CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Sociolinguistics is a study of the relationship between language and society. Researchers involved in this field are interested to explain why humans speak differently in different social contexts as well as to identify the social functions of language and the way language is used to deliver social meaning. In this chapter, the researcher presents the literature review pertaining to language and gender studies and literature on metrosexuals. One of the main social changes and one which has been researched extensively by sociolinguists is the role of gender as a determinant of linguistic usage. Furthermore, this chapter will also present readers with different theoretical frameworks in studies on language and gender, as well as with related studies on Communities of Practice (CofP).

2.1 Sex and Gender

"Gender is not something that we are born with, and not something we *have*, but something we do" (West and Zimmerman, 1987) – "something we *perform*" (Butler, 1999). In every society, boys and girls or men and women are expected to behave accordingly to their sex, as expected by the said society. Men are normally associated with strong behavioural characteristics while women are expected to behave subtly and gracefully. Before the researcher discuss further into the main issues in studies on men's and women's language, it is vital to establish the terms 'sex' and 'gender' appropriately as these two terms are often used interchangeably, as they do not carry similar meaning.

Theorists such as Butler (1999) and West and Zimmerman (1987) have tried to provide a clear definition between the terms sex and gender. Development in language and gender studies has provided a distinction between these two terms. According to Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003),

> Sex is a biological categorization based primarily on reproductive potential, whereas gender is the social elaboration of biological sex. Gender builds on biological sex, it exaggerates biological difference and, indeed, it carries biological differences into domains in which it is completely irrelevant. (p.10)

For instance, there is no biological reason as to why "men should swagger while women should mince, or why women should have long hair and men should not" (ibid., p. 10). People in general also tend to generalize that gender is the result of nurture – as social and hence fluid, while sex is simply determined by biological features.

Simpson and Myar (2010), state that *sex* deals with both biological and physiological characteristics, while *gender* is a term used to 'discriminate' people based on their socio-cultural behaviour, along with speech and language (p. 15). The concept of gender allows describing masculine and feminine behaviours in terms of their language use, patterns and styles. Simpson and Myar sum up the terms as follow:

> Although the term 'sex' and 'gender' are often used as synonyms, it is important to point out that linguists and gender theorists make an important distinction between the two: whereas 'sex' is a biological and physiological category, referring to the anatomical differences between men and women, 'gender' is a social category and a social construct. This means that 'gender' refers to the traits that men and women are assigned and how these can vary within different classes, cultures and societies. (ibid., p. 15)

Based on the quotation above, Wodak (1997) further added that "those gender traits mentioned are not immutable, but they are assigned by a culture, determined and learned socially and therefore not beyond change" (p. 7).

Nonetheless, there is no evident point at which sex leaves off and gender begins because to a certain extent, there is no single objective biological criterion for male or female sex. In contrast with gender, sex is a combination of anatomical, endocrinal and chromosomal features and therefore, the selection of these criteria for sex assignment significantly depends on cultural beliefs about what actually make someone male or female (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003). Thus, the definition of male and female categories, and people's understanding of themselves and others as male or female is ultimately social. Fausto-Sterling (2000) concludes the issue as follows:

> Labelling someone a man or a woman is a social decision. We may use scientific knowledge to help us make the decision, but only or beliefs about gender – not science – can define our sex. Furthermore, our beliefs about gender affect what kinds of knowledge scientists produce about sex in the first place. (p. 3)

Another topic which is commonly argued by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003) is that biological differences between males and females determine gender by causing enduring differences in capabilities and dispositions. For example, men are perceived as more aggressive than women because they have higher levels of testosterone; and left-brain dominance is said to lead men to being more "rational" than women while women are more 'emotional' because their relative lack of brain lateralization. However, the fact is the relation between physiology and behaviour is not simple and it has made it easy to leap for gender dichotomies. Studies have shown that hormonal levels, brain activity patterns and even brain anatomy can be a result of different activity as well as a cause. For instance, research on rhesus monkeys by Rose *et al.* (1972) and a study on different species of fish by Fox *et al.* (1997) have shown changes in hormone levels due to changes in social position.

Research on sex differences in the brain is still at its initial stages, and therefore the finding is far from conclusive (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, ibid., p. 12).

Meanwhile, Fausto-Sterling (2000) claims that the most significant discovery in this area is on women's corpus callosum (the link between the two brain hemispheres), which is relatively larger than men's. This means that the effect of men's smaller corpus callosum should result in greater lateralization, while women's larger corpus callosum is supposed to channel greater integration between the two hemispheres. Thus, many language theorists agree with the fact that women are perceived to have better language proficiency than men because there is an active connectivity between the left and right hemispheres in their brains.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that to whatever extent gender may be related to biology, it does not flow naturally and directly from our bodies. The individual's chromosomes, hormones, genitalia, and secondary sex characteristics do not determine occupation, gait or colour terminology (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003, p. 13). Gender is the very process of creating a dichotomy by effacing similarity and elaborating on difference, and even if there are biological differences, these differences are exaggerated and extended in the service of constructing gender. Actual differences are always paired with enormous similarities, never dichotomizing people but putting them on a scale with many women and men occupying the same position.

2.2 General Overview: Language and Gender

Discussion on metrosexuals is not sufficient without any reference to relevant review of literature in gender studies. Do men and women speak differently? This is one of the many issues being debated in the field of sociolinguistics. According to Holmes (2008, p. 157), "Men speak differently from women as the linguistic forms used by both sexes are not similar". The most popular notion is that "Women are more linguistically polite than men, and that men emphasize different speech functions as compared to women"

(Holmes, 2008, p. 157). Nevertheless, in this modern society and world, men are becoming more aware of using language to function and understand the importance of socializing with women and their surroundings. This is supported by Stewart *et al.* (2003) who suggest that effective communication comes from both men and women exploring their use of a variety of communication behaviours appropriate to the nature of the relationships with other people and to the demands of the situation. In relation to language use, we may infer that metrosexuals also have distinguished certain features of spoken language in their daily lives.

Previous studies on language and gender (e.g. Holmes, 1995; Tannen, 1990; West and Zimmerman, 1983; and Lakoff, 1975) have focused on women's language and this can be observed from the initiation of the three schools of thoughts (see Section 2.7). Even though reference to men's language is available in the discussion and findings of these studies (see Section 2.7), most of them are empirical and inferences are made based on 'yin' and 'yang' method (e.g. women use standard form, while men use vernacular form more in speaking).

It should be noted that studies in language and gender became controversial in 1970s whereby the arguments circulate around women as a 'deficient' gender compared to men. Robin Lakoff is one of the feminist linguists who initially started the study of language and gender on women and ever since her article was published in 1973, many other researchers have come forward and argued her theory.

