

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Background of the Study

Gender differences have been long the focus of analysis and discussion among many experts and lay people alike. In the past, people used the term 'sex differences' to discuss the differences between men and women. The term 'sex differences' is now changed to 'gender differences' because the term 'sex differences' is felt to be concentrating too much on biological differences between men and women. On the other hand, the term 'gender differences' is preferred because it does not talk only about the biological differences but also the differences of role, behavior, attitude, language, etc between men and women (Keough and Garcia, 2000:20). The emerging attention to many other aspects of gender differences has been influenced by the feminism movement which was begun in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when the feminists were concerned with the equality between men and women in every other aspects of life (Keough and Garcia, 2000:242).

As stated above, gender differences are interesting and important to discuss because they are relevant in human nature. Barton and Sardinas (2004:77) claim that people have declared themselves as men or women even before they were born. This starts with parents who prepare everything for their babies even before their birth. If they wish to have a baby girl, they will prepare pink clothes, paint the room pink, etc to show that they are going to have a baby girl. On the other hand, if they expect to have a baby boy, they most likely will prepare everything that will show that they are going to have a baby boy. As the babies begin to walk and play with other people

around, they will also be given toys based on their gender. Girls play with dolls, boys play with cars, etc. To this point, Barton and Sardinias (2004:77) claim that in the early life, human being, learn about sex differences, but when they grow up, their sex at birth – female and male– is now becoming a gender –a way of thinking, speaking, and acting that is considered feminine or masculine. In this stage, a human being learns what is meant to be a male or female and also how to behave as a man and a woman.

Regarding these differences, Deborah Tannen, as quoted by Barton and Sardinias (2004:77), claim that gender differences are even reflected in the ways that men and women use language. “When we speak, one of the things we do is identify ourselves as male or female” (Coates, 1993:163). Through our speech, we identify and behave our self as men or women. In line with this, Holmes (1992:287) states that there are six functions of speech. When language is used to express the speaker’s feelings, its function is called *expressive*; when language is used to attempt someone to do something, its function is called *directive*; When language is used to provide information, its function is called *referential*; When language is used as the comment on language itself, its function is called *metalinguistic*; When language is used as aesthetic features of language, its function is called *poetic*; When language is used to express solidarity and empathy for the others, its function is called *phatic*. However, not every one, man or woman, uses language to perform these language functions precisely in the same way. This implies that gender differences determine language differences.

The focus of the study is on the directive function of language which can be defined as “a speech act that tries to get someone to do something” (Coates, 1993:124). Coates (1993:114) states that “women and men typically employ

different linguistic 'style' that is followed up in a wide range of studies". She summarizes some ways to identify that different style; one way of them is through commands and directives used by man and women. According to Austin (1999:51), "directive is an attempt of the speakers to direct hearers to perform some future act which will make the world fit the speaker's word (it can be through commanding, ordering, requesting, warning, and suggesting)". Almost similar with Austin, Blakemore (1992:110) states that "directives can be performed through ordering, requesting, entreating, insisting, and advising". She also states that "the differences between the directives may vary in the strength, for example, an order is a stronger type of directive than a request". According to Ervin-Tripp (1977:189), "in English, and probably in most language, directives may take a number of forms ranging from simple commands boldly states to hints that require inference based on shared knowledge for their proper identification as directives". Kuntjara (2003:76) claims that the studies of gender in request, offering, commanding — simply in the directives — are not discussed too much. This fact encouraged the writer to analyze the different style of the directives used by men and women and also the responds of the listeners to the directives given. Knowing these differences will make us become more aware in interacting with both gender, male and female.

Goodwin, as quoted by Eckert and Ginet (2003:141), states that "males engage in speech acts that build hierarchies". She finds that "boys engaged in a task oriented activity— both commanding ("Gimme.....") and seeking permission ("Can I...."). She also shows that the hierarchy in boys' group is being constructed when they give commands or ask permission. Almost similar with Goodwin, Holmes (1992:293) states that "the form of directives used by boys is more direct and less polite than those used by the girls. In a study of doctors' directives to patients as can

be seen in West's study, male doctors typically used imperatives, e.g. 'Lie down', etc". Goodwin, as quoted by Coates (1993: 124) calls this type of directives as aggravated directives.

Goodwin, as quoted by Eckert and Ginet (2003:141), makes a clearness that "girls use their verbal activities mostly to make and enforce social divisions". She also states that "female engaged in speech acts that build egalitarian societies". From her study, she finds that "girl less likely to speak from either a commanding or a subordinate position. They more often use directives as suggestions or proposals for joint action, such as 'Let's.....', 'Why don't we.....', rather than as commands". Almost similar with Goodwin, Holmes (1992:293) states that "girls and women tend to favor more polite and less direct forms of directives than males. She also states that the form of directives used by the girls is clearly less direct and more polite than those used by the boys. In a study of doctors' directives to patients as can be seen in West's study, female doctors used less direct forms of directives, e.g. '*Maybe you could stay away from the dessert*'". Goodwin, as quoted by Coates (1993: 124) calls this type of directives as mitigated directives.

