

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language has been historically considered to have been the human quality that distinguishes human beings from all other species. It is one of God's amazing gifts to human beings. As it is claimed by Wareing (1999: 8) that this God's extraordinary gift is provided to all men as the remarkable trait that sets human language apart from the kind of communication that goes on, particularly between each species of animals which can only convey a very limited range of messages. What language can do is unique and salient to our species.

As language is a means of communication (Nababan 1984: 38), the development of human civilization and culture goes simultaneously as the language develops. It is the need of communication that makes people use language at every time whenever they interact to each other. By means of language, people communicate or express their feelings, emotion and thoughts to others (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 1989: 700). Furthermore, Trask (1996: 45) claims that, "Most people, when asked what language is for, reply that the function of language is to express and communicate meanings". Therefore, without language, human being may probably live in a constant behavior. It is the presence of language that develops and enriches human civilization and culture. It is this ability that made it possible for human to communicate, exchange ideas, pursue ideas and move towards excellence.

Moreover, people from different culture speak different languages. The need of interaction among various cultures has brought many languages into this world, of which sociolinguists call as language diversity or variation. It is stated by Cameron (1995: 15) that, “In sociolinguistics, the reason why speakers produce certain patterns of variation are most understood with reference to the truism that ‘language reflects society’ “. Accordingly, people use different type of language varieties or styles as they interact in different contexts or situations. In other words, the language people speak shows their identity in a certain community.

Language variation depends on the social factors of the communication including the people who speak and to whom they speak, the time and place the communication happens, the matter being discussed, and the aim or purpose of interaction (Holmes, 1992:11). Different styles of language can be used in different contexts. A student is expected to speak the formal language when he talks to his teachers. When he talks with his friends, he switches to a vernacular. The choice of style happens every time people communicate in different contexts.

Holmes (1992: 77) says that over a half of the world’s population is bilingual and many people are multilinguals. In a multilingual speech community, the many different ethnic languages used by different ethnic groups are referred to as vernacular languages. Vernaculars are usually the first languages learned by people in multilingual communities, and they are often used for a relatively narrow range of informal functions. According to Holmes (1992: 80), there are three components of the meaning of the term vernacular. The most basic one refers to the fact that a vernacular is an

uncodified or unstandardised variety. The second refers to the way it is acquired and the last is the fact that it is used for relatively circumscribed functions.

Along with the development of vernacular, slang appears to replenish standard language. To this point, Dickson as cited by Goshgarian (1992: 359) says, “ No debate about language standards would be complete without a look at slang”. In 1970’s, spreading slang words in Jakarta increased. James Danandjaja (2003:v), an expert in anthropology claims that slang is a kind of popular languages which can change the meaning of formal words or create a new word without paying attention to the linguistic rules. For example, the word “tidak” is changed into “tinta”, the word “mau “ is changed into “mawar” and the word “baik” is changed into “bye-bye love”.

In Indonesia, James Danandjaja as cited by Sahertian (2003: v) says that slang words mostly appear in the lower class community; however, in the early 1980’s slang language was taken over by teens in Indonesia. Nowadays, the teens who especially work in beauty parlors mostly use slang language to communicate with each others. According to Kridalaksana (1982: 56) the reason for the beauty parlor staff to use slang words in communicating with each other is to make the customers (out-group) fail to understand their (in-group) conversations.

The beauty parlor staff is mostly dominated by teenagers who are known as “slang users” among themselves. Nevertheless, they will use formal language when they speak to their customers. Their accent and intonation are so unique that they attract other people to listen, guess and laugh at the same time. This phenomenon makes the writer interested in exploring what slang

words are mostly used by them and the reasons why they use these slang words in communicating with their peers. Holmes (1992:184) says that most social dialectologists have found that adolescents use the highest frequencies of vernacular forms, especially if they are forms which people clearly recognize or identify as non-standard.

Since there are many beauty parlors in Surabaya the writer's focus of this investigation is on Johnny Andrean Beauty Parlor that is located on the 3rd floor of Delta Plaza Surabaya. This beauty parlor is famous not only in Surabaya but also in other big cities such as Jakarta, Denpasar, and Bandung. Like other beauty parlors, this beauty parlor has professional hair dressers and other staff such as barbers and massage boys who use slang words mainly when they speak to one another.