In an early study conducted by Lakoff, she pointed out certain features as 'women's talk' in the 1970s US. In 1973, an article entitled *Language and Woman's Place* by Lakoff was published and subsequently created a huge debate among the linguists at that time. She introduces an empirical theory that women have a different way of speaking from men. According to her, women's speech is characterized by linguistic features such as the following:

a. Lexical hedges or fillers, e.g. *you know, sort of, well, you see.*

b. Tag questions, e.g. *she's very nice, isn't she?*

c. Rising intonation on declaratives, e.g. *it's really GOOD!*

d. 'Empty' adjectives, e.g. *divine, charming, cute.*

e. Precise colour terms, e.g. *magenta, aquamarine.*

f. Intensifiers such as *just* and *so*, e.g. *I like him so much.*

g. 'Hypercorrect' grammar, e.g. consistent use of standard verb forms.

h. 'Superpolite' forms, e.g. indirect requests, euphemisms.

i. Avoidance of strong swear words, e.g. *fudge, my goodness.*

j. Empathic stress, e.g. *it was a BRILLIANT performance.*

Based on Lakoff's theory, it can be inferred that the linguistic features used by men are the opposite of women's linguistic features. However, the said features have been argued by other language theorists as those linguistic features appear to be very specific and easy to investigate. In addition, Lakoff's claims are made based on her own observations and intuitions. It is obviously true that society has also changed a great deal in the intervening time. Further, conservative feminist reviewers on language such as Litosseliti (2006) and Wodak (1997) claim that English is inherently sexist, structured and fixed as to accommodate or 'mirror' a male world-view (Stockwell, 2010). However, this claim has been argued recently by Stockwell who mentions that:

> Sociolinguists have more recently taken the view that it is linguistic practices that are often sexist and communities who use language in a sexist way, rather than the language itself being controlled by men (largely since, it is argued, meanings are a matter of social negotiation and cannot be fixed by anyone). There is certainly enough evidence that we can use the term genderlect to refer to the different lexical and grammatical choices that are characteristically made by men and women (2010, p. 20).

The distinction between sex and gender has important political and social implications which justify practices that discriminate against the sexes on women particularly. As a result, these can be said to be ideological and have often been used to justify male privileges. Besides, Simpson and Myar (2010) claim that men's supposedly natural role as 'providers' and 'breadwinners' make them 'distant' from emotional attachment thus making them to be less capable in using the language effectively as they concentrate more on their motor skills while women's inherently 'natural' roles as mothers, nurturers and carers make them better off in language use.

Other examples of gender ideologies are such as women are naturally more suitable for lower status or low salary professions (e.g.: nurses, nanny or maid), whereas men are more qualified for professional occupations such as engineering, aviation and medicine. Early pre-feminist linguistic research on language and gender initiated by Jespersen (1922) asserts that linguistic differences are the result of biological differences between men and women. Again, it comes back to 'biological determinism' as the main factor that creates gender stereotypes about men's and women's linguistic behaviour.

2.3 Sexist Language

The term 'sexism' is defined by Wodak (1997) as 'discrimination within a social system on the basis of sexual membership' (p. 7). It also indicates a historically hierarchical system of inequality where women and sometimes men are discriminated against, exploited and constrained in certain ways or other on the basis of their sex. What constitutes sexist language is still being debated and has been the subject of many researches that focus on gender bias in language. Litosseliti (2006, p. 14–15) has come up with a checklist of areas where this gender bias in the language becomes obvious:

a. Sex specific

Sex specification can be found in gendered terms like ‘actress’, or in the use of ‘she’ to refer to countries.

b. Gratuitous modifiers

Under this category, the words or phrases draw attention to sex as difference, for instance ‘lady driver’, ‘women engineer’, ‘male nurse’ or ‘male prostitute’.

c. Lexical gaps and under lexicalization

The words can be identified in inequalities between complementary sets of gendered terms, such as in having more, often derogatory, terms for sexually active women than for men; or by contrast, in lexical gaps where there are no female equivalents. For examples, ‘henpecked’, ‘pussy whipped’ or ‘rent boy’.

d. Semantic derogation

Under this group, it refers to certain terms describing women have changed over time from neutral to negative in connotation. These terms often include a sexual slur, as in ‘mistress’, ‘madam’, ‘queen’ or ‘harlot’ – the last of these originally meaning ‘a fellow of unkempt appearance’. Compare also ‘bachelor’ as opposed to ‘spinster’, or ‘slag/slapper’ as opposed to ‘stud’.

e. Asymmetrically gendered language items

Asymmetrically gendered language items include the use of 'Mrs' to describe married women, thereby divulging their marital status, whereas the same does not apply to 'Mr'. The same principle applies to so-called 'agent' nouns like 'fireman', 'policeman' or 'chairman', even though these terms nowadays do have the equivalents of 'firefighter', 'policewoman', 'chairwoman'/ 'chairperson'/ chair.

f. Connotations of language items

The connotations of language items are exploited in references like 'girl' to describe grown-up women, where expressions like 'weathergirl' arguably trivialize the referent and indicate a lack of maturity in the subject. More recently, 'boys' are sometimes used alongside with 'girls', particularly on 'lifestyle' and make-over television programmes. Another 'connotative' example is the use of 'lady' as a euphemism rather than 'woman', while the term 'single mother' often has negative connotations and 'working mother', while not as downbeat as 'single mother', can also have negative associations.

From the descriptions stated earlier, we can see that many words in English language consist of certain presuppositions about gender and nonchalant attitudes about men and women. Newspapers particularly are full with terms that portray men and women in stereotypical ways. In general, Simpson and Myar (2010) claim the words and terms for women are broadly defined as to represent their social roles ('granny', 'mother of two') but at the same time, they are also judged more ruthlessly ('divorcee', 'career woman'). To sum up, the number of terms that denotes the sexual behaviour of women, mainly in negative terms is higher than that of men.

2.4 Literature on Men’s Language: Language Use and Speech Styles

It is no doubt that in sociolinguistics or in any other fields, there is an increasing number of feminist scholars who have realized to question on how empirical gaps come to be created. For instance, Holmes (1995) ... ‘Are women more polite than men?’ Thorne and Stacey (1993, p. 168) state “that many gaps were there for a reason, i.e. that existing paradigms systematically ignore or erase the significance of women’s experiences and the organization of gender”. This has led many feminist sociolinguists and linguistic anthropologists to come up with questions about analytical concepts that must be re-evaluated when women and gender are taken seriously.

Several studies such as the definition of hypercorrection (Cameron and Coates, 1988), standard and vernacular language (Morgan, 1994), definitions of speech community (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992; Holmes, 1999), and even theories about the way language constructs social identity (Ochs, 1992) have all been examined by feminist sociolinguists (McElhinny, 2003, p. 21). As a result, literature on men’s language has yet to be developed extensively as most studies concentrate on the descriptions of women’s language.

Men and masculinity cannot be separated in the study of language and gender. Before we probe the issue further into language perspective, it is wise to understand the definition of the embedded variable/stereotype of men in general, which is *masculinity*. To begin with, Connell (1995) in his book *Masculinities* emphasizes that masculinity is a gender practice theory/ideology (like femininity) which is not a coherent object, but part of a larger structure. Hegemonic masculinity, the most important aspect of Connell’s theory, is “defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (1995, p. 77). Here, it means that hegemonic masculinity controls a hierarchy of masculinities set up in a way to maintain these gender relations. Central to the theory is the use of ideology, which Connell states to be an "ideology of supremacy" of men over women (ibid., p. 83). From Connell's definition, the study of women's language reiterates that men's language is normally associated with power and discrimination (male dominance theory by West and Zimmerman, 1983) which subsequently cause women's language to be perceived as tentative, powerless and insignificant which disqualify them from getting positions and authority as compared to men.

