphological* features): the writing system of an individual language, defined in terms such factors as distinctive use of the alphabet, capital letters, spelling, punctuation, and ways of expressing emphasis (italics, boldface, etc.)

3. *Grammatical* features: the many possibilities of syntax and morphology, defined in terms of such factors as the distinctive use of sentence structure, word order, and word inflections.

4. *Lexical* features: the vocabulary of a language, defined in terms of the set of words and idioms given distinctive use within a variety.

5. *Discourse* features: the structural organization of a text, defined in terms of such factors as coherence, relevance, paragraph structure, and the logical progression of ideas.

In this research, the writer focuses on orthographic or graphological features because it is what the readers first see in a text, especially when it is in an unusual forms of written text on the Internet, such as, emoticon, punctuation, capital letters, etc, as Crystal (2011) said that when people look for novel linguistic features on the Internet, it is usually the orthography which catches their attention first. The writer also focuses on lexical features in order to determine

what vocabulary of a language used by male and female commenters in giving response to humor content post.

2.3. Internet Language Features

Basically, Internet language features refer to the use of certain styles or forms in the aspects of written language on the Internet, as the writer previously mentioned some of the features of written language on the Internet proposed by Crystal (2006) above. Internet language features 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).

In her book entitled *Cyberpl@ay: Communicating Online*, Danet (2001) proposed some features of digital writing. She mentioned that the features are devices to balance the nature of the medium as attenuated 'speech'. It is also to help carry the messages as fast as possible, since we cannot type as fast as we speak.

Table 2.1 Common Digital Writing by Danet (2001)

Multiple punctuation	Type back soon!!!!!!!
Eccentric spelling	Type back soooooooon!
Capital letters	I'M REALLY ANGRY AT YOU
Asterisks for emphasis	I'm really *angry* at you
Written-out laughter	Hehehe, hahahaha
Music/noise	Mmmmmmm, MMMMMMM

Descriptions of actions	*grins*, <grin>, <g>
Emoticons	:-) (smile) ;-) (wink) :-((frown)
Abbreviations	LOL, BRB
Rebus Writing	CU [see you]

In this research, the writer uses Internet Language Features as the main theory which is common features of digital writing proposed by Danet (2001) and lexical features by Crystal (2006). Crystal defines lexical features as the vocabulary of a language, which may be different between one person or one genre from another. In his further work, Crystal (2011) explains that the area of language that most easily manifests change is vocabulary. So it is interesting to see what vocabulary used in different kind of topic. According to Danet (2001) there are ten common features in digital writing, they are: Multiple punctuation, Eccentric spelling, Capital letters, Asterisks for emphasis, Written-out laughter, Music/noise, Descriptions of actions, Emoticons, Abbreviations, and Rebus writing. The explanation of each feature will be discussed below:

1. Multiple Punctuation

    The features of multiple exclamation marks and question marks are considered as punctuation of expressiveness or also can be called as emotive punctuations (Crystal, 2006). It is often appear at the end of a sentence. The examples of the use of multiple punctuation are: *how are you?????* Or *are you serious!!!!!*.

2. Eccentric spelling

According to Danet and Herring (2007) eccentric spelling or intentional reproduction of spoken language used is an expressivity resource. Eccentric spelling is attempts to reproduce actual articulation in typed messages are the major causes for these unconventional spellings (Nishimura, 2003). Some examples of eccentric spelling: *see you tomorrooooow* or *I'm so happyyyyyy*.

3. Capital letters

The use of capital letters for emphasis is strategies to enhance the readers' and writers' ability to experience the words as if they were spoken (Danet, 2001). According to Danet and Herring (2007) the use of capital letters in online setting is to signify loud speech or shouting. For example: *I AM SO MAD*, *OH MY GOD*.

4. Asterisks for emphasis

The asterisks symbol is used for emphasis in a word or phrase (Crystal, 2006). It is also mentioned by Danet (2001) that asterisks symbol is used to emphasize particular words to improve their speech-like quality. The example of the use of asterisks for emphasis is: *I *wish* she is right*, *the *real* answer*.

5. Written-out laughter

According to Danet (2001) typing *hehehe* is clearly a device to express a sound, which in this case is the sound of laughter. Danet and

Herring (2007) mentioned that in order to supply missing information such as laughter in online setting, the users represent the sound by typing in similar ways. For example: *hahaha*, *wkwkw*.