Many experts have studied gender differences reflected in language use – oral or written in general. The writer focuses her study on the gender differences in written literature since "written literature is a reflection of what happens in our real life" (Little, 1966:1). Little believes that "literature explains people's values, their thoughts and problems as well as their conflicts. In short, literature reflects the whole way of life of a society. As such, we can assume that men and women in literary works such as novels, short stories, plays, poems, etc should also reflect our verbal behaviors including the differences in giving directives". This assumption encouraged the writer to find out how men and women in literature use directives.

Bentley (1963:1) states that, “in all, critics usually agree that all forms of drama must represent a special situation in life”. Therefore, regarding that plays appropriately represent real life situations, the writer decided to study *All My Sons*, a play written by Arthur Miller. Besides, plays contain more dialogues than the other literary genres. Short, as quoted by Carter and Simpson (1995:138), states that “an overview of the dialogues may be usefully employed in the analysis of drama texts. As an addition, plays are different from other fictions such as poems, short stories, or novels since they are created to be performed by different actors in different locations throughout time which made plays become a popular form of entertainment and relaxation” (Bentley, 1963:1). In line with Bentley, Little (1966:3) explains that “a drama presents characters which are shown in dialogues and actions, so that drama has a dramatic characterization in which other literary genres do not have. It has a quality to describe human characters and attitudes in action”.

The writer chose Arthur Miller as the playwright in this study since his plays often reflect social problems and individual's place in society. What makes him different from the other American playwrights is that Miller believes that a serious playwright must write social drama. To him, “the genre of a drama is not simply ‘an image of society's evil’. The true social drama, which Miller calls the ‘whole drama’, must recognize that man has both a subjective and objective existence, that he belongs to not only himself and his family but to the world beyond. This definition fits the four plays that made Miller famous – *All My Sons* (1947), *Death of a Salesman* (1949), *The Crucible* (1953), and *A View from the Bridge* (1955) (Downer, 1967:96)”.

Among those four plays, the writer chose *All My Sons* since Miller, at the first time, applies his belief about a true social drama in *All My Sons* through Joe Keller.

“In Miller’s early work, he made each of the protagonist character involved in a struggle between the character’s acceptance or rejection of himself toward the society. *All My Sons* focuses on Joe Keller’s conflict of responsibilities: to his family and to the society. He believes that he is guilty in sending the cracked cylinder heads as this could help his family earn money for living and also made his son, Chris, join the family business. Keller justifies his actions as he thinks that he has an obligation to his family and not to the society as Keller thinks that there is nothing greater than the family” (Downer, 1967:96). In line with Arthur Miller’s belief, the writer chose *All My Sons* to be studied because she is interested in the topic of family as well as the conflict happened between Joe against his morale. Family, humanity, and social values are represented through the Kellers, the Devers, and other characters in the play. “Besides, the play is based on a true story which happened during the Second World War. A manufacturer was found shipping out broken parts for tanks. This had caused mechanical failures which had led to the deaths of many soldiers. The fault was discovered, and the manufacturer was convicted”

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_Miller).

The writer chose to study the major characters of the play because almost all of the dialogues of the play happen among the four main characters: Joe Keller, Kate Keller, Chris Keller, and Ann Dever. The dialogues also tell about the problem inside Joe Keller, Kate Keller, Chris Keller, and Ann Dever. Simply, the whole story tells us about them, their problems, and how they solve the problems.

Those are the reasons for the writer to study the directives used by male and female major characters in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons*. Besides, after doing a brief library study, the writer found out that so far there has been no study about this topic. Therefore, the writer is motivated to analyze the types of directives used by

male and female major characters and also the responses of the directives given to the listener.

1.2. The Statement of the Problem

In line with the background of the study above, the problem statements are formulated as follows:

- 1.2.1. What types of directives are used by male and female major characters in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons*?

To answer the major problem above, the minor problems were formulated as follows:

- 1.2.1.1. What types of directives are used by male major characters, Joe Keller and Chris Keller, to male character listeners in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons*?

- 1.2.1.2. What types of directives are used by male major characters, Joe Keller and Chris Keller, to female character listeners in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons*?

- 1.2.1.3. What types of directives are used by female major characters, Kate Keller and Ann Dever, to male character listeners in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons*?

- 1.2.1.4. What types of directives are used by female major characters, Kate Keller and Ann Dever, to female character listeners in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons*?

- 1.2.2. How do the listeners respond to the directives given by male and female major characters in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons*?

To answer the major problem above, the minor problems were formulated as follows:

1.2.2.1. How do the male character listeners respond to the directives given by male major characters, Joe Keller and Chris Keller, in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons*?