In early sociolinguistic studies on gender, it was often assumed that gender should be studied where it was most salient, and that gender was most salient "in cross-sex interaction between potentially sexually accessible interlocutors, or same-sex interaction in gender-specific tasks" (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 53). As far as men and language is concerned, the two key parts of Lakoff's claim that created a flurry of research and debate were – (1) that women and men talk differently, and (2) that differences in women's and men's speech are the result of and support of male dominance (see Section 2.2, p. 18). Thus, it has resulted in conflicting paradigms which are later called the *difference* and *dominance* approaches.

Nevertheless, it does not mean that sociolinguists totally neglect the needs to look into men's linguistic behaviours because several studies such as Holmes (2008) and Johnson and Meinhof (1997) attempt to describe men's language. In fact, some references to women's language are useful to make us understand why men do not use similar linguistic patterns as women. Holmes (2008, p. 164-168) provided four different explanations of women’s linguistic behaviour which indirectly describe men’s language:

a. The social status explanation

This claim suggests that women tend to use more standard speech forms than men since they are more concerned with their status. It also means that “women pay attention more on the way they speak because it portrays their social class background or social status in the community” (Holmes, 2008, p.164). An indication of high social status is portrayed through the use of standard speech forms and therefore according to this claim, women use these speech forms as a way of maintaining such status. As for men, language is not a marker of their social status; According to Connell’s (1995) gender practice theory (hegemonic masculinity), the social status matter is of no question for men because they have already been on top of the social status hierarchy whereby this position has given them an advantage to practise male dominance, power and control over women in the society.

b. Women’s position as guardian of society’s values

This explanation states that women use more standard forms than men because generally, the society expects morally-exemplary behaviour from women than men. Little boys receive better freedom than little girls. Misdemeanours from boys are tolerated whereas girls are more quickly corrected if they misbehave (Holmes, 2008). Likewise, any rule-breaking acts committed by women are condemned strictly compared to rule-breaking by men. Women are the ‘benchmark’ of proper behaviour in the eyes of community. Thus, society relies upon women to use language more accurately and with standard forms compared to men, as they (women) normally possess immaculate linguistic repertoire which is crucial to mould children's speech (Holmes, 2008, p. 165). As mentioned earlier, men's role in society is perceived as a 'leader' (adhering to a position characterized by *normalization*), the breadwinner or to be in the frontline in many aspects of life and therefore, men are not subjected to exhibit morally exemplary behaviour as women and to use standard and more correct language (*men as ungendered representatives of humanity* as stated by Johnson, 1997, p. 12).

c. Subordinate group must be polite

The third explanation on women's linguistic behaviour is that they are the 'secondary' group to men and therefore, have to be polite. For example, children have to speak politely to adults. Hence, as a subordinate group, women must refrain themselves from offending men by speaking carefully and politely. This claim is closely related to the social status explanation in which women are very concerned about their need to be valued in the society (Holmes, 2008, p. 166). By using standard forms, women are protecting their 'face' as well as avoiding offence to others. On the other hand, it is generally more acceptable if men are not polite since men's behaviour are normally associated with 'aggressivity', 'competitiveness' and 'emotional detachment' (Petersen, 2003, p. 58).

d. Vernacular forms express machismo

Why don't men use more standard forms? The answer is "men prefer vernacular forms since they carry macho connotations of masculinity and toughness" (Holmes, 2008, p. 167). According to Holmes, if this claim is true, it may explain the reason why women may not prefer to use such forms. From several observations and studies, Holmes discovers that men regard vernacular forms in a positive way and put a high value on these forms, even though they do not always admit to doing so openly.

In a more recent work, particularly on masculinity, the theory of gender as performance has been taken up by many gender theorists such as Johnson and Meinhof (1997). One good example is Cameron (1997), who conducted a study and analysed young male American college students' talk and their use of gossip as well as other features normally associated with female talk, such as cooperation and solidarity features when talking about women and gays. In her observation, Cameron found that the subjects (male students) attempted to distance themselves as a group from homosexuality by 'performing' heterosexual masculinity through using gossip as a tool.

In like manner, Kiesling (1997) investigated interactions among a fraternity group in a US college. Set up in a more structured setting based on election meeting within a fraternity group, Kiesling examined the ways in which individual men performed different roles based on their hierarchical position within the fraternity as a whole. The practise of differing 'archetypal' male functions by these subjects may be perceived as representing the idealized paradigms of masculinity and femininity. However, the members of this fraternity community demonstrated a range of discursive strategies, breaking up the male-female speech behaviour stereotypes. Kiesling managed to show how the different roles possessed by the men and their discursive representations of those positions were closely dependent on the place of each individual within the power of the fraternity.

In contrast, Coates (1997) analysed the differentiation between male and female conversational behaviour. In her study, Coates compared the turn-taking patterns between all-men and all-women's talks, and later found an evident difference between the two. She discovered that men preferred to engage in a one-at-a-time floor, in contrast with women who created a collaborative floor in their talks, following a more polyphonic way of talking. In another study entitled "Box Out and Taxing", Hewitt (1997) focussed on a game played by adolescent males in a school, and pointed out the complexity as well as interplay between notions of cooperation and competition. Hewitt proved that cooperative talk between these boys during the game also carried sharp elements of contestation. On the other hand, he also illustrated how the boy's fiercely competitive game was dependent on a high degree of communication and coordination which demanded that participants respect the rules of talk. Further, other studies such as Johnson & Finlay's on male gossip (1997) and Sidnell's work on men's talks in a rumshop (2003) were meant to describe men's language in different social contexts.

2.5 Male Gossip

Gossip is a form of speaking, which is normally associated with women (Coates, 1989). Gossip is also known as idle talk especially about personal and private affairs of others (Jones, 1980). The use of gossip in a conversation is a mean of affirming group solidarity and an unofficial channel for information transfer within individuals, especially in a community of practice. Eggins and Slade (1997) defined gossip as "a form of talk which interactants can construct solidarity as they explore shared normative judgments about culturally significant behavioural domains" (p. 273). This emphasis on the normative function of gossip as a tool of reinforcing the values of the group relates well to the importance of "[binding] gossipers together in an imagined community of shared values” (White, 1994, p. 79). In other words, gossip is a ‘device’ in strengthening the cohesion of the social group.

Johnson and Finlay (1997) relate this function of gossip to the discourse of ‘football talk’ between men, which seems to act as an instant point of mutual reference even between strangers. However, Johnson and Finlay further argue that the familiar discussion about other men is restricted to unknown and famous individuals only. It is found that men’s gossip seems to avoid private or personal experience matters, and the information-transfer is only on public knowledge while no private and emotional energy is invested in a talk.

