

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines five points. The first point is the background of the study that explains the academic rationale of choosing the topic. The second point outlines two research questions that guide this study. The third point explains the objectives of the study, which clarify the purpose of this study. The fourth point describes the significance of the study by explaining its benefits and contributions from both a theoretical and practical perspective. Lastly, the fifth point defines the scope and limitation of the study, which sets the boundaries of the discussion.

1.1 Background of the Study

Nowadays, many people use taboo words in their daily conversation, even young or old people. According to Nitisari, Lestari, & Ramadhan (2023), taboo words are now often used by people as their everyday language. This is due to the influence of increasingly advanced technology, especially social media as online social interactions. Adarna et al. (2025) stated that swear words, once considered taboo, have become more popular due to its representation in media such as television, movies, and social media platforms. The existence of taboo words has become a universal linguistic phenomenon (Khairullina et al., 2020). The phenomenon of using taboo words is often associated with the speaker's desire to express strong emotions, such as anger, frustration, or joy (Lidyawati & Supri, 2023). Even though it is a universal linguistic phenomenon, there are also restrictions on the use of taboo words, which are often rooted in cultural, religious, or moral beliefs, where their use may be considered a violation of propriety.

Taboo words are an interesting aspect of language to study. According to Purba et al. (2022), taboo words are one aspect of language that people need to be aware of because they are forms of language that cannot be spoken as they are considered inappropriate. Taboo words are generally defined as words that are prohibited, avoided, or considered impolite to be spoken in public or in formal situations, as they are often related to sensitive issues, so speakers will avoid using them. This happens because every community has certain words that are considered

taboo, which are not spoken in front of others, especially in formal and polite situations (Sasabone et al., 2024).

In Indonesia, especially in Javanese culture, “*unggah-ungguh*” (Javanese norms of politeness) are very important and influence the way people speak. Javanese people are known for highly value harmony and respect. This can be seen in the different levels of the Javanese language, or “*undha usuk*,” which is a social stratification based on social class, including “*ngoko*” (informal), “*krama madya*” (middle), and “*krama inggil*” (polite/formal) (Hadiwijaya, Kinanti, & Sari, 2022). This makes the use of taboo words in Javanese, such as those in “*ngoko*” (informal) considered inappropriate. According to Jay & Janschewitz (2008), the use of profanity is not expected in formal contexts and with participants who have unequal status. Therefore, the use of taboo words by a public figure can have a significant potential to trigger reactions and debates in society, particularly when used by a preacher in religious da’wah in Java.

One of the preachers who often uses Javanese taboo words in religious da’wah is Miftah Maulana Habiburrahman or usually called Gus Miftah, an Indonesian religious figure known for his controversial da’wah. According to Erwin, Prasongko, & Zuhriyah (2025), Gus Miftah is widely known for his often eccentric da’wah that focus on glamorous worlds such as discotheques, bars, and even prostitution, which sets him apart from other preachers who deliver da’wah in mosques and other formal religious events. According to Taufikin, Nurhayati, & Muhajarah (2025), Gus Miftah is well-known for his casual language, humor, and involvement with marginalized communities in ways that capture the attention of young audiences active on social media. Many of his da’wah videos provoke a lot of people to comment about the topic that was discussed or his controversial statement. Gus Miftah has recently been in the public spotlight due to his da’wah videos on YouTube that discuss hot issues, such as the case of the looting of a member of parliament’s house, a police officer hitting an online motorcycle taxi driver, and etc.

However, the growth of social media, especially YouTube, has become a new platform for preachers to deliver da’wah. This has led to the emergence of a

new style of da'wah characterized by a more relaxed approach to the audiences, such as the use of everyday language. According to Hidayat & Nuri (2024), da'wah models in the digital era have grown to become more diverse and engaging as new social media platforms have emerged. Furthermore, the social media platform YouTube allows da'wah content to reach a much wider audience than just face-to-face audiences, crossing geographical and social boundaries, while also creating new interactions between preachers and virtual audiences, especially for young audiences. On the YouTube platform, da'wah videos are presented with creative visuals and an easy-to-understand language style, making them more effective at grabbing attention and satisfying youthful viewers (Hidayat & Nuri, 2024). Da'wah videos on YouTube are often not only recorded but also edited to maintain the preachers' appeal.

One YouTube channel that consistently uploads and disseminates da'wah videos of Indonesian preachers is the Dakwah Pedia channel. This channel has amassed around 265 thousand subscribers and has uploaded around 452 videos. This channel provides da'wah content that is easily accessible to audiences throughout Indonesia. Many famous Indonesian preachers' da'wah videos are uploaded by this channel, one of them is Gus Miftah da'wah videos.

