

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter I includes the research background, problem identification, research scope, problem statement, research objectives, and research significance.

1.1 Research Background

In daily activities, communication is an essential part of social life; without it, people cannot interact normally. One of the tools used to express reactions, thoughts, and feelings by humans around the world is language. Language is defined as dynamic, diverse, and humanized sound symbols (Dobrovolsky & O'Grady, 1992). Language is divided into two categories: spoken and written language, each having different implications and uses in communication. Additionally, language can facilitate collective activities such as playing sports and working together. Some people use language in various functions and specific social contexts to illustrate what they feel and want to convey (Culpeper, 1996; Beers Fägersten, 2007). Therefore, language is crucial in enabling people to communicate, especially to avoid misunderstandings in interactions, ensuring that humans can understand each other.

In daily interactions, some people use polite language to foster a positive relationship context with others. This can be done in various ways, including avoiding harsh language or word choice. According to Trudgill (1974), taboo words are likened to discouraged behaviours because they are considered immoral. Based

on this, it is important to understand that what is considered taboo language can vary significantly between cultures and societies. Differences in values, norms, and beliefs can influence perceptions of words that are considered inappropriate. One type of taboo word is the swear word. Swear words often express intensity and emotions, including anger, frustration, or surprise. They can also reinforce statements or demonstrate social closeness in informal conversations. Thus, swear words are a fascinating type of word to discuss today, considering that their function is not always negative.

Swear words are part of a person's natural offensive language, so most individuals avoid using them (Rosenberg et al., 2017). According to most people, using swear words is considered negative and disrespectful because it can offend someone and make them uncomfortable. Dutton (2007) argues that swear words have negative meanings because they are disgusting and rude, especially words such as 'f*ck' and 'bitch'. Based on this, the use of swear words generally hurts others. According to Ljung (2011), swearing is emotive language; its primary function is to reflect or seem to reflect the feelings and attitudes of the speaker. This means that speakers typically use swear words to express their emotions. In communication, people will have different intonations when speaking. If people are angry, they usually use swear words to emphasize their emotions when speaking.

In the field of linguistic expression, swear words are referred to as inappropriate speech and are often labelled as bad language because, for some people, they are considered taboo or socially unacceptable (Karjalainen, 2002; Stone, McMillan, & Hazelton, 2015; Van Lancker & Cummings, 2016; Andang & Bram, 2018; Hence, swear words such as 'bitch,' 'motherfucker,' 'shit,' and others

are inappropriate in formal situations. This is because their context is often abusive, insulting, or emphatic when the speaker expresses intense emotions, which differs greatly from the polite and formal context. Based on these definitions, it can be seen that swear words have a function that is generally considered negative because their context is insulting and can offend the person who hears them. According to Andersson and Trudgill (1992), swear words have three purposes: expletive, abusive, and auxiliary. Expletive use means to express personal emotions and is not directed at anyone. Abusive use involves directing swear words at others. Auxiliary use means employing swear words not directed at a specific person or situation, serving as empty expressions often said in a non-emphatic tone.

On the other hand, swear words are not entirely negative for most people. Sometimes, only some are strong and patient when faced with situations that trigger their emotions or high stress. Some people tend to hurl abusive and insulting curse words at others to express their feelings of anger and the pain they experience (Philipp & Lombardo, 2017). This statement is also supported by Crystal (2003), who said that swear words are an explosion, a release of emotional energy. It means that swearing can release feelings of emotion or frustration in difficult situations. Consequently, it can make someone feel relieved when they vent their anger. In other words, swearing serves as a coping mechanism for stress.

Most of the use of swear words is spread through social interactions, such as adults' emergence of swear words. This is supported by evidence from news publications, such as Tribunjatim.com, which discusses typical swear words from East Java, such as 'Jancok,' which holds taboo meaning in the East Java region (Mardianita, 2023). The use of swear words in movies has been a topic of interest

in popular culture studies and psychology. Movies often reflect real-life situations and characters, and swear words are often portrayed as integral to the narrative. For example, a publication from Tribunjatim.com discusses a Korean movie where the swear word 'Shibal' has recently gained popularity (Stevani, 2023).

Jay (2000) suggests that children can start incorporating swear words into their vocabulary as soon as they begin to hear and speak. Children who often imitate or say swear words do not fully understand the meaning of the words; they want to express their anger to appear cool. Thus, children may learn to use swear words through social learning, such as observing daily conversations. Since the early days of movies, swear words have been a part of artistic expression. From classic movies to modern works, swear words often add authenticity to dialogue and convey an intense atmosphere. However, shifting cultural and social norms have influenced how swear words are used and received in movies. This phenomenon raises the question of how the use of swear words in movies reflects social reality and its impact on audiences, especially in shaping individual perceptions and behaviour.

Screenings of Movies containing swear words currently exist in almost all genres of action, horror, thriller, fantasy, comedy, and others. Here are some examples of swear word usage in movies: 1. The word 'F*ck' appears in the 1994 movie **Pulp Fiction**, directed by Quentin Tarantino. 2. 'Shit' in *The Shawshank Redemption* (1994) directed by Frank Darabont. 3. 'Asshole' in the Movie *Goodfellas* (1990) directed by Martin Scorsese. 4. 'Bitch' in the Movie *Kill Bill: Volume 1* (2003) directed by Quentin Tarantino. 5. 'Motherfucker' in the Movie *Scarface* (1983) directed by Brian De Palma. They are often used in situations that trigger strong emotions, such as anger, frustration, or extreme excitement. Their use

is often considered inappropriate in formal or professional contexts. They are often considered a form of offence to communication etiquette or common courtesy.