As cited by Sahertian (2003:viii), Danandjaja says that Indonesian slang can be in the form of sentences but usually it is in the form of unusual words. This statement of Danandjaja has drawn the writer's curiosity to investigate what slang words are mostly used by Johnny Andrean Beauty Parlor staff and why they use these slang words. The writer's interest in this topic gets strengthened after he knows that so far there hasn't been any thesis at the English Department of Unika Widya Mandala Surabaya reporting any study on this topic. So, finally, he decided to make a study on this topic and reported it in this thesis entitled : "Slang Expressions Found Among Johnny Andrean Beauty Parlor Staff in Delta Plaza Surabaya "

1.2 Statements of the Problem

The research questions of the study under report were formulated as follows:

1. What forms of slang expressions are used by Johnny Andrean Beauty Parlors' staff in talking to one another?
2. Which form of slang expression is mostly used by Johnny Andrean Beauty Parlors' staff in talking to one another?
3. What reasons influence the Johnny Andrean Beauty Parlors staff to use slang expressions in communicating with one another?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Related to the statements of the problems, this study intended :

1. To describe the form of slang expressions which are mostly used by Johnny Andrean Beauty Parlors' staff in communicating with one another.
2. To describe which form of slang expression is mostly used by Johnny Andrean Beauty Parlors' staff in communicating with one another.
3. To describe the reasons which influence the Johnny Andrean Beauty Parlors' staff to use slang expressions in communicating with one another.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to give a contribution to the field of sociolinguistics since it explains a language variety (slang) which is used in a certain speech community (a beauty parlor). This study can serve as an example of language variety studies for the English Department students and help people get a better understanding about this phenomenon: its nature and reasons.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

Although there are many beauty parlors in Surabaya, the writer only chose one of them, i.e. Johnny Andrean Beauty Parlor to study the slang expressions used by his staff in interacting with one another. This beauty parlor is located on 3rd floor of Delta Plaza Surabaya. The focus of the study is on the slang expressions mostly used by Johnny Andrean Beauty Parlor staff and the factors influencing the staffs of Johnny Andrean Beauty Parlor to use such slang expressions. The subjects of the study under report are limited to two hair dressers who work from 10 a.m. up to 6 p.m.

1.6 Theoretical Frame Work

This study is based on the theory of language variation with special reference to slang which belongs to sociolinguistics.

Hudson (1980:24) describes language varieties as a set of linguistic items with similar social distribution. This definition allows us to call any of the following “varieties of language”: English, French, London English, the English of football commentators, the languages used by the members of a particular long-house in the north west Amazon, and the language or languages used by a particular person. Furthermore, Holmes (1992:9) describes language varieties as a set of linguistic forms used under specific social circumstances, i.e. with a distinctive social distribution. Accordingly, slang is one of the language varieties (Hardianto: 1996).

Johnson (1994:1) claims that slang can be described as informal, non-standard words or phrases (lexical innovations) which tend to originate in subcultures within a society. Slang often suggests that the person (its user) is the same group as his hearer(s). It can be considered as a distinguishing factor of in-group identity.

The writer uses these two important theories to help him find out the slang expressions and the reasons why the subjects under study use slang expressions in communicating with their peers every day.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

There are six key terms that need to be defined in order to avoid misunderstanding.

Language Variation

Holmes (1992:9) describes varieties of language as a set of linguistic forms used under specific social circumstances, i.e. with a distinctive social distribution.

Slang

Johnson (1994:1) claims that slang can be described as informal, non-standard words or phrases (lexical innovations) which tend to originate in subcultures within a society. Slang often suggests that the person (its user) is the same group as his hearer(s). It can be considered as a distinguishing factor of in-group identity.

Slang expression

Referring to *Slang* definition, *Slang Expression* is words or groups of words which regarded as below standard and used by certain groups of society to serve the inter-group communication goals.

Beauty parlor

A place where people can get beauty treatment which includes face (e.g. facial, make up, etc.), hair (bonding, hair spa, etc.), nail (manicure and pedicure), etc.

Beauty Parlor staff

Beauty parlor staff is a group of persons who work in a beauty parlor under the authority of the owner of the beauty parlor.

Johnny Andrean beauty parlor staff

Johnny Andrean beauty parlor staff is a group of persons who work for Johnny Andrean beauty parlor giving beauty treatments to the customers

1.8 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I is the Introduction consisting the background of the study, the statements of the problems, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation, the theoretical framework, the definition of key terms, and the organization of the thesis. Chapter II is a review of related literature awchich consists of underlying concepts and previous studies. Chapter III is the research methodology that covers the nature of the study, the subjects, the data source, the instruments, the data collection procedures, and the data analysis procedures. Chapter IV presents the research findings and the discussions of the findings. Chapter V is the conclusion and suggestions.