CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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

1.1 Research Background

Humans are social beings who cannot live in isolation. In their daily lives, people require assistance from others, which necessitates interaction and communication with one another. One of the key elements for achieving this is language. Language serves as a system of sound symbols that humans use to convey specific meanings to each other. Repka (2021) explains in his research that language is an open, complex, adaptive, and non-linear system of symbols and signs used for communication. Each region in the world has its own language, and the use of language in these areas is an agreement among all the inhabitants of those regions.

As time progresses, language also evolves. The emergence of different types of language marks this evolution. Generally, language can be classified into two categories: polite language and harsh or vulgar language. Although harsh language may seem impolite, it has become commonplace in certain segments of society. Stapleton et al. (2022) define harsh language as the use of words that carry negative and often emotional connotations, which are considered taboo in certain cultures. The use of such words is often viewed as taboo for various reasons, including insult, conflict provocation, violation of norms, and demonstration of disrespect. The use of these words can create a negative and unpleasant atmosphere.

Despite its negative connotations in some contexts, harsh language has a variety of motives and functions. According to Jdetawy (2019), harsh language has four motives for use and three functions. The motives include emotional expression (anger, frustration), social identity and group affiliation, stress and tension relief, and the creation of humor and entertainment. Additionally, the three functions of harsh language include conveying feelings more strongly, enhancing the impact of communication, and strengthening social relationships in specific contexts. Furthermore, harsh language can be classified into several types. Overall, harsh language can be divided into twelve categories, including epithets, profanity,

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obscenity, cursing, blasphemy, taboo, vulgarity, slang, insults, scatology, semantic derogation, and slurs. These types of harsh language can be utilized in various aspects of life depending on their functions and motives.

One thing that is characteristic of harsh language is the use of swear words in it. Swear words are words that are considered rude and are often prohibited in a formal context. According to Pinker (2007), swear words are linguistic expressions that trigger strong emotional responses, often because they are associated with forbidden or emotionally charged concepts such as sex, excretion, religion, and death. The use of swear words in everyday life doesn't always have a negative connotation. While often used to attack someone personally, swear words can also be used jokingly to strengthen relationships.

The spread of swear words as a part of vulgar language has reached various parts of the world. Some consider it a common phenomenon, while others see it as something that strongly contradicts existing norms. Indonesia is one of the countries with rich cultural diversity, including its languages. Each region in Indonesia has its own local language. Bali is one such region that possesses a variety of languages, including vulgar language. In Bali, language classification is divided into three levels, known as *Sor Singgih*. Astiti (2021) explains that these levels consist of *Basa Alus* (Polite/Refined Language), *Basa Andap* (Common Language), and *Basa Kasar* (Vulgar Language). These language levels are commonly found across different areas in Bali. However, not many Balinese people use polite or refined language in their daily lives. Instead, they tend to use common (*andap*) and vulgar (*kasar*) language for everyday communication (Sudiarta, 2015).

The use of swear words has become commonplace among the people of Bali, especially those living in Buleleng Regency. Using swear words in communication is considered normal for many Buleleng residents, particularly among adults. Wibawa et al. (2021), in their research, explain that polite language is more commonly used by children compared to adults. Words such as *cicing* 'dog', *pirate* 'spirit of the dead', and *naskleng* 'head of male genitalia' are some examples of vulgar language frequently used by the people of Buleleng. The use of these words has spread to rural areas surrounding Buleleng Regency, including Pacung Village, which is located in the eastern part of Buleleng.

In Pacung Village, the use of swear words is a phenomenon that has become an integral part of social interactions and has been passed down through generations. The local community uses various forms of swear words, ranging from words considered taboo to expressions with specific meanings in daily communication. These swear words are not only used in situations of conflict or anger but also frequently appear in casual conversations between residents, interactions in the marketplace, and even in joking contexts. Therefore, this phenomenon is interesting to study further, particularly in terms of the variations of vulgar language used and the social functions it carries.

1.2 Problem Identification

The phenomenon of using vulgar language in Bali, particularly in Buleleng, specifically in Pacung Village, has existed for a long time. This serves as the key issue to be discussed in this study. Vulgar language is generally perceived as negative, but in some communities, including Pacung Village, it can serve specific social functions. It is essential to analyze how the people of Pacung Village interpret and use vulgar language in various contexts, such as daily conversations, humor, social solidarity, or even to reinforce closeness between individuals. The lack of specific studies on the types and variations of vulgar language in a local context, as well as its functions in the social life of the Pacung Village community, makes this topic interesting for further research.

1.3 Scope of the Study

This research is limited to identifying, categorizing, and finding the types of swear words used by people in Pacung Village, specifically the local people with age range from 50 to 60 years old. It is based on the theory of Swear Words (Jay, 2009), which includes Obscenity, Profanity, Insults and Slurs, and Emphatic Swearing. The analysis includes the types of swear words used and their function in society's daily life.

1.4 Research Question

Based on the background that has been provided, the problems in this research can be formulated as follows:

1. What types of swear words are used by people in Pacung Village?
2. What is the function of the swear words used by people in Pacung Village?

1.5 Research Objective

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

1. To identify the types of swear words used by people in Pacung Village
2. To analyze the function of swear words used by people in Pacung Village

1.6 Significance of the Study

This section elaborates on the contributions of this research, both theoretically and practically, as outlined earlier. The study aims to offer fresh perspectives on the use of profanity in Pacung Village and its potential influence on people in there. Its significance is discussed in the following sections below.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

This study uses Timothy Jay'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 Significance

This section explains the impact of the results of this research on several parties.

a. For Readers

This study can help readers understand how vulgar language is used in

everyday communication in Desa Pacung and how it functions in various social contexts. By examining vulgar language from a sociolinguistic perspective, readers can understand that it does not always have a negative connotation but can serve specific social functions, such as indicating familiarity or solidarity.

b. For Further Research

This research can serve as a reference for future studies on vulgar language in various communities, especially in rural areas that have been rarely studied. The findings of this study can also be compared with the phenomenon of vulgar language in other regions, providing a broader understanding of the variations of vulgar language in Indonesian culture.

c. For Students

Students can gain a better understanding of how language evolves in different social and cultural contexts. They will learn about the role of swear words in communication, including their meanings, functions, and variations in different age groups, genders, and social settings.