

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

Swearing is a form of linguistic expression which is often referred to bad language because all swearwords are taboo, although not all taboo words are swearwords (Karjalainen, 2002: 18). In fact, many people always associate swearwords with something bad. That is why, they prefer not use them in a conversation. However, there are some other people who still employ them in their conversation, especially to express their feeling. This is in line with what Svensson (2004: 01) says that some people find swearing to be rude and disrespectful, while others find it quite useful in their everyday vocabulary. There are differences in occupation as a function of gender and status, men are always expected to swear more than women in equivalent occupations and higher status personnel (e. g., dean) are expected to swear less than lower status and there are also myths that grow in society that only the undereducated speakers swear (Jay, 1992; 2009).

A psycholinguist, Jay of Massachusetts College of the Liberal Arts and author of *Cursing in America* via Faye Flam in *Carnal Knowledge*, and some other linguists believe that swearing is good to be used in communication. He states that it sometimes helps people avoid physical violence because it allows people to express their emotions symbolically at distance. In line with Jay's theory, Andersson via Karjalainen (2002) states that there are some reasons

influencing people to swear, e.g. to express surprise or shock, to indicate friendship, and to amuse.

People cannot deny that swearing is a part of social life. This fact is supported by a survey conducted by *American Demographic Magazine* which shows that among 60 people, 72% of them like swearing in public (Grimm, 2004 in Fagersten, 2005: 04). Knowing the fact that swearing is a part of social life, some script writers and directors of movie still do not avoid using swearing in the dialogues because movie is a representation of a real life.

A movie entitled *From Paris with Love* which is directed by Pierre Morell tries to represent the real life of society, especially people who are in the drug markets society. In this movie, there are many swearwords which are uttered by some characters. Through this movie people can see that swearwords can be used for any reasons depending on the situational contexts. This can be seen in the following dialogue.

(When Wax drives the car back to get Reese's file in his own car, but Wax crashes the police car up against some parking cars. Then, Reese's car is exploded. It makes Reese shocked.)

Reese: What the **f*****⁶⁷ Wax?

(Smiling)

Wax: A **f***ing**⁶⁸ boom. Work for you?

Reese: You're **f***ing**⁶⁹ crazy.

Data 67 and 69 show that **f***** can be used to express shock, and datum 68 shows that swearing can be used to insult someone although in a humorous way.

This is one of the swearing cases reflected in *From Paris with Love* movie, and there are still many other data which prompt the researcher to analyze the phenomenon of swearing in this movie.

B. Research Focus

Jay (1992), in *Cursing in America*, proposes a classification system of bad language, covering 1) cursing, 2) profanity, 3) blasphemy, 4) taboo, 5) obscenity, 6) vulgar, 7) epithets, 8) insults and slurs, 9) scatology, and 10) slang. However, not all the ten categories are explored, but only the fourth one, because swearing which becomes the focus of this research is a part of taboo.

Swearwords are a potential trouble for many people because not all people can understand the meaning and the reasons why others utter swearwords, specifically for the non-native English. The reasons that influence people to swear can be very various, i.e. to follow the others who have used it previously, and to imitate the dialogue in the movie to make them seem cool, although actually the meaning of the swearwords that they use is very rude and impolite.

Regardless of the controversy over whether swearing is good or not, today people can find swearwords in the entertainment world easily, i.e. movies, songs, and TV's program. *From Paris with Love* is one of the movies that represents the real life of the society, especially the characters whose original country is America. The use of swearwords in this movie can be seen from the situation when the characters express anger, frustration, surprise, shock, insult, friendship and amusement. The phenomenon of swearing related to the society in *From Paris with Love* movie leaves several problems that can be identified.

The first problem is related to the types of swearing being used. *From Paris with Love* movie shows that swearing does not only arise in an abusive type, but it may occur in expletive, humorous, and auxiliary type.

The second problem is related to the reasons why the characters of *From Paris with Love* movie frequently swear in the dialogues. In fact, swearing is not only used to express anger or to insult other people, but it can be used to indicate friendship and express surprise.

The third problem is whether swearwords are identical with lower social status and undereducated person since there are opinions that higher status personnel (i.e. dean) are expected to swear less than lower status and the myths that only undereducated speakers swear still exist. This movie portrays the real life of some Americans who live in French. Although they belong to educated people, they still swear to express their feeling.

In addition, there is also a problem which can be identified related to racism issue in *From Paris with Love*. The problem emerges when some American characters insult Pakistani drug sellers and terrorists.

Moreover, swearing based on gender is an interesting topic to analyze since in this movie swearwords are not only uttered by men, but women characters do so. This movie shows the fact that women also swear which is portrayed through Caroline and Nicole characters.

Knowing the fact that there are too many problems arises dealing with swearing analysis, this research focuses on the types of swearing, the reasons influencing people to swear, and the relationship between swearing and social class in society as illustrated in *From Paris with Love*.

C. Formulation of the Problems

Based on the limitation of the problem, the problems of the research are formulated as follows:

1. What are the types of swearing which occur in *From Paris with Love* movie?
2. What are the reasons influencing the characters of the movie to swear?
3. How the relationship between swearing and social class in society as illustrated in the movie?

D. Objectives of the Research

In relation to the formulation of the problem, the objectives of this research are stated as follows:

1. to identify and to describe the types of swearing which occur in *From Paris with Love*,
2. to describe the reasons influencing the characters of the movie to swear, and
3. to explain the relationship between swearing and social class in society as illustrated in the movie.

E. Research Significances

Regarding to the background and the objectives of the research, it is expected that this research will contribute a great significance both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the research findings will give additional information to linguistic researchers dealing with sociolinguistics research of

swearing. Practically, the research may be useful as references for other researchers to conduct sociolinguistic research and can change the public opinion that swearing is always bad and identical to undereducated person.