1.2.2.2. How do the female character listeners respond to the directives given by male major characters, Joe Keller and Chris Keller, in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons*?

1.2.2.3. How do male character listeners respond to the directives given by female major characters, Kate Keller and Ann Dever, in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons*?

1.2.2.4. How do female character listeners respond to the directives given by female major characters, Kate Keller and Ann Dever, in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons*?

1.3. The Objective of the Study

Based on the statements of the problems above, the study under report is intended to:

1.3.1. Find and describe the types of directives used by male and female major characters in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons*.

To answer the major objective above, the study under report is intended to:

1.3.1.1. Describe the type of directives used by male major characters, Joe Keller and Chris Keller, to male character listeners in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons*.

1.3.1.2. Describe the type of directives used by male major characters, Joe Keller and Chris Keller, to female character listeners in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons*.

1.3.1.3. Describe the type of directives used by female major characters, Joe Keller and Chris Keller, to male character listeners in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons*.

1.3.1.4. Describe the type of directives used by female major characters, Kate Keller and Ann Dever, to female character listeners in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons*.

1.3.2. Show how the listeners respond to the directives given by male and female major characters in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons*.

To answer the major objective above, the study under report intended to:

1.3.2.1. Find and describe the responses to the directives given by male major characters, Joe Keller and Chris Keller, in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons* on the male character listener.

1.3.2.2. Find and describe the responses to the directives given by male major characters, Joe Keller and Chris Keller, in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons* on the female character listener.

1.3.2.3. Find and describe the responses to the directives given by female major characters, Kate Keller and Ann Dever, in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons* on the male character listener.

1.3.2.4. Find and describe the responses to the directives given by female major characters, Kate Keller and Ann Dever, in Arthur Miller's play *All My Sons* on the female character listener.

1.4. The Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to give a better understanding about the men's and women's speech style especially in the directives used in *All My Sons* written by Arthur Miller. They are also expected to serve an additional reference for the students who are interested in studying the language used by the characters in a literature, especially a play. The writer hopes that this study could help the readers to know that the characteristics of the characters in a literature can be seen from the language they used, in this case through their directives. The writer also hopes that this study then will give a contribution to the field of sociolinguistic especially about the way men and women in giving directives. In addition, the result of this study is also expected to arise greater interest for the readers (especially in literature) in studying sociolinguistics especially about language and gender.

1.5. The Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of the study is an analysis of gender-based directives in literary works especially in a play. Here, the writer analyzes a play as a written text, not a play as a performance on the stage. Therefore, the writer only analyzes the text written despite of the tone, facial expressions, etc of the characters of the play performing on the stage. Due to the limitation of time, the ability, the analysis method, and equipments, the analysis focuses only on the types of directives used by male and female major characters of the play and the responses of the male and female characters (listeners) to the directives given as encountered in the text. The data (utterances) being analyzed are limited to those of major characters' dialogues that contain directives. The major characters of the play are: Joe Keller, Kate Keller, Chris Keller, and Ann Dever.

1.6. The Definition of Key Terms

Before further discussion, it is necessary to define some key terms used in this study:

1. *Gender*

“Gender is a social construct (but one heavily grounded in sex) involving the whole gamut of psychological, social, and cultural differences between males and females” (Wardhaugh, 1998:309).

2. *Directives*

“A directive is an act from the speakers to direct the hearers to perform some future act which will make the world fit with the speaker’s words (through commanding, ordering, requesting, warning, suggesting)” {Austin, as quoted by Peccei (1999:51)}.

3. *Gender-based Directives*

Goodwin, as quoted by Montgomery (1995:160), shows that boys tend to give aggravated directives while girls tend to give mitigated directives. Using Goodwin’s study of aggravated and mitigated directives, West, as quoted by Coates (1993:125-126), shows that male doctors tend to give aggravated directives while female doctors tend to give mitigated directives. Based on those studies above, it is seen that male tend to give aggravated directives and female tend to give mitigated directives.

4. *Major Character*

“Major character is a character who plays an important and prominent role in the story” (Perrish, 1977:494). In this play under study, the major characters of the play are: Joe Keller, Kate Keller, Chris Keller, and Ann Dever.

5. *All My Sons*

“All My Sons is the name of a 1947 play by Arthur Miller. The play was later turned into a film in 1948 and was made for TV film in 1986.”

(http://wikipedia.org/wiki/All_My_Sons) (See Chapter II)

1.7. The Organization of the Thesis

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter I deals with the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation of the study, the definition of key terms, the theoretical framework, and the organization of the study. Chapter II presents the review of related theories and related studies. Chapter III describes the research methodology. Chapter IV deals with the findings and the discussion of the findings. Chapter V presents the summary and suggestions.