One interesting phenomenon that can be observed in Gus Miftah's da'wah is the use of Javanese taboo words, which are traditionally considered inappropriate for use in religious events, such as da'wah. The example of Javanese taboo words that usually used by Gus Miftah in his da'wah is "*goblok*" (stupid). This study will analyze Gus Miftah's da'wah videos that discuss politics and gain a high number of viewers on social media YouTube because the topics are hot topics in today's society, that is about politics, including looting of the member of parliaments' house and free nutritious meal (MBG) poisoning. Renaldi (2025) reported that the videos of looting quickly spread across various social media platforms, and the users speculated about the whereabouts of the members of parliament whose homes were looted. In addition, news about mass poisoning due to the Free Nutritious Meal program or MBG has caused a stir on social media (Krisdamarjati, 2025). Therefore, it can be concluded that the topic discussed by Gus Miftah in his latest

da'wah videos is a topic that is currently widely discussed, particularly in social media platforms.

Although there have been several studies analyzing Javanese taboo words, none of them have analyzed Gus Miftah's da'wah videos in his recent videos that discuss politics. For example, studies by Febriyatko et al. (2023) and Adrio (2022) that examined Javanese taboo words found in films, including *Yowis Ben 2* and *Cek Toko Sebelah*. These studies identified taboo words using theory proposed by Jay (1996) and Leech (1983), with results showing that taboo words functions to express emotions, foster friendship solidarity, and serve as expressions of intimacy. Meanwhile, based on these two studies that focused on films, this research fills the gap by specifically examining Javanese taboo words in the script of Gus Miftah's latest da'wah videos on the Dakwah Pedia YouTube channel. This study is conducted using sociolinguistics analysis to examine the actual functions of the Javanese taboo words used in religious discourse or da'wah. This study also applies theories proposed by Wardhaugh (2006) and Jay (1992) to analyze the types and the functions of taboo words. Thus, this study is important to do based on the explanation above.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background above, the following questions are formulated:

1. What are the types of Javanese taboo words used by Gus Miftah in his da'wah videos script on Dakwah Pedia YouTube channel?
2. What are the functions of Javanese taboo words uttered by Gus Miftah in his da'wah videos script on Dakwah Pedia YouTube channel?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In relation to the research questions, the following are the objectives to be achieved by this study:

1. To identify the types of Javanese taboo words used by Gus Miftah in his da'wah videos script on Dakwah Pedia YouTube channel.

2. To explain the functions of Javanese taboo words uttered by Gus Miftah in his da'wah videos script on Dakwah Pedia YouTube channel.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Theoretically, this study enriches research in the field of sociolinguistics, particularly in the analysis of Javanese taboo words. By analyzing the types of Javanese taboo words based on Wardhaugh (2006) and their functions using Jay (1992), this study can expand the use of these theories to specifically show the types and functions of Javanese taboo words that usually used by Gus Miftah in his da'wah videos. This study directly contributes to a deeper understanding of the application of sociolinguistics of taboo words in the context of da'wah in Java.

Practically, this study is expected to give beneficial contributions for several parties. For students and lecturers in the English Study Program, this study serves as a relevant and up-to-date case study on the functions of using taboo words in the context of Javanese and da'wah. In addition, the results of this study can be used as a reference for further study focusing on sociolinguistics analysis, especially taboo words in da'wah on social media. Therefore, this study may be useful as a guide to identify gaps and new ideas for the next research on taboo words, especially the application of English theory in analyzing the Javanese language.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

In this study, the writer focuses on the sociolinguistics analysis of Gus Miftah da'wah. Specifically, it analyzes the types of Javanese taboo words and their functions in his recent da'wah videos on Dakwah Pedia YouTube channel. The study is limited to videos that have a high number of viewers at least twenty thousand viewers and uploaded in September 2025, they are titled "*Gus Miftah Terbaru ~ Pesan untuk DPR Joget Joget!! Rakyat Boleh Marah, tapi Bukan Menjarah*" (Latest from Gus Miftah ~ Message for the DPR who Dance!! The People may be Angry, but not Looting), "*Gus Miftah Terbaru 2025 ~ Apa Hukumnya Menjarah Rumah Dpr dan Demo di Indonesia??*" (Gus Miftah Latest 2025 ~ What is the Law on Looting DPR Houses and Protesting in Indonesia??),

and “*Gus Miftah Angkat Bicara Viral Anak Keracunan MBG - Gus Miftah Terbaru 2025*” (Gus Miftah Speaks Out on the Viral MBG Poisoned Child - Gus Miftah Latest 2025). The videos were chosen because they were consumed and watched by large virtual audiences, so the social impact is felt more by many people.

The analysis is guided by the theoretical frameworks of Wardhaugh (2006) for identifying the types of taboo words and Jay (1992) for explaining their functions. In addition, this study also has several limitations. First, it is limited to a specific set of da’wah videos on social media platform YouTube in the Dakwah Pedia channel. Second, this study only analyzes the utterances in the script and not the entire content of the videos. Last, the study is confined to the Javanese language, which may not reflect Gus Miftah’s use of other languages.