The use of swear words in movies is numerous and varied, with contexts ranging from casual situations to expressions of anger and others. Psychological studies have shown that exposure to swearing words in the media can affect an individual's perception and behaviour, especially in children and adolescents who are vulnerable to outside influences. The use of swear words in movies is increasing yearly despite the possibility that movies may be watched by children who are still students (Maudy, 2023). Therefore, it is important to understand how swear words in movies can affect the audience, either directly or indirectly. On the other hand, language styles and expressions used in daily conversations can change over time. Words that were previously considered abusive may be viewed as more normal or even integrated into everyday language styles. Thus, the widespread exposure to swear words through movies is now starting to lose its taboo status as it becomes more common and accepted in popular culture. The use of swear words has lost some of its influence over time and is diminishing as the frequency of their use increases (Howe, 2012).

Movies have become an important part of popular culture, and the use of swear words in movies has become a topic of interest to many researchers and observers. Given the widespread use of various swear words, especially in movies, the use of swear words in *30 Minutes or Less Movie* stands out and deserves further investigation. As the availability and accessibility of movies through various platforms increases, understanding the use of abusive language in the context of movies becomes increasingly important. The reason for choosing this Movie is first

because the topic to be researched can be easily found in this Movie. Secondly, this Movie's script provides a rich data source on swear words. Thirdly, all the characters, from teenagers to parents, use swear words; in other words, we can find out whether there are differences in how each character uses swear words and what triggers them. Fourth, the Movie is easy to find and can be watched on Netflix with a dark comedy action genre that features many scenes of pronunciation of various swear words. Fifth, the context of the situation that triggers the characters in this Movie to use swear words is very diverse and not monotonous.

1.2 Problem Identification

The use of profanity, especially swearing, is considered taboo and offensive, potentially causing discomfort to the listener. Despite the negative general perception, some argue that swearing can be a release for individuals facing high emotional distress. Swearing words are widespread, seen in social interactions even among students. This adversely affects learners' emotional well-being and character development as the younger generation. On the other hand, movies are one strategy to facilitate students' learning. Whereas nowadays many movies feature the use of swear words. This contributes to the change of language style and expression in daily conversation, challenging the taboo status of swear words and making them more acceptable in popular culture. This research problem focuses on identifying the types of swear words used in *30 Minutes or Less Movie* and how the use of swear words by the main character, Nick, in this Movie, affects the audience's perception of the character and the overall storyline.

1.3 Scope of The Study

This research is limited to identifying, categorizing, and finding the dominant swear words used by Nick, the main character in *30 Minutes or Less Movie*. It is based on the theory of Swear Words (Batisstella, 2005), which includes Epithets, Profanity, Vulgarity, and Obscenity. The analysis includes the types of swear words used, the context in which they are used, and their impact on character development and storyline.

1.4 Research Questions

Building on the background provided, the problems in this study can be formulated as follows:

- 1) What types of swear words are used by Nick as the main character in *30 Minutes or Less Movie*?
- 2) What are Nick's dominant types of swear words as the main character in *30 Minutes or Less Movie*?

1.5 Aims of the Study

In order to find relevant answers to the research problems, this study is aimed at the following objectives:

- 1) To categorize and identify the types of swear words used by Nick as the main character in *30 Minutes or Less Movie*.
- 2) To find out the dominant types of swear words Nick uses as the main character in *30 Minutes or Less Movie*.

1.6 Significances of the Study

This section discusses the contributions made in this research in terms of theoretical and practical aspects, as described in the section above. This research is expected to provide new insights into the use of profanity in movies and how it can affect viewers' perceptions and reactions. The results of this study can also be a reference for moviemakers, screenwriters, and other researchers interested in language analysis in visual media. Its significance is discussed in the following sections below:

1.6.1 Theoretical Significances

This study uses Batisstella's theory to categorize swear words and is expected to contribute insight into the coherence of the types of swear words. This theoretical framework contributes to the systematic classification of profanity, providing a structured approach to understanding different types of offensive language.

1.6.2 Practical Significances

a. For The Teacher

The results of this study are expected to contribute to teachers and prospective teachers paying more attention to language or choice of words when interacting with students when teaching. On the other hand, learning strategies using media in the form of videos become more effective, but it is also necessary to sort out which are good to watch and which are not good for students to watch.

Therefore, this research is expected to help foster the learning of good character and ethics in students.

b. For The EFL (English Foreign Language) Students

The results of this study are expected to contribute to teachers and prospective teachers paying more attention to language or word choice when interacting with students when teaching. On the other hand, learning strategies using media in the form of videos become more effective, but it is also necessary to sort out which are good to watch and which are not good for students to watch. Therefore, this research is expected to help foster the learning of good character and ethics in students.

c. For The Community

The results of this study are expected to provide benefits for the community, especially adults, to pay more attention and be careful in using swear words in front of children who are still minors. That way, children will not carelessly say swear words they could have heard from adults. In addition, with this research, it is hoped that people can understand the types of swear words included in which parts to be wiser in using them according to the context of the situation.

d. For Further Research

It is hoped that this research can help add information and references for other researchers who want to research swear word analysis in another movie. Then it is hoped that other researchers can understand easily and clearly about swear word

analysis with a theory in a movie through this research. Other researchers who want to do linguistic research, especially about language, can get information and know how to analyze taboo word elements in swear words through this research. Thus, this research is expected to be useful and help other researchers get detailed information about swear word analysis in developing their research ideas in the future.

