

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Nowadays, social media is a form of modernization where people interact with each other using social media to do activities widely. The social media platform allows individuals to engage with others by generating or disseminating content with others. Some individuals claim that they have never stopped using social media in their lifetime. Social media habits is an excessively alarming behavior. The reason is that they can spend their entire day scrolling on social media (Wardoyo et al., 2023). Based on Morning Consult's report, Instagram is one of the second most common social media platforms used by Gen Z, and it reached 76%, after YouTube, which reached 88%. Instagram is still one popular social media platform that has gained popularity among users, especially Gen Z users.

Language and gender refer to the relationship between the languages of males and females and other gender identities. The influence of social media on language use can impact language maintenance, language change, and language modification (Yaser et al., 2022). Writing a caption on Instagram involves someone using language. In language systems, rules known as grammar simplify the process of combining words into larger units of meaning (phrases, sentences, text).

Instagram is a mobile application that utilizes location-based social networking to share photos and videos. Regarding Instagram captions, people can write captions freely to create their ideal selves in a virtual space (Gultom et al., 2020). These are the foundations for communication and expression, such as conversational expression, literacy, and creative writing (Danesi, 2016).

The studies about language and gender on social media Instagram have been conducted by Barnwell et al. (2021) to examine how the family lives on Instagram performing intimacy through the photographs and words in an

Instagram caption. For example, this study is about the differences in the relationship between son-father and daughter-mother, where daughter-mother is more expressive and their incredible bond. Gultom et al. (2020) identify the terms used on Instagram captions when promoting fashion products between male and female influencers.

The studies about differences theory by Deborah Tannen have been conducted by Rachmawati (2023) to examine Deborah Tannen's theory on language and gender in conversation between male and female characters in the movie '10 Things I Hate About You'. This research found the differences in dialogue between male and female characters categorized into six categories. Khan et al. (2020) analyze gender differences through language and social identities in the drama serial. This study discovered disparities in drama serials that reflect beliefs, gender stereotypes, and relationships of power.

Based on the overview, the phenomena in social Instagram activities, namely the differences in language use between males and females. Hence, this research examines differences in language in Instagram captions between males and females of Generation Z. Instagram is the most popular social media platform for Gen Z, who constantly share photos and videos of their activities. To effectively convey the meaning of a post, a caption is necessary before it is posted. The researcher will analyze and clarify whether Deborah Tannen's theory (1990) is applied in language usage in sentences between males and females of Generation Z to create captions in an Instagram post.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of the study, these research questions are:

1. What are the differences in language used in Instagram captions by males and females of Generation Z using the Difference Theory by Deborah Tannen?
2. What do males and females use the frequent themes in Generation Z's Instagram captions?

1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the research question, these research objectives are:

1. To identify the difference theory between language and gender performed in the Instagram captions of Generation Z.
2. To analyze the frequent themes males and females use in Generation Z's Instagram captions.

1.4 Uses of Study

The researcher wishes to contribute to the sociolinguistic application of this study and bring benefits to sociolinguistics learning. It has the following two distinct reasons:

1.4.1 Theoretical Use

This study offers a way to determine when sociolinguistics learning is suitable, particularly to investigate language and gender and Deborah Tannen's know-difference theory, which is applied by Generation Z males and females when creating captions in a post on Instagram.

1.4.2 Practical Significance

This study aimed to understand sociolinguistics learning and focused on language and gender. Students, teachers, and researchers can use it to gain an understanding of sociolinguistics in difference theory as additional research on a related field or topic.

1.5 Scope of Study

Generation Z refers to people born between 1997 and 2012. In the present generation, numerous individuals spend time on social media at least once daily. Following YouTube, one of the most popular social networking platforms is Instagram (Later.com). The researcher will focus on Instagram accounts such as colleagues and several accounts from influencers and artists/actors who are part of Generation Z.

Numerous Instagram users will be involved in captions when they post pictures or videos. The researcher found many themes in captions and the different themes between males and females of Generation Z in Instagram captions. This study will focus on the difference in language use in Instagram captions by males and females of Generation Z according to Deborah Tannen to see whether Tannen's theory still applies or is used by males and females of Gen Z in Instagram captions and clarify whether it is still applicable or not.