Benwell (2001) in her article entitled *Male Gossip and Language Play* discovered this pattern of gossip among men can also be seen in men’s magazines too. Unlike female’s lifestyle magazines, the shared information in men’s magazines is rather general and the denial of private spheres is marked. The alternative subject of male gossip is those men who do not ‘fit” the description of dominant mould of masculinity such as the gay men or new men (metrosexual). For instance, the excerpt below from *Loaded* (men’s lifestyle magazine) describes how gossip takes place in a magazine:

> Many a funny bone was tickled recently when it came out that two strapping Welsh guardsmen had been well and truly hung out to dry by three slightly built women during a late night brawl in a West London 7-Eleven. In the course of what appears to have been a merry old dust-up, Private Dean Morgan suffered a gashed head, while Private Vincent Jones was reduced to seeking refuge in a nearby bakery after suffering a broken nose and bruised jaw. Conclusive proof, some might say, that all Welshmen are as soft as a limp chin. (p. 22)

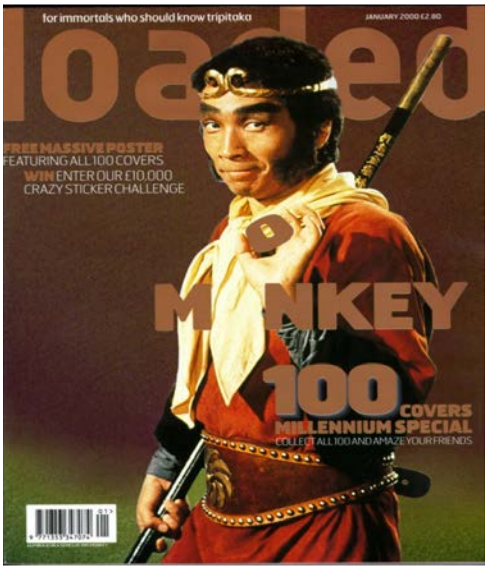

Figure 2.1: Cover page of *Loaded* magazine

The more censorious aspect of gossip relates well to the narrowly defined function of gossip as “talk which involves the pejorative judgment of an absent other” given by Eggin and Slade (1997). This sort of pejorative gossip obviously contributes to the reinforcement of normative values and construction of group identity. Eggin and Slade have identified a number of compulsory stages to the genre of gossip which include:

1. **Third person focus**: This part introduces the subject of the gossip (as mentioned in the excerpt on page 26, ‘the Welsh guardsmen’) and frames the deviant behaviour (that they as “strapping” guardsmen were attacked and overpowered by “three slightly built women”). At this stage, Eggin and Slade argue, constructs the polarization of “we” (the hearer/gossiper/reader) and “them” (the subject of gossip).

2. **Substantiating behaviour**: Under this premise, the gossiper provides evidence or information which enables the participants to make negative evaluation. “The speaker describes an event which highlights some departure from normality and

this is then used as a hook on which to hang the evaluation" (ibid., p. 285). In this example, the departure from normality is the apparent weakness (as in "sought refuge") of these military men and their fleshly vulnerability (as in "broken nose", "gashed head" and "bruised jaw").

3. **Pejorative behaviour**: In this stage, a negative, attitudinal evaluation is explicitly realized ("Conclusive proof, some might say, that all Welshmen are as soft as a limp chin"). Interestingly, this process of "othering" is realized not only in terms of non-masculine behaviour, but in terms of national identity.

As stated in Section 2.4, Cameron (1997) discussed the phenomenon of "othering" in male gossip in terms of heterosexual anxiety about homosexuality. Men can only gossip pejoratively about men who are "different" from them since identifying with, rather than against them, constitutes the taboo of desire for other men.

2.6 Background History of the Emergence of Metrosexuals

In this modern world, the emergence of metrosexual's group as a community of practice in our society is a sign of the impact "between the development of consumer society and the shift of gender role" (Doublekova, 2008, p. ii). With regards to studies on language and gender, we may infer that the development and lifestyle changes experienced by metrosexuals these days have probably resulted in linguistic change in our society.

Related literature review on the term *metrosexual* by Aishah Sandhera Abdullah (2010, p. 22) traced the existence of metrosexuals to the Victorian era (1837-1901). This is further supported by Kaye (2009) in his journal entitled "Twenty-First-Century Victorian Dandy: What Metrosexuality and the Heterosexual Matrix Reveal about

Victorian Men". In this journal, the term *dandy (*used to describe the nineteenth century men) was defined by Kaye and its definition is very much related to metrosexuals. The only obvious difference is dandy promotes beauty. As for metrosexuals, the men are more devoted towards their image as the focus is more on their physical outlook. Apart from that, there are certain manners, rules and regulations that men tend to follow in order to be one (Aishah Sandhera Abdullah, 2010, p. 22).

From the brief discussion earlier, we can see that the existence of *dandy* men in the nineteenth century can be related to the present metrosexual's community. Perhaps, Simpson (1994) manages to establish this similarity and later comes up with the term *metrosexual* to replace the term *dandy*. Nevertheless, how does Simpson manage to define the emergence of this new community in the late twentieth century? Before we discuss this matter further, it is crucial to understand the notion of postmodernist transformation of *masculinity* (also known as the notion of the new man), which has been extensively documented by three writers in particular, Mort (1996), Nixon (1996) and Edwards (1997). Later, their studies were discussed by Beynon (2002) in his book *Masculinities and Culture.* He summarizes the notion of the new man as follows:

> ..the notion of the new man is based upon two strands. One (the nurturer) arose out of gender politics, particularly as a response to first wave feminism. The second (the narcissist) was a direct result of the commercial **image-ing** of masculinity in the 1980s. If the former was emblematic of the late 1960s and 1970s, the latter was a direct outcome of the market-led policies that have been pursued in the United States and western Europe since the 1980s era of Reagan-Thatcherite economics. Similarly, the creation of the new lad in the 1990s was a commercial project and a regression in terms of gender politics (p. 119).

In this respect, it is found that Simpson was influenced by the development of a second strand of the new men movement (the narcissist) associated with commercial masculinity. According to Beynon, the commercialisation of masculinities began in the 1980s, as a result of the spectacular expansion of consumerism since the end of the

Second World War. The 1980s also witnessed a change in the politics of looking (new men's appearance) as the 'male-on-male' gaze joined the 'male-on-female' as socially acceptable, especially among young, fashionable metropolitan men with high disposable incomes (Beynon, 2002, p. 103). Nixon (1996) uses a threefold model to triangulate how this phenomenon came about:

a. Clothing outlets for men

Male retail outlets proliferated in the 1980s, ranging from the exclusive, designer outlets to the merchandising of cut-price labels. The middle-ranging 'Next' label was one of the great marketing successes of their decade, their clothes 'speaking' aspirational lifestyle rather than class. In Next's hands, the outmoded suit made a spectacular comeback, wrecking 'a vengeance against all forms of soft-focus effeminacy' (Edwards, 1997, p. 21)

b. New visual representations of men

In the 1980s, new visual representations of masculinities appeared in advertising and on television. The male form began to be eroticized and objectified in ways that had previously been applied to the female body. In the hands of photographers such as Ray Petri and Kevin Brody and advertising agencies like Bartle Boyle Hegarty, a narcissistic, self-confident, well-groomed, muscular but also sensitive new men emerged in cards and posters (for example, those by Athena) (Beynon, 2002, p. 103).

c. Style magazines for men

The emergence of style press for men was arguably among the most notable features of the 1980s popular culture. In their pages, diverse and mobile masculinities were created; as Edward (1997) puts it in both layout and content. He also reiterates that these were new kinds of magazines for new kinds of men. They constituted a new commercial project and were 'lifestyle manuals… offering new ways of experiencing the city' (Nixon, 1996, p. 155), in the process, placing men-in-the-mirror, to borrow a term from Edwards' (1997) book. He documents the growth of style magazine publishing and the clever crafting of a range of visually sophisticated masculinities for the first generation to be brought up on colour television, one more visually literate than any before. Both Mort (1996) and Edwards (1997) are of the opinion that the 1980s men were not changing because of sexual politics, but through commercial pressures. In fact, the style magazines had 'a lot more to do with new markets for the constant reconstruction of masculinity through consumption' (Edwards, 1997, p. 82).

