

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the author will explain why this study is important to do. Through background of study, the statement of the research problem, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation of the study and the definition of the key terms, the reason will be in sufficient details.

A. Background of Study

People examine carefully about language because of vary reasons. One of them is why there are many kinds of language and why there are differences in a language among different speech communities. In this thesis, the writer gives emphasis on sexism problem in language which is the relation between language and social culture value (sociolinguistic).

In the other hand, language has four functions. People may be using language as reference, affective, aesthetic or conventional (phatic)¹. Language is used as referencial way when transmission of information is happening from speaker to hearer and the information directly refers to the intended thing. Eg. information about cooks recipe, guidance to someone's address, plane schedule etc. In sentence, when anyone says "put your gun on the ground!". This sentence is included in referencial because refers to inteneded things, they are "gun" and "ground". And what is more important than transmission of information is probability of how to speak right to right

¹ Shan Wareing, *What Is Language?* in Linda Thomas & Shan Wareing (Eds.), *Language, Society and Power: An Introduction*. New York: Routledge. 1999. Page: 12

person is affective function of language. For example, a mother tells her five aged kid to take a bath soon is natural phenomena, but cannot be natural if the employee tells his boss to carry his bag. From the example we can see that the influence of social and cultural status stick to language. Then, language is used as aesthetical way can be seen from poetry and songs which is meant for pleasure where their pattern, rhyme and meaning tricks are played on. And when we are singing a melodious song, suddenly anyone comes whatever this person is brother or colleague to have a bussiness with us, then in the beginning of the conversation he say "you sing nicely". Then it is a platitude intended to smoothen the relationship or it is a phatic.

Besides vary reasons of inquiry about language and its functions, many general problems of language related to cultural value emeges, one of them is sexism in language. The writer focuses on affective function of language because according to certain minority – like disability, women, children – sexism in a language represents one gender – women at most – in disadvantaged position and gives gender stereotypes. This phenomena is social phenomena related to language or we can say sociolinguistic phenomena.

Discussion about sociolinguistic phenomena is frequently linked to langauge and culture. Sexism in a language is one of sociolinguistic phenomena related to language and culture. Next, discussion about language and culture always concerns Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, like Kadarisman (2008) in his article *Hipotesis Sapir-Whorf dan Ungkap Verbal Keagamaan*

which is inquiring the differences of Indonesian ritualistic verbal and American based on Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis; and Haoyun Dai, Xiaodong Xu (2014) with their article *Sexism in News: A Comparative Study on the Portray of Female and Male Politicians in The New York Times*.

In this case, language is one of universal aspects exists on any culture all over the world², therefore sociolinguistic phenomena is a part of cultural phenomena. From language and culture discussion, Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis has two versions. For the first is linguistic relativity and the second is linguistic determinism (they both are contrary)³. Linguistic relativity explains that certain culture has disparity to interpret or to percept reality in the world, and the disparity exist on language used in the certain culture. The term “relativity” refers to the idea that there is no proper way to give label or name to the world realities. People in certain culture give label or name to the world realities based on their perception, and this perception is relative which is meant diferent perception among one culture to the another.

An example of linguistic realtivity phenomena is different interpretation of the word “rice” in English and “*nasi*” in Bahasa Indonesia. Bahasa Indonesia has four words to give name to monocotyl plant with white seed, they are “*padi*”, “*gabah*”, “*beras*” and “*nasi*”. They are all actually different based on the process of manufacture. In Bahasa Indonesia perception of word “*padi*” is still on the plant form, then “*padi*” seed is separated from its stem to be “*gabah*”, then “*gabah*” is discovered from its

² Koentjaraningrat, *Kebudayaan, Mentalitas dan Pembangunan*. Jakarta: Gramedia. 1982. Page: 2

³ Ishtla Singh, *Language, Thought and Representation* in Linda Thomas & Shan Wareing (Eds.), *Language, Society and Power: An Introduction*. New York: Routledge. 1999. Page: 37

skin to be "*beras*", "*beras*" is cooked to be "*nasi*" – we know that "rice" in English means "*padi*", "*gabah*", "*beras*" and "*nasi*" in Bahasa Indonesia. Names of "*padi*", "*gabah*", "*beras*" and "*nasi*" in Bahasa Indonesia is needed to differentiate, but English only needs one word to translate the four words of Bahasa Indonesia, it is "*rice*".

The writer assumption of the difference of word "*padi*", "*gabah*", "*beras*" dan "*nasi*" in Bahasa Indonesia which is only "*rice*" in English is Indonesian culture is still standing on agriculture as food defence, while English has turned into industrial system since industrial revolution.

The second version of Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis is language determinism which says not only people in a certain culture perception of the world realities influences their language, but also language in a certain culture determine perception or the way of thinking of people in the certain culture. People in a certain culture could not percept the world realities beyond the terms used in their language.

