

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses about the main reason and theory in general. All reasons and purposes why the researcher choose the theory and the data are explained in subchapters. All subchapters are background of the study, research question, the significance of the study, and the limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Language holds a vital role in shaping communication and the transmission of information. As a communication tool, language not only reflects but also influences the cultural characteristics and behaviors of different nations. Each society's way of thinking, acting, and interacting is closely linked to its language use, which varies depending on context, social position, and situational demands. This dynamic interaction between language and its communicative function highlights the complexity of language studies, as language continues to evolve in diverse social settings (Apriyanto, 2020). Moreover, language and communication are inseparable components of human life. Through language, individuals express their thoughts, intentions, and emotions, enabling mutual understanding and the smooth flow of interaction. Effective use of language therefore contributes significantly to the success of communication.

Language's effectiveness in communication depends not only on structural correctness but also on the speaker's capacity to employ it strategically. This pragmatic flexibility allows language to fulfill multiple communicative functions beyond merely conveying factual information. Adaptability enables language to perform referential, persuasive, emotive, and phatic functions in different social contexts (Setyowati & Lubis, 2020). The emotive function, for example, plays a crucial role in expressing a speaker's psychological state such as surprise, happiness, or frustration through emotionally charged words, exclamations, or intonations. These expressions not only convey feelings but also create a sense of

immediacy and emotional connection, thereby enhancing the listener's engagement and empathy. In both spoken and written forms, the deliberate use of emotive language helps shape interpersonal dynamics and influences how messages are received and interpreted. Thus, the speaker's awareness and intentional application of various language functions significantly impact the clarity, effectiveness, and emotional resonance of communication.

Building on this understanding of language's multifaceted functions, the use of swear words serves as a compelling example of how emotive language operates in real-life interactions. Swear words, though often considered vulgar or offensive, carry powerful emotional weight and serve crucial pragmatic purposes within communication. They are frequently used to express strong emotional reactions such as anger, pain, shock, or even excitement, thereby fulfilling the emotive function of language (Andersson & Trudgill, 1990). For instance, when someone is overwhelmed with frustration or confusion, expressions like *"This is so fucking annoying!"* or *"What the hell is going on?"* may emerge as spontaneous outbursts, reflecting their emotional state and providing a form of emotional release. In these moments, individuals often struggle to filter their language or choose more neutral terms, making swearing a natural, immediate response to emotional tension. Moreover, in certain contexts, words such as *"damn," "hell,"* or *"shit"* may be used humorously or to create a sense of solidarity among peers, demonstrating that swearing is not merely a sign of aggression or impoliteness but also a strategic linguistic choice. Therefore, the study of swear words offers valuable insight into the dynamic, context-sensitive nature of language, revealing how emotionally charged expressions are deeply embedded in social interaction and cultural norms.

Traditionally, the use of swear words has been largely associated with the expression of anger or hatred, implying a limited function in communication. However, contemporary societal trends suggest a shift in the role of swear words, especially among younger demographics. In today's communication landscape, swear words have evolved into a widespread phenomenon, transcending their

conventional associations to become tools for connection and camaraderie among peers. This is particularly evident in the younger generation, including university students. This use of swear words among young people often reflects solidarity or familiarity in social relationships. For instance, swear words such as "*jancok*" or its shortened form "*cok*", originally a highly offensive insult in Javanese, are frequently used among close friends as a sign of intimacy or shared identity, rather than hostility. Similarly, "*asu*", which literally means "dog," is commonly employed by youth as an expression of frustration or annoyance, akin to saying "damn" in English. Another example is "*jangkrik*" (meaning "cricket"), which functions as a mild exclamation or interjection often used in surprising or frustrating situations, but with a softer tone. Additionally, "*matamu*", which literally translates to "your eyes," is typically used as a sarcastic or dismissive retort, often exchanged jokingly among peers. In many social contexts, the use of such swear words has become a relatively normative behavior, depending on the situation and environment in which they are uttered. Swear words are often understood in contextual terms, where words that are considered vulgar or inappropriate in one situation may be acceptable or even considered normal in another situation, such as in a conversation between close friends or in a stressful environment.