In addition, gay men – the predominant in the image and fashion industries, were the initiators of these changes and were blamed by many people for what some perceived as feminization of men's apparel (Beynon, 2002, p. 104). These critics have strongly objected to what they held to be the prioritization of the 'gay look' in fashion, including the rising up of macho masculinity in terms of hyper-masculinity. Conversely, Beynon added that many gay men resented what they regarded as the cheapening of their own distinctive visual style by the fashion industry.

2.6.1 The Misconceptions about Metrosexuals

As mentioned earlier in Section 1.0 (see p.1), the term *Metrosexual* was first coined by Simpson (1994) who was the correspondence for *The Independent* magazine, New York. Ever since the term is coined by Simpson, it has created heated discussions and arguments particularly on the sexual orientation of metrosexuals. There are several researchers who try to redefine the term. Flocker (2003), defines "A metrosexual is twenty-first century male trendsetter, straight, urban man with heightened aesthetic sense, man who spends time and money on appearance and shopping, and man who is willing to embrace his feminine side" (p.1). Kaye (2009) also states that "… metrosexual men are in touch with his feminine side" (p. 108). Meanwhile, Hackberth (2003) describes a metrosexual as "… a man who seems stereotypically gay except when it comes to sexual orientation" (quoted in Denk, 2009, p. 3).

Other than that, O'Shaughnessy and Stadler (2005) state that metrosexuals are those who possess three main physical characteristics: unique appearance through clothing, embrace 'notorious' spending habit and possess extreme concern over appearance that often make them to appear as 'narcissistic'. Further, Denk (2009) comes up with an interesting definition about metrosexuals:

> The term 'metrosexual' was created out of the prefix metro-, meaning urban or city, and the suffix –sexual, used in the same context as homosexual, making the connection between how these men dress and their sexual preference. The metrosexual chooses clothing not for its utility, but also for its designer tags and the look that it portrays. He dyes his hair to refine his look more often than one might think, even if it is only 'to cover the grey'. These men might also do things such as wearing make-up and getting manicures, which have historically been signs of femininity. (p. 3)

From several definitions given earlier, it should be noted that Flocker (2003), Hackbarth (2003) and Denk (2009) provide deviated opinions pertaining to the sexual orientation of metrosexual in their definitions. According to Flocker and Hackbarth, metrosexuals are straight (heterosexual) guys, while Denk states that metrosexuals are homosexual or gay men. However, the sexual orientation of metrosexuals cannot be sub-divided into groups of heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual, or attributes focus point (such as portraying either hyper or submissive masculinity) and therefore, it should never be argued in this context of study as Simpson (1994) has clearly stated it in his definition, "... He (a metrosexual) might be officially gay, straight or bisexual, but this is utterly immaterial because he has clearly taken himself as his own love object and pleasure as his sexual preference" (p. 1). Thus, it is crucial for theorists and researchers to adhere to the definition established by Simpson, since the masses as well as academic references acknowledge him as a person who coined the term *metrosexual*.

2.6.2 Studies on Metrosexuals

Studies on metrosexuals started several years later after Simpson (1994) coined the term. Conseur (2004) is one of the researchers in Sociology studies who conducted a study on this subject. In her study, she investigated male college students in one of the universities in the US in terms of their metrosexual behaviour and identity factors contributing to this trend in society. The results from Conseur's (ibid.) study indicate that metrosexual behaviour has a strong connection to the role of the media in enforcing men to adopt this behaviour in their lives. At the same time, increasing awareness of having better self-image is a factor which causes men to adopt metrosexual behaviour.

On the other hand, a study by Doublekova (2008) examines metrosexual as a Western trend which appears in the post-state socialism context of Bulgaria, focussing on gender norms and constructions of masculinity. Through her analysis of the gathered data, she finds that metrosexuality allows more flexibility in gender positioning. As for the Bulgarian context, it demonstrates that meanings of consumerism and male vanity are different in the country, and heterosexual normativity is still very strong, due to local historical and material conditions (Doublekova, 2008, p. ii). (ibid., p.ii). Meanwhile, Anderson (2008) in her paper discusses the role of metrosexual and retrosexual (the antithesis of the metrosexual, Simpson, 2006) which have affected the male role in society. Anderson (2008) states that a social backlash (the retrosexual) emerged as a result of ‘feminization’ of men portrayed by metrosexual. The retrosexual backlash stresses what it means to be ‘real men’ with appeals to virulent sexuality, violence, sport, machismo, and the lack of interest in fashion, etiquette and health (p. i). Further, Parobková (2009) investigates the position of metrosexuals in American culture by focusing on the historical background of this term and its relationship to fashion, sports, homosexuals and the relation of this phenomenon to the black and Hispanic people in America.

Being “the most promising consumer market of the decade” (Simpson, 1994), studies on metrosexuals can be found vastly in business, marketing and consumerism field. In her thesis, Janowska (2008) focuses on metrosexuals and their shopping habits regarding to selection of clothing. She concludes her study by stating that metrosexuals are favourite brand switchers and have a short-span of interest in brand loyalty. Likewise, Denk (2009) uses theories of conspicuous consumption and status display to examine the relationship between changing gender roles and metrosexuality as a new form of status display. Conversely, Cheng, Ooi & Ting (2010) investigate the effect of self image, social expectation and celebrity endorsement on the consumption of metrosexuals toward male grooming products in Malaysia. The results of their study indicate that there is a strong correlation between self image, celebrity endorsement and social expectation on the consumption behaviour of metrosexuals.

On the other hand, Pruekchaikul (2010) explores and analyses the identity of metrosexuals through using three categories of advertisements: male skin products, men’s sportswear and credit cards. The analysis focuses on the linguistic mechanism and the paralinguistic device, particularly images or pictures presented in adverts (p.

1094). According to Pruekchaikul (ibid.), the issue of how advertisements construct metrosexuals in a way different from normative males via the use of language and paralanguage is one of the interesting topics under the study of sociolinguistics particularly on gender construction (p. 1103). However, as stated earlier, literature on men's language particularly on metrosexual's language is quite limited. As this is the first of such a study in the context of Malaysian men, the findings can contribute to further understanding and development of literature in men's language.

