

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the background, research questions, objectives, and significance of the research.

1.1 Research Background

Language is one of the most crucial aspects of life (Downes, 1998). Language has such a crucial purpose in all communities since it allows people to communicate with one another. It helps individuals to convey their wants. Humans use language as a communication tool in their lives (Wardaugh, 1992; Utami et al., 2022; Alqahtani, 2015). Our lives could be worthless if we could not communicate because of communication, individuals can easily adapt to their environments (Emanuel, 2007). Language allows speakers to identify themselves and see their language as representing their identity. Learning a language is about learning to communicate with individuals from other parts of the world. As a result, language is crucial in the field of trade, international agendas, and a variety of other activities (Putri et al., 2018).

Suyanto (2011) defines language as a set of sounds or signs created by human verbal tools that have meaning. (Utami et al., 2022). It is frequently used in communities to share information and obtain a benefit when having a conversation (Refa & Siriporn, 2021). Language is a method of communication that individuals use to communicate and conduct daily tasks in the community (Maru et al., 2021). Language plays a crucial role in the lives of countries since it allows them to express their opinions, feelings, and emotions (Sari, 2016). Language involves its use of utterances, as well as structures and interpretations. It is not easy to have a conversation in social environments without human speech (Noprianti & Padmadewi, 2022). We may conclude from the explanation above that language is a tool for humans to express and communicate what they feel and believe, and it can undoubtedly be understood by others, implying that communication happens.

Languages are homogeneous and have to be distinct from others. The language of the community strongly integrates sociolects, which assist in identifying socioeconomic and educational levels, age, gender, class, and occupation (Honko, 1998) cited in Benlakdar, 2020; Nurchalistiani & Didik, (2021). It also includes culture and beliefs within the community (Refa & Siriporn, 2021). As a result, the term language variety within the community is founded. A member of the community in a language, according to Chaer and Agustina (2012), contains a variety of social statuses and cultural differences. It occurs through the use of a society's speech. The involvement of individuals who speak different languages enriches this country's linguistic diversity. The choice of speakers and utterance partners typically influences language diversity (Chaer & Agustina, 2010). Thus according to Fishman (in Chaer & Agustina, 2010, p. 36), a speech community is a group that understands at least one variety of linguistics and its use principles. When it comes to language as kind of a way to communicate, it is undeniably linked to sociolinguistics, as it is a linguistics field that explores how people use language in having conversations in the community (Godwin & Rita, 2018; Utami et al., 2022). The research subject is language (Nasution et al., 2020). This implies that sociolinguistics is focused on social problems (Stockwell, 2013).

According to Chaika (2008), sociolinguistics concerns numerous sociological aspects, including participant, environment, subject, function, alienation, status, formality, and social factors that impact people's interaction. Language variation is one of the subjects covered in sociolinguistics (Fishman, 2001). Permatasari et al. (2020) state that it describes language use and variants in humanity's social context. According to Chaer and Agustina (2010) in Munawaroh (2020), those languages have structures and components that all communicators of its language understand equitably. The language is becoming more diverse and complex. The variety or diversity of this language is influenced not only due to utterances that are not homogeneous but also by to variety of social interactions they engage in. As a result, it is concluded that the variety of languages could be categorized depending on the presence of social action and the purpose of activities through social community (Gemilasari, 2013). Finally, the sociolinguistic field studies how the structure of a society affects how people speak and

how different languages and styles of use relate to social characteristics, including class, gender, and age (Melofa et al., 2017).

Language variation is the outcome of the interaction of language and social characteristics such as age, gender, education, social status, social occasion, etc. (Barber & Stainton, 2010). Chaer and Agustina (2010) differentiated language variations based on speakers and language users. Language differences based on speakers pertain to geography, social status, gender, and age. In contrast, depending on the user, language variations refer to what language is used for, in what areas, what ways and tools are utilized, and how formal or informal the context is. The differences in language variety may be found in vocabulary, morphology, and syntactic structure (Chaika, 2008). As written and posted by a Facebook user, on his Facebook post updated, a teenager invites his Facebook friends to play online games together by saying, "*Infoo Mabar ges, 1 vs 10 main FF!*" (*Let's play FF together*) Meanwhile, a 40-year-old woman posted a video of herself and Majlis Taklim's group performing Sholawatan on Facebook. Group members talked about their plans to go shopping together and commented on the post. "*Majlis Taklim Al-Ikhlas, kita lagi ngumpul latihan solawatan, semoga kita selalu akur dan kompak ya ibu-ibu*". (*Majlis Taklim Al-ikhlas are gathering to practice sholawatan. May we always get along and be unified*). It may be concluded from the two posts shared on social media Facebook by an adult woman and a teenager that they speak and use different languages. Hasnitah et al. (2023) propose that language variations are influenced not only by speakers but also by social interaction factors. Language diversity increases when a language is spoken by a large number of people in a wide area. The examples of language variations were found in Facebook posts between a 40-year-old woman and a teenager, supporting Fishman's (1972) statement that the older a person is the more vocabulary they master and have a good understanding of language structure. Additionally, variations seen from gender differences will affect language style, the topic of conversation chosen, and even the choice of words used. This can be seen in the use of language by children, teenagers, and adults, which will vary due to technological developments that feature new and continually changing expressions of words or language that are commonly used by teenagers. In addition to creating new words or language expressions, teenagers frequently utilize abbreviations or shortenings of words

with varied meanings and purposes in their daily speech. This is consistent with Abbas's (2024) statement that language use is influenced by social circumstances. Gender, social class, status, politics, age, and technological aspects are the main social factors that people take into consideration.