Today, the claim is usually referred to as the Linguistic relativity hypothesis, Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, or the Whorfian hypothesis⁴. In this thesis, the writer consistently uses Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis because of under consideration that the both version of Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis that are linguistic relativity is used to inquire the cause of sexism in language from cultural prespective, while linguistic determinism is used to inquire sexist language effects to social life.

⁴ Ronald Wardaugh, *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics (5th edition)*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. 2006. Page: 222

One of sociolinguistic phenomena as mentioned above is sexism in a language. Sexism in a language appears because of the influence of sexist culture or we may say extreme patriarchy in social system. This social system like this is tended to put women in disadvantaged position in all that matters. For example, generally in this society (tend to England and western people in general), man is still having higher status on job occupation, where men are still having higher property and salary than women; some of politicians, directors, judge advocates, surgeons, headmasters, director of films are dominated by men⁵. Sexist language also contains asymmetry representation or put men and women in unbalanced position and provides gender stereotypes. Wareing says sexism in a language can be observed in two perspectives, first, how far grammar system support sexism? and how far that aspects beyond grammar system are used to create sexism?⁶

English is a real example for sexist language figure, because English contains asymmetry representation in its grammar and provides gender stereotypes. About English as a figure of sexist language, Jespersen as quoted by Dai & Xu says English is the most sexist language he has ever known⁷. Besides, English exists in a culture which used to extreme patriarchy until feminist linguistic activism emerged in early 1970's.

⁵ Shan Wareing, *Language and Gender* in Linda Thomas & Shan Wareing (Eds.), *Language, Society and Power: An Introduction*. New York: Routledge. 1999. Page: 107

⁶ Ibid. Page: 107

⁷ Haoyun Dai & Xiaodong Xu, *Sexism in News: A Comparative Study on The Portray of Female and Male Politicians in The New York Times* In *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics*. Nanjing: Scientific Research Publishing Inc. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/ojml.2014.45061>. 2014. Page: 710

Grammar system of English can be said to support formation of sexist language with observe asymmetry aspect. Asymmetry represents masculine and feminine form improporunately and most of them put woman as subversive.

Beside asymetri, English grammar that supports sexism existance is based on markedness. Markedness Theory identifies linguistic elements as marked or unmarked. Unmarked elements are more basic, natural and frequently used than marked ones. Unmarked linguistic components are generally considered positive or neutral, while marked ones are frequently related to negative senses. According to Lyons, there are two types of marking: formal marking and distributional marking⁸.

Formal Marking sets out from the perspective of external characteristics. Generally speaking, in a pair of gender-opposite nouns, masculine ones are unmarked whereas feminine ones are marked with the added affixes like -ess, -ette, -rix, which may denote insignificance and humbleness. In this way, feminine nouns are often treated as derivations of masculine nouns. A large number of feminine nouns are created by adding affixes to masculine nouns, which may put women at a subordinate and secondary position.

While Distributive Marking refers to the different distribution ranges and the frequency of occurrence. Masculine nouns can not only be used to indicate men but also function as generic nouns, but feminine nouns have limitations in distribution. So the former is unmarked and the latter is marked. For example: chairman, businessman, salesman can be used to refer to men

⁸John Lyons. *Semantics*. London: Cambridge University Press. 1977

and women, but chairwomen, businesswoman, saleswomen can only be used to refer to women. In terms of pronouns, Spender described a phenomenon: "she represents a woman but he is mankind. If she enters mankind she loses herself to be "he"⁹. From his statement, it is assumed that masculine pronoun can be used to denote both genders and someone whose gender is unknown, but feminine pronoun can only refer to women.

In the other hand, aspects beyond grammar used to create sexism cause gender stereotypes and semantic derogation. Gender stereotypes is meant the patterns of the way men and women are talking, they are talking frequency, construction of talking change or interruption, back channel support, mitigated and aggravated form and spreading topic. While semantic derogation is a process which the words refer to women indicates negative sense or sexual connotation. Semantic means "meaning" and derogation means "making something worse." Generally speaking, masculine nouns are neutral and generic, often associated with positive and affirmative meanings. However, feminine nouns are in a more specific and narrow sense, often containing negative meanings. For example, though both bachelor and spinster refer to single person, bachelor are often regarded as free-minded and happy but spinster gives people an impression of a peculiar old woman. Semantic derogation can also be found in semantic degradation or derogation that many neutral or even positive female terms were sexually derogated. Some marked

⁹Dale Spender & Paul. *Man Made Language*. London: Routledge. 1980

feminine nouns denote not only specific occupations or positions but also marital status. Examples are ambassadress, countess, empress etc.