2.7 Theoretical Frameworks: Deficit, Dominance and Difference

According to Simpson and Myar (2010), in the early 1970s and 1980s, the studies on language and gender were classified by the emergence of three schools of thought: *deficit*, *dominance* and *difference* (p. 17). In brief, 'deficit' concentrated on the issue pertaining to whether the language used by women was weak, lacking and deficient. Meanwhile, 'dominance' analysed further into whether 'gender inequality' and 'male dominance' over women produced differences in styles of speech between men and women. In contrast, 'difference' investigated whether these differences were the result of men and women being socialized into different gender roles, with miscommunication between the two arising from this.

2.7.1 Deficit

Under this school of thought, the most influential paradigm in 'deficit' area is Lakoff's theory that can be found in her book, *Language and Women's Place* (1975), where she argued that women's language is weak, which consequently reflects and propagates their subordinate status in society. The characteristics of women's language described by Lakoff are largely based on her anecdotal evidence and assumptions. In addition to claiming that women have a tendency not to tell jokes, Lakoff also claims that women tend to use tag questions in their speech such as *'isn't it?'* or *'aren't I?'* that show their insecurity and doubt, as well as using certain intonation patterns to seek their interlocutor's approval.

Nonetheless, follow-up studies conducted by Cameron *et al.* (1988), Coates (1996) and Toolan (1996) have negated this claim, challenging Lakoff's theory that meaning depends on contexts and that tag questions and other 'weak' forms consist of multiple functions. Tag questions and other hedges serve as facilitative functions rather than indexing insecurity as these linguistic features would enable women to deliver their messages smoothly and effectively. Cameron *et al.* (1988) suggested that:

> ... much of the facilitating depends on the subordinate speaker in a conversation, who may or may not be female as in 'unequal encounters' such as in job interviews, in doctor-patient interactions and in the workplace. On top of that, the use of tag questions in some institutional contexts like courtroom questioning and 'disciplinary interviews' can be used to humiliate the addressee rather than being facilitating. Therefore, tag questions and other hedges can be considered as interactional forms of the ***powerful*** rather than the ***powerless*** (p. 74).

The following excerpt (as cited in Simpson and Myar, 2010, p. 18) is an example of a disciplinary interview between a female prisoner and a male prison governor (taken from the documentary *Jailbirds*, BBC2, 1999), which exemplifies the use of tag questions:

1 Governor:	You will have to get sorted out at some point ye know… *aren't you*? Instead of that you're getting more aggressive each time you come. Whether you are doing it or not, you shouldn't be doing it you know that=
2 Prisoner:	=Yes Sir
3 Governor:	And that's what we are dealing with here *isn't it*? Is there anything you'd like to say in mitigation?
4 Prisoner:	Nothing
5 Governor:	Nothing? Nothing at all [Prisoner: Nothing]. Not even I'm sorry?

From the example given, the first tag question by the Governor may be interpreted as a request for explanation or confirmation from the prisoner, who submissively agrees to his proposition (‘Yes Sir’). However, it becomes apparent that the prisoner is not being asked to clarify anything, but more to express her guilt and submission by line 2. She instead turns down the offer to provide an explanation of her misbehaviour by saying ‘Nothing’ twice. This shows that it is crucial to acknowledge the fact that the use of any linguistic forms very much depend on several variables, not only gender, such as the status of the speaker and relative (institutional) power, their purposes, the type of communication and the overall context.

2.7.2 Dominance

The other two main theoretical frameworks debated in the study of language and gender were the ‘dominance’ and ‘difference’ approaches, in which one seeking to expose the generic assumption of male dominance over women through their linguistic behaviour like West and Zimmerman (1983), while the latter relating differences in conversational behaviour mainly by both sexes who grew up in different subcultures (e.g. Tannen 1990; Holmes, 1995). The main concern of ‘dominance’ theorists was on the exposure of gender bias in the English language, particularly in grammatical forms that consistently rendered women invisible. Sexist language as described in Litosseliti’s (2006, p. 16-17) checklist symbolizes women in a stereotypical way, as in *redhead*, *female pilot* or *mistress*; and explicit derogatory terms for women such as *whore*, *bitch* or *slut*.

A book by Spender (1980) entitled *Man Made Language* initiated a very provocative theoretical paradigm. Spender claims that since we live in a patriarchal system, meaning has been defined by men, and men’s language has been seen as the norm. In order to show male dominance, Spender states that “Men have always been the dominant group because they (men) have created many things in this world, developed the categories, invented sexism and its justification and developed a language trap which caters their interest” (1980, p. 142). She further argues that men have ‘labelled’ the world in certain ways, and have invested their meanings in terms like ‘motherhood’, ‘frigidity’ or ‘emasculate’. On the other hand, women have fought back through terms such as ‘sexual harassment’ or ‘chauvinism’. However, Spender eventually explains that it is not women who are ‘deficient’, but the social order was to be blamed for this polemic.

However, Spender’s work was highly criticized for being too deterministic for merely positioning the language as the key determinant of our social reality. Cameron stated that Spender neglected ‘the contextuality and indeterminacy of meaning’, but instead producing ‘an account of Orwellian thought-control via male speaks which is patently false’ (2006, p. 16). In addition, Simpson (1993) argued to this theory by stating that Spender’s excessively idealistic programme had little to offer in the way of contesting and changing sexist language.

2.7.3 Difference

In 1980s, the ‘difference’ approaches became prominent in the study of language and gender. Simpson and Myar (2010) stated that “Theorists viewed that these differences were largely due to boys and girls growing up in different subcultures and being socialized from an early age into different gender roles” (p. 19). This paradigm viewed men’s and women’s speech as essentially different but at the same time equal. For instance, studies found that women are more co-operative speakers than men and more concerned to the ‘face wants’ of others (Coates, 1996; Holmes, 1995; Tannen, 1990).

The findings have been largely used to explain the use of certain language features by women such as hedging and indirectness to engage the interlocutor or to mitigate face-threats.

Theorists who supported 'difference' approach such as Coates (1996), Sunderland (2004) and Holmes (2008) had also done constructive re-evaluation of women's language by analysing deeper on women and how they interact within their speech communities and in all-female groups. According to Coates (1996), a number of studies in the past emphasized the positive forms and functions of women's talk and 'gossip', which far from being trivial, actually was found to have important social functions in that it helps women to construct, negotiate and maintain their identities. Meanwhile, Tannen (1990) and Gray (1992) both argued that miscommunication between men and women was mainly caused by different conversational expectations placed on women. Women in particular mostly use emphatic 'rapport talk' strategy compared to men's information-laden 'report talk' approach (Holmes, 2008; and Jariah Mohd Jan, 1999). Nevertheless, Simpson and Myar (2010) further stated that Tannen and Gray's books received a lot of criticisms from linguists, particularly Cameron (1998) for their neglect to mention the relations of power between the sexes.

2.7.4 Gender Performativity

The dominance and difference frameworks were used vastly to describe the production of language by men and women; however, these two models were compromised because they offered too simplistic a model of gender differences in language. Subsequently, the scholarly emphasis has shifted the paradigm more recently to how men and women are constructed through language and discourse. This development has been referred to as the 'Third Wave' or 'poststructuralist' feminism because it has challenged the view initiated by the Second Wave feminists that gender is a binary opposition only. Influenced by Foucault's (1980) understanding of power, the Third Wave feminism focuses on the multiplicity of gendered identities and associated linguistic behaviours (Baxter, 2003).