Madurese swear words are the focus of this study because it has unique characteristics that reflect the cultural identity of the Madurese community. It is often used to express strong emotions and build social closeness, thus becoming an integral part of the local communication culture. Studying Madurese swear words provides a deeper insight into how Madurese people integrate their culture into their daily communication patterns. In addition, the vocabulary and usage patterns of Madurese swear words are different compared to other languages, making them interesting for further research. This research was conducted in the area of Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura, which is a strategic place to observe the use of Madurese swear words in daily life. Students of this university come from various regions in Madura, thus providing a diversity of perspectives in communication patterns. The university as an academic community offers a rich picture of how

Madurese language, including swearing, is used in social and academic interactions. This environment also reflects the role of language in creating social and cultural identity among the younger generation.

Students often use swearing in their daily interactions, especially in informal settings. This phenomenon shows that cursing is not always associated with aggression or conflict, but can be a way to build intimacy and solidarity. In peer groups, cursing is often used to break the ice or as a form of humor that strengthens social relationships (Jay, 2009). This use reflects the adaptation of social norms in student interactions, where swear words serves as a medium of communication that is relaxed and familiar.

Students are appropriate informants in this study because they represent young people who are at the stage of social and cultural identity formation. At this age, students tend to be more explorative and socially active, so the language they use reflects the social dynamics developing in their community. Young groups are significant agents of language change, as they are more open to innovation and variation in language use (Holmes, 2013). Therefore, university students provide a relevant perspective to understand the use of swearing in social and cultural contexts.

This study aims to identify the types and reasons of swearing language in the student's interaction of Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura. In addition, this study also seeks to reveal how swear words reflect students' cultural and social identities. By understanding the use of this language, the research is expected to provide insight into the dynamics of student communication in various social contexts. This research is directed to contribute to the study of sociolinguistics, especially related to language use in young groups. The results of the study are expected to be a reference for educators, policy makers, and the general public in understanding language variations in local cultures. In addition, this research also has practical implications, such as helping educational institutions understand students'

interaction patterns, so that they can create an environment that supports healthy and inclusive communication.

1.2 Research Questions

The research questions are framed by the background of the study and are meant to examine the language environment among students' interaction in Trunodjoyo Madura University.

1. What are types of Madurese swear words are used by students at Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura?
2. What are the motives behind the use of Madurese swear words among students at Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

According to the research questions, this study will attempt to accomplish the following two goals:

1. To identify types the Madurese swear words used by students at Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura.
2. To examine the motives underlying the use of Madurese swear words among students at students Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research holds significant importance both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it contributes to the advancement of knowledge in the field of sociolinguistics, particularly regarding the use of swear words as a form of communication in social interactions among students. Focusing on the students of Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura, this study enhances our understanding of the use of swear words within the local cultural context and how such words are employed to build social relationships and express emotions. It is hoped that this will broaden the scope of linguistic studies related to verbal expressions, which are often considered taboo but serve a crucial role in communication dynamics.

Practically, the methods and procedures used in this research can provide new insights for both students and educators on how to understand the use of swear words in everyday interactions. The findings of this study are expected to serve as a valuable resource for students in recognizing linguistic and social patterns in their environment, as well as helping them explore and understand language as a complex and dynamic tool of communication.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this research is Sociolinguistics, especially swear words. The discussion is focused on aspects of Madurese swear and the reason influencing. In this study, the researcher uses Hughes's theory to analyze types of swear words and uses Andersson and Trudgill (1992) theory to analyze the motives behind the use of swearing in interaction between students of Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura.

This limitation of the study specifically focuses on the use of swear words in spoken interactions among Madurese students aged 18–25 from the Faculty of Social and Cultural Sciences (FISIB) at Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura, regardless of gender. The research examines verbal utterances produced in informal off-campus settings, such as peer conversations, group discussions, or social gatherings at coffee shops.