One thing that makes extreme patriarchy in social life worse is mass media role. Moreover, media that may be used the most by people is mass media which including television, radio, newspaper or another printed media. The term "mass" refers to news/information delivered to huge amount of people or news/information which public consume the most. Therefore, language used in media is very potential to spread notion of correctness and attitude toward language use.

Mass media, to report news/information is vary. For example, "A shot B" is different with "B was shot". This variation indicates that mass media is playing big role in language use and therefore construct people's perception. But Thornborrow clarifies "we should not have in mind that media is in the powerful side, while people are in the media's influence"¹⁰. The implication of what Thornborrow's quote is that people have choices to choose news/information based on people's desire, people may choose newspaper published by A beside B or even not to choose to read.

When mass media are using sexist language to report news/information to public, it is same as to give contribution in constructing sexist community, and this is dangerous. For the impact, when gender stereotypes is included in mass media and it is used frequently, at the end, sexist community will be actually formed.

¹⁰ Joanna Thornborrow, *Language and Gender* in Linda Thomas & Shan Wareing (Eds.), *Language, Society and Power: An Introduction*. New York: Routledge. 1999. Page: 81

In this thesis, media that will be a spotlight is *New York Times* newspaper. *New York Times* newspaper is a daily newspaper published in New York City, USA where the people speak English. This kind of mass media has big potential to spread notion of correctness and attitude toward language use with the second biggest circulation after *The Wall Street Journal*. Language used in *New York Times* is liberal, therefore has a big potential to change over times¹¹.

Changes happen in languages, one of them is because of political correctness reason. At the core of political correctness is a reformist idea with the view and aim of changing and improving society, essentially by changing the way things are named and framed¹². These attempts are aimed mainly at establishing equality, equal representation and removing the possibility of insult in various areas and issues in which some believe a group is being discriminated against or viewed with a bias. Such sensitive issues include gender, race, national and ethnic identity, culture, religion, age, sexual preferences, disabilities and others. Political correctness, however, is not an ideology, statement of beliefs in the same way as, say, Marxism. It is instead an underlying attitude, one that is very difficult to pin down and which moves in mysterious ways¹³. Political correctness usually considers more about language. The way something are named and stigmatized toward language

¹¹ I. Westin. *Language Change in English Newspaper Editorials*. New York: Rodopi B.V. 2002.

¹² Tatiana Hořavová, *The Debate on Political Correctness with Special Focus on Education: Intentions, Consequences and Controversies*. Praha: Univerzita Karlova V Praze. 2013. Page: 7

¹³ Ibid. Page: 7

which is playing role to spread notion of correctness and attitude as mentioned above.

Linguistic case which have more consideration to be inquired is sexism. As mentioned above, sexism in language provides gender stereotypes. These stereotypes exist in language structure and culture. The impact is that sexism in language rises gender issue which represents one of gender – women at the most – in disadvantaged position. Political correctness in this case is manifested as an attempt to change language as reformist idea of this attitude in the hope of social balance and erase gender discrimination.

The linguistic change was caused by men role as language regulators. Pauwels mentions men roles as language regulators as their roles in the dictionary-making process; in the writing of normative grammars; in the establishment of language academies and other normative language institutions; and through their involvement in language planning activities¹⁴. As a matter of fact, there are something wrong with men as language regulators, the problem is, men as language regulators put women as subject of language regulation. Even though women take a part as language enforcer in language regulation.

This thesis uses diachronic approach to analyze documents found in *New York Times* newspaper, because this thesis will describe the development of sexist discourse in different points of time. 1965's is chosen as a beginning point of sexist discourse occurrence before linguistic activism who affiliated

¹⁴ Anne Pauwels, *Linguistic Sexism and Feminist Linguistic Activism* In Janet Holmes & Miriam Meyerhoff (Eds.) *The Handbook of Language and Gender*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. 2003. Page: 550

with women movement – say Feminist Linguistic Activism – started on 1970's.

1965's is considered a year that femininst linguistic activism was not yet showing their influences toward language change, because as Pauwel's statement that it was the linguistic activism associated with the women's movement starting in the 1970's that posed the first major female challenge to male dominance in language regulation and planning¹⁵. While in 1975's was that the feminist linguistic activism was on their early way to made their influence to language change. In 1985's, feminist linguistic activism's progress of their efforts could be measured of how far their attempts to carry change in language. In 1995's – 2005's, further efforts might take an account.