From this perspective, gender is described as a process of negotiation and not something that is given. The notion of *Gender Performativity* is presently an influential framework in the study of language and gender which is introduced by Butler (1999). According to Butler (ibid.), gender refers to what men and women perform and is not something that we are. The premise of gender performativity is that men and women continuously negotiate their gender roles and therefore are capable of challenging them. On the other hand, masculinity and femininity is a construct, an identity that 'has to be reaffirmed constantly and publicly displayed by repeatedly performing acts in accordance with the social norm' (Cameron 1997, p. 49).

From a linguistic viewpoint, expressions of gender performed by men and women are deployments of linguistic resources. The effect of any resource depends on the manner in which it is deployed – on the situation, context and the broader style within which it is embedded. This style involves both the other concurring stylistic elements and the history of the speaker's stylistic activity. Butler (1999) highlights the laying down of performances over time, and at the centre of this history is the combined history of individual speakers' performances. In this respect, due importance is given to the language use and styles of speakers when they interact.

The notion of gendered core ascends in many studies on language and gender, as 'habitual' behaviours contribute towards fundamental differences between men and women. For instance, the view of men as hierarchical and competitive, and women as egalitarian and connection-seeking have been widely discussed in language and gender studies (e.g. Johnson & Meyerhoff, 1997; Tannen, 1990). Such ideology has allowed theorists to connect between speech moves and strategies on one hand, while looking at characters and dispositions on the other. One clear example of gender performativity by Hall (1995) would be the telephone sex worker adopting ‘feminine’ and using ‘powerless’ speech style to display a version of femininity that she thinks her male customers expect.

It should be noted that deficit, difference, dominance and gender performativity are the bedrock of the theoretical frameworks of this study, while the Communities of Practice (CofP) described in the following is one of several frameworks available for research design in ethnography. Nonetheless, metrosexuals belong to a new ‘set’ of men’s community which have emerged in our society today. Therefore, it is crucial for sociolinguists to concentrate and analyse how the metrosexual community use language and the impact of metrosexuality on men’s language.

In order to analyse their practice and use of language, the researcher adopted the Communities of Practice Model framework to explain the data in this study. Wenger (1991) is renowned for his research on Communities of Practice. Apart from Wenger, Bucholtz (1999), Cameron (1997), Kiesling (1997) and Meyerhoff (2003) are some researchers who have used this model to analyse the use of language in interaction by different community, which is firmly grounded within a framework of social constructionist. The two advantages of this approach are, firstly it has a potential to uncover the more dynamic aspects of interaction, and secondly, it is useful to identify areas of potential social change. Moreover, McElhinny (2003) reiterates that this approach is tailored suitably for the analysis of cultures, societies and linguistic behaviours which may not fulfil the standard gender dichotomy. In addition, it assists research which contests the dominant ideologies in different areas and contexts such as in language study.

2.8 Understanding the Communities of Practice (CofP) Framework

Lave and Wenger (1991) are the ones who initiated the Communities of Practice (CofP) theory. Figure 2.2 presents an illustration of the Communities of Practice or CofP framework:

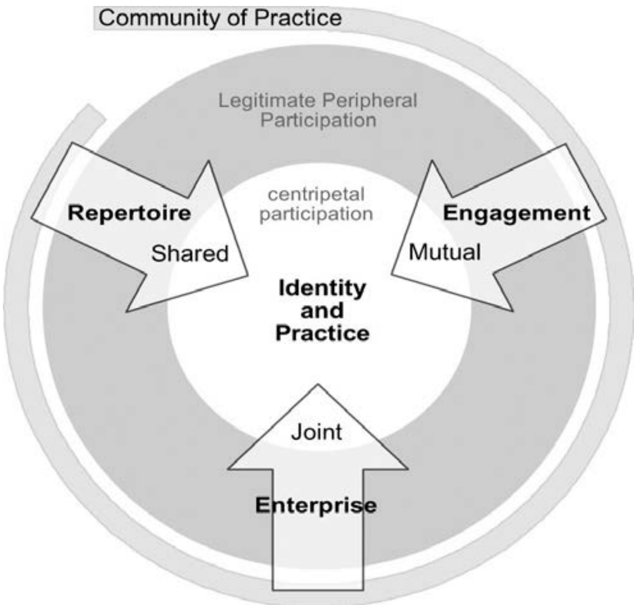

Figure 2.2: Illustration of Communities of Practice

Figure 2.2 describes the flow of mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire in the development of identity and practice in communities of practice. The centripetal participation refers to the members of CofP who have reached 'full-membership' level. The centripetal members in a CofP have also developed their own set of linguistic and non-linguistic practices as a result of the existence of mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire. Meanwhile, the legitimate peripheral participants refer to the members who have not reached the full membership status as the centripetal's member have and thus, they may not be fully competent with the certain practices of the 'full' members of CofP.

In their later work, however, Lave and Wenger (1998) abandoned the concept of legitimate peripheral participation and used the idea of an inherent tension in a duality instead. In the context of a Community of Practice, the notion of a duality is used to capture the idea of the tension between two opposing forces which become a driving force for change and creativity. Lave and Wenger use the concept of dualities to examine the forces that create and sustain a community of practice. They described a duality as "... a single conceptual unit that is formed by two inseparable and mutually constitutive elements whose inherent tensions and complementarity give the concept richness and dynamism" (1998, p. 66). In recent years, Wenger (2006) describes CofP as follows:

> Communities of Practice are formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavour: a tribe learning to survive, a band of artists seeking new forms of expression, a group of engineers working on similar problems, a clique of pupils defining their identity in the school, a network of surgeons exploring novel techniques, a gathering of first-time managers helping each other cope. In a nutshell, communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly (p. 1).

Wenger presents three characteristics of CofP which are crucial:

1. **Joint Enterprise (The Domain):**

   A group of friends or a social network of people is not merely a community of practice (CofP). It is controlled by a domain of interest which represents the identity of the group. Membership is further enhanced through dedication to the domain. Each member develops a mutual competence that makes them different from non-members or outsiders. According to Wenger (2006), the domain of interest is not essentially something recognized as ‘expertise’ for the outsiders. A misfit group could have established different kinds of mechanisms to deal with their bailiwick: living in the street and upholding some kind of ‘gang’ identity that represents them. They appreciate their shared knowledge and exchange information from one another, despite the fact that only a small number of outsiders may accept or even acknowledge their expertise.

2. Mutual Engagement (The Community):

In accomplishing the aims and goals of their shared endeavour, members get involved in regular talks and meetings, assist one another, and exchange facts or ideas. Members develop ‘bonds’ that allow them to participate in learning from one another. A webpage in itself cannot be considered as a CofP. Doing similar job or having similar position does not form a CofP unless there is a constant interaction and mutual learning between the members. For instance, the flight attendants in a large airline company or students in Malaysian universities may share a lot in common. However, without constant interaction and collaborative learning among the group members, they cannot be called a CofP. An important note about communities of practice is that members may not necessarily have to work together every day. For example, a group of artists used to get together at studios or bars to talk about the painting styles that they have come up with together. Through these regular interactions, they make up a CofP even though they often worked alone.

