

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter describes the background of the research which is important to be conducted. It also reveals the research problems and research focus. In addition, this chapter also mentions the objectives of the research and states the research significances.

#### **A. Background of the Study**

In daily life, people invariably use language to interact with others. They interact in order to convey their inclinations to the others. Nonetheless, the use of language is not that simple. It can be used to identify the status of people in society as well. This condition can be seen when the speakers comprehend to employ proper language to the hearers in a certain circumstance. The more they experience to grasp the language deeply, the more they will be respected by society. Therefore, language is not simply a role in communicative purpose, but it likewise serves to establish and maintain relationship with others.

By the existence of the culture in society, language automatically becomes bounded with the culture itself. The relation between language and culture reflects the structure of a language whereby speakers of that language view the world. It is inconceivable to understand or appreciate both language and culture without acknowledging the relation between them. In fact, various concepts such as Kinship System, Colour Terminology, Prototype, Taboo, and Euphemism emerge since there are relationships between language and culture. They describe how the

culture affects language to contrive various words in order to be tolerable in society.

Taboo, which becomes one of the concepts in relation to language and culture, needs to be explored further since it is an interesting phenomenon in society. According to Wardhaugh (2006:239), taboo is the proscription or restriction in any of society which causes anxiety, embarrassment, or shame for the one who employs it. In other word, taboo is acts created by society but society itself refuse their community to produce nonetheless. However, there are always people who tend to utilize taboo in an attempt to demonstrate their own freedom from such social constraints or to reveal the taboo as illogical and unwarranted, as in certain movements for 'free speech'. In addition, the use and definition of taboo words are basically the same but it varies in terms of expressions for every language, for example, the expressions of taboo words between English and Bahasa Indonesia are different. It is extremely forbidden to utter *anjing* (dog) in Bahasa Indonesia since dog is considered as impure animal particularly for Moslem (majority people in Indonesia). Meanwhile, the word dog in English has no effect to either the speaker or hearer, because dog is considered as a friendly animal and almost people have it as their pet.

In relation to taboo subject whereby exposes about bad language, it is necessary to involve swearing as the part of taboo, since swearing is described as a form of linguistic activity employing taboo words to impart the expression of strong emotions. This is in line with Karjalainen (2012:18), who states that swearing is kind of linguistic expression which refers to bad language especially

taboo, although not all of taboo words are swearwords. Swearing is used as the main device of the speakers in order to give emphasis to their speech, which often combine with techniques like stress, intonation and tone of voice, as well as non-linguistic phenomena like gestures and facial expression (Ljung 2011:5). Thus, the usage of swearing must involve the taboo words to strengthen swearing taking place in circumstance. The list of taboo words such as: *shit, fuck, prick, and bitch* are well considered as swearing, but actually not all taboo words contain swearing. Consider for instance the words *shag* and *fuck* in which officially accepted as the words for having sex and taboo in English speaker. However, only word *fuck* works as swearing, since comparing them by using well-formed structure such as *fuck you, not give a fuck, and fucking idiot* with the impossible phrase like *Shag you, not give a shag, and shagging idiot*. In fact, although the use of swearing is believed to intimidate and disturb others, in certain circumstance they do not affect at all. It is due to the intimacy between the speaker and the hearer. Thus, it is interesting to find out the social role and context beneath the conversation of the speakers which contains swearing.

The use of swearing in social role is interesting because it is related to the speakers' gender and social class. There is an assumption which believes that men tend to swear more than women (McEnery 2006:29). It is completely true since men tend to be superior when they take the lead on conversation compared to women. They have free choice to speak with various styles and swearing occasionally becomes the favorite one. However, social class might be shown as another influential factor as stated by Trudgill (2000:31) that bad language or non-

standard English words are more frequently used among the lower social class. Therefore, everyone including women can also produce swearwords based on their social role as a lower class.

From the explanation above, it can be assumed that the circumstances around the speakers take a huge part as influential factors of why people utter swearing. Patrick via Vingerhoets (2013:297), concludes that swearwords are primarily used by soldier, sailors, laborer, uneducated people, and criminals. They commonly utilize swearwords with their colleague, family, or even to another group of society because of the influence of their surroundings. Swearing, in fact, does not emerge in daily conversation but in movies as well, since it is believed that movie is the representation of reality. It is quite possible to find those phenomena in the characters of movie based on the conversation of the characters. Therefore, in order to explore swearing phenomena, it is interesting to analyze a movie which contains many swearwords entitled *Pulp Fiction*.

*Pulp Fiction* movie is about the story of American gangsters in the United States. The narration is presented out of sequence for each scene, but it is actually related one to another. The story is about Vincent, as the main character in this movie who plays as a hit man, who does an order to take back a secret luggage which belongs to his boss. During his mission, accompanied by his partners, Jules, he has to murder some people who deceived their boss. Shortly, they manage to do the mission given by their boss with a lot of struggles. Another scene tells about Butch, a prizefighter, who plays as second main character in the movie. As a prizefighter, he has been ordered by Vincent's boss, Marcellus, to manipulate

the match and get lost by his opponent. However, he accidentally beats his opponent and wins the match instead. Marcellus gets angry and intends to chase him, but he manages to escape with his girl from the town.

*Pulp Fiction* becomes a suitable subject due to the possibility of swearwords uttered by the main characters, since the main characters are the representation of criminal lifestyle in society. This can be seen from the dialogues among the characters which frequently add some swearwords. In addition, the scenes in this movie are presented by mixing humour and violence acts. It is quite possible to find out the differences of swearwords uttered by characters depending on the context of this movie. Therefore, *Pulp Fiction* is an appropriate subject in this research.

## **B. Research Focus**

In *Pulp Fiction*, there are many aspects which are interesting to be analyzed under Sociolinguistics approach. Mostly, those aspects are bad languages which include slang words, swearing, vulgar, and blasphemy. It is possible since almost all of the characters in this movie are criminals; hence they tend to use bad language as the representation of their identity in social role. However, swearing becomes primary focus to be analyzed since it is frequently used rather than the other categories.

The focus of the research is to analyze swearwords phenomena uttered by main characters in *Pulp Fiction*. Based on the background of the study and due to the researcher's limited time, the study focuses on two problems. The first problem is the types of the swearing. The types of swearing are needed to be

analyzed further since swearing involves several terms of linguistic resources such as words, phrases, and sentences. By selecting each swearing expression and discovering the context of each dialogue uttered by main characters, it is expected that the use of swearing is perfectly classified into several types; they are dysphemistic swearing, abusive swearing, idiomatic swearing, emphatic swearing, and cathartic swearing. The second problem is the functions of swearing. It needs to be discovered as well since swearing is affected by several motives; they are psychological, social, and linguistic motives.

Based on the background and research focus above, the research problems can be formulated as follows.

1. What are the types of swearing employed by the main characters in *Pulp Fiction* Movie?
2. What are the reasons for swearing uttered by the main characters in *Pulp Fiction* Movie?

### **C. Objectives of the study**

In connection to the research problems formulated above, the objectives of the study are.

1. to find out the type of swearing which employed by main characters in *Pulp Fiction*; and
2. to observe the reasons for swearing which uttered by main characters in *Pulp Fiction*

**D. Research Significances.**

Regarding the background and the objective of the research, this research is expected to give contribution, both theoretically, and practically.

1. Theoretically, these findings of research are expected to enrich knowledge on sociolinguistics, especially the use of swearing which can be analyzed under the study of bad language.
2. Practically, this research is expected to be beneficial to other researchers, especially for student of English Language and Literature who are going to do similiar topic of the research.