As what we have known, diachronic approach to language analysis related to linguistic change is included in Historical Linguistic field. This approach is focussed on pragmatic of sexist discourse in *New York Times* newspaper, consider that news as one of the pragmatic uses of language, shares the same attribution: shaped by and reshape society¹⁶. Pragmatics involve reference, presupposition, implicature and inference in the discourse context. Like what Gillian B. and George Yule say, in using terms as reference, presupposition, implicature and inference, the discourse analyst is

¹⁵ Anne Pauwels, *Linguistic Sexism and Feminist Linguistic Activism* In Janet Holmes & Miriam Meyerhoff (Eds.) *The Handbook of Language and Gender*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. 2003. Page: 551

¹⁶ Haoyun Dai & Xiaodong Xu, *Sexism in News: A Comparative Study on The Portray of Female and Male Politicians in The New York Times* In *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics*. Nanjing: Scientific Research Publishing Inc. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/ojml.2014.45061>. 2014. Page: 710

describing what speakers and hearers are doing, and not the relationship exists between one sentence or proposition and another¹⁷.

B. Statement of The Research Problem

As mentioned above, media and languages are the carriers as well as the creators of social culture, reflecting and at the same time reinforcing the ideology of public. Studying sexism from the perspective of news media provides us clearer and more direct way to detect the asymmetrical power distribution between females and males. Through diachronic approach, the problem is formulated as “How was the development of sexist discourse in the *New York Times* article published on 1965 – 2005?”

C. The Purpose of The Study

Through this study, the result will come to answer the statement of the research problem. It is “How was the development of sexist discourse in the *New York Times* article published on 1965 – 2005?”

D. The Significance of The Study

Through this study, the authors hope to rise people’s awareness of the hidden sexism in the newspaper which may put women in disadvantaged position in society and the development of sexist language in the *New York Times* article published on 1965 – 2005.

¹⁷ Gillian B. & George Yule. *Discourse Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1988. Page: 27

E. The Scope and Limitation of The Study

This study cannot judge the other aspects beyond portray of sexist discourse explained through pragmatic in *New York Times* article available in 1965, 1975, 1985, 1995 and 2005. In other words, this study will focus only on how was the development of sexist language in the *New York Times* article published on 1965 – 2005.

Besides, data taken from New York Times article are selected based on formal marking, distributive marking, semantic derogation and generic bias. Data that are taken is considered to have discourses of sexism.

F. Definition of Key Terms

1. Sexism

Sexism in a language appears because of the influence of sexist culture or we may say extreme patriarchy in social system. This social system like this is tended to put women in disadvantaged position in all that matters. For example, generally in this society (tend to England and western people in general), man is still having higher status on job occupation, where men are still having higher property and salary than women; some of politicians, directors, judge advocates, surgeons, headmasters, director of films are dominated by men¹⁸. Sexist language also contains asymmetry representation or put men and women in unbalanced position and provides gender stereotypes.

¹⁸ Shan Wareing, *Language and Gender* in Linda Thomas & Shan Wareing (Eds.), *Language, Society and Power: An Introduction*. New York: Routledge. 1999. Page: 107

2. Mass Media

Media that may be used the most by people is mass media which including television, radio, newspaper or another printed media. The term “mass” refers to news/information delivered to huge amount of people or news/information which public consume the most. Therefore, language used in media is very potential to spread notion of correctness and attitude toward language use.

3. Political Correctness

At the core of political correctness is a reformist idea with the view and aim of changing and improving society, essentially by changing the way things are named and framed¹⁹. These attempts are aimed mainly at establishing equality, equal representation and removing the possibility of insult in various areas and issues in which some believe a group is being discriminated against or viewed with a bias. Such sensitive issues include gender, race, national and ethnic identity, culture, religion, age, sexual preferences, disabilities and others. Political correctness, however, is not an ideology, statement of beliefs in the same way as, say, Marxism. It is instead an underlying attitude, one that is very difficult to pin down and which moves in mysterious ways²⁰. Political correctness usually considers more about language. The way something are named and

¹⁹ Tatiana Hořavová, *The Debate on Political Correctness with Special Focus on Education: Intentions, Consequences and Controversies*. Praha: Univerzita Karlova V Praze. 2013. Page: 7

²⁰ Ibid. Page: 7

stigmatized toward language which is playing role to spread notion of correctness and attitude as mentioned above.

4. Diachronic Approach (Historical Linguistic)²¹

Historical linguistics deals with language change. Historical linguistics is sometimes called *diachronic* linguistics (from Greek *dia-* 'through' + *chronos* 'time' + *-ic*), since historical linguists are concerned with change in language or languages over time. This is contrasted with *synchronic* linguistics, which deals with a language at a single point in time; for example, linguists may attempt to write a grammar of present-day English as spoken in some particular speech community, and that would be a synchronic grammar. Similarly, a grammar written of Old English intended to represent a single point in time would also be a synchronic grammar.

²¹ Lyle Campbell. *Historical Linguistics: An Introduction*. USA: Edinburg University Press. 1998.