3. Shared Repertoire (The Practice):

A CofP is more than a community of interest; for instance, a group of adults who commit in similar sports or hobbies. Each member in a CofP is called a ‘practitioner’. Hence, members cultivate a shared repertoire of resources via exchanging knowledge on real-life stories, experiences, tools, and solutions of overcoming persistent problems—in other words, a shared practice with each other. This is a time-consuming process and requires constant interaction. An interesting chat with a tourist on a train might provide one with different kinds of fascinating facts; however, this single event does not count for a CofP. This developmental process of a joint practice takes place naturally. For instance, the in-flight supervisors who work in wide-body fleets make a rigorous attempt to gather information and document the in-flight services procedures they have acquired into a knowledge base. On the other hand, teachers who get together for breakfast in a school canteen regularly might not be aware that their breakfast talks could be one of the prime channels of knowledge on how to teach their students. By engaging in these sustained interactions, a shared repertoire is produced through a series of experiences and events that they have shared together for them to practise.

Communities of Practice framework focuses on the analysis of the way communities engage in meaning-making within its members. This may include analyses on both linguistic practices such as phonology, gestures, use of slang or sexist terms and non-linguistic practices (e.g. hairstyles, clothing choice, brand consciousness, lifestyle affiliation) which can be studied by researchers to understand the phenomena present in one particular community (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Analyses of a lifestyle as well as linguistic practices may provide insights on a number of levels. While the findings of a particular language variation may be interesting to sociolinguists, such data can be utilized to make judgments of the internal structures of the community being studied.

Davies (2005) explains that essential to the discipline of CofP is the strong analysis of aforementioned practices or shared repertoire of these groups. Davies (2005, p. 559) quotes, “The core of community of practice concept resides in the importance of doing, and more particularly, doing things in a way which reinforces membership in that community of practice". She further states that this foregrounding of practices is seen by Bucholtz (1999) as both the overarching benefit of the approach and the main point of difference between CofP and other sociolinguistic frameworks such as speech communities and social network analysis (ibid., p. 559).

In relation to this study, the researcher strongly believes CofP framework is most suitable in scaffolding the speech patterns and styles of metrosexuals. As mentioned above, CofP emphasizes equal focus on linguistics and non-linguistic practices. This idea has been initiated from the earlier concept of practice theory, which contests that since there is no clear concrete gap between linguistic and non-linguistic practices in the eyes of the user(s), analyses of either type of practice by researchers 'should be approached in analogous ways' (Bordieu 1997, as cited in Bucholtz, 1999, p. 210). It essentially means that the importance of a lexical item used by the group is seen as vital to that of a gesture and body movement, a style of clothing and a cosmetic choice (Bucholtz, 1999). Therefore, in analyzing the speech patterns and styles of metrosexuals, CofP provides a great deal of advantage for the researcher in conducting his study. Its 'triangulation' feature enables the researcher to build a convenient observable perimeter which is based on three premises – mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire.

2.9 Related Studies on Communities of Practice

Bucholtz (1999), Cameron (1997), Eckert (1999) and Kiesling (1997) have focussed their studies on analysing the use of language in interaction by different Communities of Practice (see Section 2.4 for studies by Cameron and Kiesling). One of the notable findings for CofP framework is the concept of brokering. Wenger (1998) asserts that in

CofP context, brokering is the process by which new practices such as linguistic are brought into the group. He further claims this concept consists of the idea that legitimate periphery participants "[yield] enough distance to bring a different perspective, but also enough legitimacy to be listened to and are thus able to posit the practices from one group into another" (p. 110).

In this relation to brokering concept, Bucholtz (1999) in her study on a group of nerdy girls found that a socially flexible girl (Carrie) was able to introduce the nerdy girls to words from the 'cooler' group. However, Davies (2005) argues that Bucholtz analysis is incomplete, and contends that "it is hard to imagine peripheral members having sufficient legitimacy to affect group practices" (p. 566), and that the new practices must be sanctioned by 'full' members of the group. Meanwhile, Eckert (1999) in her study on a group of a young female adolescence group found contrastive evidence for this idea of 'sanctioning'. In Eckert's study, a girl who was known for bringing new fashions into her school was looked at by her peers with scorn; it was only after a popular girl from a different clique wore a similar item that she felt 'licensed' to wear the high-fashion items.

Upon the completion of reviewing the literature available in CofP, the researcher found that previous studies on CofP have been carried out with both male's group (see Section 2.4 for studies by Cameron, 1997; and Kiesling, 1997) and female's group (Bucholtz, 1999; and Eckert, 1999). However, there were no studies conducted to analyse the language of metrosexual's group as a Community of Practice. Although the concept of brokering (Bucholtz, 1999; Eckert, 1999; and Wenger, 1998) is an interesting area of CofP worth to be researched on, the researcher found that the concept of legitimate peripheral members (see Figure 2.2) is not relevant to be looked into as all of the six metrosexual subjects involved in his study are the centripetal members (see Figure 2.2) who have reached 'full' membership level in CofP. In addition, the researcher also noticed that there has been no attempt by preceding studies to fill in the gap between mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire premises that govern the CofP framework in the production of language by a group of Communities of Practice.

Meanwhile, studies by Cameron (1997) and Kiesling (1997) concentrate on how the male college students perform their gender identity in a CofP based on gender performativity theory (Butler, 1999) only and neglect holistic descriptions of the language from the three other schools of thoughts (see Section 2.7). Therefore, Cameron and Kiesling's descriptions of language and findings are strictly limited and analysed from the gender performativity perspective only. With that, the researcher would like to explore the use of multiple frameworks in language and gender which includes Lakoff's *Deficit* framework (1975), *Dominance* framework by Litosseliti's (2006); West and Zimmerman (1983); Spender (1980), *Difference* framework by Coates (1996); Holmes (1995); and Tannen (1990); and *Gender Performativity* by Butler (1999); and Cameron (1997) in the production of speech patterns and styles of metrosexual's language in his study. Further, the researcher would also like to analyse the reciprocal effect between mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire in the production of metrosexual's language in CofP.

2.10 Summary

According to Stockwell, "Gender is negotiated and performed culturally and socially in the operation of discourse" (2010, p. 21). In this context, the definition of modern men has developed more extensively in the last two decades. Along with this development, it also marks the revolution of men’s language through many channels such as the internet (online websites and magazines for men), mass-media (TV commercials and advertisements) and press (men’s magazines, men’s books). Subsequently, metrosexuals can be considered as one community who receives the massive impact from this development and thus making them as one communities of practice who live among us in our society. Nevertheless, this study intends to discover whether there are any similarities and differences among metrosexuals in using their language and how they use the language to function in a society.

Up until today, we can see that there are numerous studies on women’s language or feminism language that have been carried out by famous linguists such as Cameron (1997), Coates (1997), Holmes (2008) and Lakoff (1975). The most outstanding notion as stated by Holmes about men’s language is that men prefer to use vernacular or non-standard forms in their language because they carry macho connotations of masculinity and toughness. However, references and researches on men, especially on metrosexual’s language are yet to be as extensive as studies in women’s language. Hence, this study aims to contribute towards the development of language and gender, especially on men’s language through the discussions and findings in the subsequent chapters.