6. Music/noise

According to Crystal (2006) there is a feature of the language of chat groups which is defined as a formulate sounds effect, like *aieee, mmm, argh*. One of the features that differ from formal written and spoken language is the attempt to depict the taste of speech and use typically spoken discourse markers to do so, like *mmm* or *ah* (Fais and Ogura, 2001 in Danet and Herring, 2007)

7. Descriptions of action

Descriptions of action is examined in terms of asterisks that enclose a verb; the verb spelled out between angle brackets and the initial letter alone of the verb in angle brackets (Nishimura, 2003 in Danet & Herring, 2007). The example of descriptions of action: **smile**, *<Smile>*.

8. Emoticons

According to Crystal (2006) emoticon is a combination of keyboard characters designed to show an emotional face expression; they are typed in sequence on a single line, and placed after the final punctuation mark of a sentence. For example: :) , :(.

9. Abbreviations

Abbreviations are the conventional way of reading by pronouncing the name of each letter (McCarthy, 2002). Danet (2001) said that the use

of abbreviations in online setting save valuable typing time. The examples of abbreviations: LOL stands for "Laughing Out Loud" or BRB which means "Be Right Back.

10. Rebus writing

The use of letters or numbers to represent the phonetic sequence that constitutes its realization in spoken language (Anis, 2003 in Danet & Herring, 2007). Crystal (2006) said that in rebus writing, the sound value of the letter or numeral acts as a syllable of a word. For example: *CU* for "see you", or *2nite* for "tonight".

2.4. Related Studies

There are previous studies examined the language used by different gender on the Internet entitled *Gender, Communication, and Self-Presentation in Teen Chatrooms Revisited: Have Patterns Changed* written by Herring and Kapidzic (2011) and by Mersandy (2012) with the title of *The Used of Internet Language Features of Male and Female Indonesia Adolescents in blogspot www.blogspot.com.*

The first study by Herring and Kapidzic examines gender preferences in linguistic features and communication styles in synchronous text messages, along with self-presentation in user profile pictures, drawing on data from popular English-language teen chat sites collected in 2010. The finding of this study is that there are significant differences in speech acts, message tone, and in Physical stance, dress, and social distance on profile pictures that generally conform to

traditional gender stereotypes. In conclusion, they stated that the findings of the present study are overall more in line with traditional findings, that young females in 2010 still tended to present themselves as emotional, friendly, good listeners (reactive), sexually available, and eager to please males, while young males appear more assertive, manipulative, initiating, and visually dominant.

The differences of the study above done by Herring and Kapidzic and this study is that they focus on how teens represent themselves in chatrooms, examine preferred gender in linguistic features and communication styles in chatrooms plus profile picture as self-presentation. While this study is about how males and females with no specific age express their thoughts in giving comments on humor content post in social media by examining the use of internet language features by both gender. Both of this studies discuss about how specific gender use language on the internet.

The research on male and female language on the internet in this department has been done by Mersandy (2012) with the title of *The Used of Internet Language Features of Male and Female Indonesia Adolescents in blogspot www.blogspot.com*. In that research she analyzed the internet language features found in Indonesian male and female adolescents' blogs. She also examined who is more expressive in online setting because some of Internet language features above are characterized as indicators of emotional expressiveness.

The finding of this research is that there are similarities and differences between male and female Internet language features. The similarity between male

and female Internet language features is that both top three features used are the same which are Capital letters, Abbreviations, and Ways of expressing emphasis. While the differences are the total of word tokens and Internet language features used by female adolescents are higher than male adolescents. From the findings, she concluded that female adolescents are more expressive in their blogs if compared with male adolescents because of Internet language features used by female adolescents are higher than male adolescents.

The difference between this study and the research done by Mersandy above is that she examined the Internet language features used by Indonesian adolescents in www.blogspot.com. Meanwhile, in this study, the writer determines the typical the Internet language features used by male and female commenters in the comments on *Dagelan*'s account on Instagram. Both of these studies are using Internet language features proposed by Danet (2001) as the main theory. The writer also examines the internet language features by Crystal (2005) which is lexical features.