The preliminary studies mentioned previously regarding language variations based on Age show that generally, a person speaks to suit their age and needs. The need will increase as people get older. For instance, like children, they will be more comfortable talking about games, such as the above conversation, whereas their adult phase will talk more about projects, daily expenses, and what they need. So the patterns illustrated in the previous conversations are the things that fit into their relevant aspects. By all of this, Sunahrowi (2007) contends that various factors can influence linguistic variances in an exciting social life. As a result, the researcher would like to investigate the variation of language in social media used by students from educational institutions. This research will focus on social media, Facebook and Instagram. Facebook is one of the most well-known social networking platforms is Facebook. It is globally available and has a large user base that is constantly growing. It currently has over one billion users and is an interesting form of virtual communication (Danah & Ellison, 2007). It has evolved as a standout platform for individuals to connect and communicate with others worldwide. People can use post updates to complete a range of activities. Facebook has already gone far beyond by continually updating its functionality, which includes sharing videos or pictures, posting comments, creating a story, posting status, personal messages, tagging, and, most reportedly, live-streaming video (Junco, 2013). They used it to share information and details about their everyday life.

According to Bolander and Locher (2010), post updates are texts published by Facebook users wherein they share something about what they are doing right presently and other information with their Friends on Facebook, including how they are feeling, what they are doing, encourage someone to do something, or what they intend to do in the future. Post update is one way for people to inform other network members of their involvement (Awl, 2011). Most of the interaction on Facebook is written. However, it is usually done in informal language on Facebook, in which they are free to express their

opinion or post comments (Das & Sahoo, 2011). Previous research into the motivations for Facebook use has found enjoyment, self-expression, information exchange, medium interest, and self-documentation, but interpersonal interactions are the most common (Alhabash et al., 2014). Instagram currently has 800 million daily users (Kircaburun, 2020). Because of its wide usage among young adults and teenagers, Instagram is the quickest-increasing SMS (Wagner, 2015). (Alhabash and Ma 2017; Jackson and Luchner 2017). Instagram allows individuals to share, filter, post pictures, and create live streams and stories with later attributes. Instagram offers a pleasant atmosphere for users. Earlier studies have investigated different motives, including entertainment, comfort, self-expression, medium interest, interpersonal communications, monitoring, documentary evidence, freshness, and creativity (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016). Instagram use could be attributed to showing or expressing a more famous self, spending time, and enjoyment in the current study (study, 2022). Instagram is appropriate for self-expression, social connection, surveillance and understanding of others, documentation, uniqueness, and creativity (Lee et al., 2015).

The researcher analyzes many posts or news people post on Instagram and Facebook. There are various kinds of stories or post updates. Most are promoting their business, providing a religious speech, motivations, expressing their unforgettable moment, announcement, invitation an ID for playing an online game, those who are fighting, those who are sarcastic, and so on. As they publish such things on Facebook and Instagram, other members leave comments on the posts, and the interaction begins. According to Cantina and Alvarico (2022), users can publish something that explains their activities, conditions, thoughts, and feelings. It can quickly begin a style of online interaction that might be obtained by people worldwide. Social Media, Facebook, and Instagram are like a forum for those who want to tell what has happened and what will happen, so there are many kinds of interactions there. Their interaction makes the researcher interested in studying more deeply the variations of the language they use and how they use their language variations. This research aims to analyze the sociolinguistic theory of language variation to determine the language variation used in social media and the use of it, especially in Facebook and Instagram students' posts.

1.2 Identification of the Problem

The Sociolinguistics Study: language variation used by students in social media; Facebook and Instagram are the focus of this research. This is limited to Facebook and Instagram posts by University students. The study's problem was listed as being related to the following:

- 1) There are many variations in language used by university students in their social media.
- 2) A variety of factors cause different language variations on social media
- 3) Their different needs and cultures influence the way people use language.

1.3 Research Question

Based on the background of the problem above, the research questions are;

- 1) What language variations are used by university students in social media Facebook and Instagram?
- 2) How do they use the language variations in social media, especially Facebook and Instagram?

1.4 Purposes of the study

In line with the research questions above, the objectives of the research are;

- 1) To describe the language variation used by university students in social media Facebook and Instagram.
- 2) To analyze how the language used by university students in social media.

1.5 Significances of the Study

The findings of this study will be a valuable reference and significant contribution to the field of sociolinguistics research, specifically language variations. The research focuses on the kinds of language variation and how the language is used by students from educational institutions. It has both theoretical and practical implications.

Theoretically, the researcher hopes that the findings can provide relevant information. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to current theories about language variation in social media, especially Facebook and Instagram posts.

Practically, the study is supposed to give outcomes that will represent another reference for language variations. This study is intended to be a reference for future research on similar topic areas in greater depth and thus not restricted to specific contexts. So, the findings of future studies describe language variation in any context.

