

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is a tool for humans to communicate with each other. It is a sum of words and phrases that humans use to express their thoughts (Chomsky 2006). That sum of words and phrases contain messages that convey meanings that speakers want their interlocutors to know and understand. In that sense, language is purposive because speakers have the precise intention of getting something over to somebody else, adjusting their behavior, thoughts, or general attitude toward a situation (Chomsky 2006). In communicating their intentions which contain their thoughts by a language, humans use various styles or ways to convey them. One of those styles or ways is swearing.

Wajnryb (2005) defines swearing into two; one that has to do with the words used that commonly constitute “swearing” and the other one has to do with how we refer to “swearing”. This means that swearing has two different definitions that are to swear and to say bad language. Furthermore, quoting Stapleton (2010), swearing is defined as a linguistic activity that engages the use of taboo words (Vingerhoets, Bylsma and Vlam 2013). Taboo words in English according to Swan (2005) are words that are connected with religion, sexual activities, and the associated parts of the body. He also argues that when people swear, taboo words usually change their meaning as it does not hold the literal meaning that the words have.

Beside considered as 'bad' and containing taboo words, swear words has the meaning of offensive language specially used in anger (Ljung 2011). Cursing—an American term of swearing—is an utterance that is emotionally powerful and harmful expressions that uses offensive words, and are known mostly as insults (Jay 1999). However, swear words are not constantly used for insults; they are also used to express strong emotions to influence the listener, whether it is a positive or negative influence (Jay 1999). The positive influence that the listeners get from hearing swear words is, for instance, the feeling of bond and solidarity in a circle of close friends, while negative influence is, for instance, using it in a formal situation like in a class which is not appropriate.

In addition, Wajnryb (2005) claims that some swear words started as taboo words because of their referential functions. However, as those words gravitated over time towards more emotional outlets, they have lost their referential meaning. Swear words now have emotional functions, in which they are used to express one's emotions. As a continuation of the shifting of functions, Jay (2009) argues that swearing can be used to disclose several emotions from anger and frustration to joy and surprise.

The practice of swear words are often associated with some sociolinguistic variables such as sex, social class, and age (McEnery 2006). Different types of groups exercise a different amount of swear words use. McEnery (2006) states that recent research found that the frequency of using swear words from both genders varies depending on the context and the hearer(s). In the matter of social class, generally speaking, all social classes use swear words of various categories

in a similar amount (McEnery 2006). In terms of age, McEnery (2006) argues that older people tend to use mild or weak swear words because they tend to avoid the use of direct swear words. Opposing to older speakers, McEnery (2006) quotes Chesire's (1982) claim that younger speakers or adolescents value swear words more and it becomes a primary symbol of vernacular identity.

The phenomenon of swear words is interesting to be researched by itself but it becomes more interesting when they are used by different age speakers. From a sociological perspective, age is one of the factors that define an individual's characteristics that determine who a person is and his or her behavior (Pitti 2017). Several reasons caused their decision of using swear words, one of them being their maturity because as stated above, age defines individuals' characteristics. Younger speakers are in their childhood and adolescence, while older speakers are in their adulthood. The difference between childhood and adulthood is their maturity although it is also influenced by a particular culture or social group (Aiken 2013). Therefore, it is vivid that age plays a role in their word choice.

The difference by comparing the use of swear words of younger speakers and older speakers or adults can be seen through their daily life conversations. Aside from that, swear words can also be found in movies. There are many movies that employ swear words. Scriptwriters might choose to include swear words in the movie for the viewers to relate to the viewers' daily life. There are many movies that use swear words with different characters of different ages. One of those movies is *Deadpool 2*.

Deadpool 2 is an R-rated American superhero movie that contains a bunch of swear words that are spoken by the characters. It was released in Indonesia on May 15, 2018. *Deadpool 2* is a sequel of *Deadpool* by Marvel that has a distinct plot and some different characters from the first one, even though the two are correlated. Swearing in *Deadpool* and *Deadpool 2* movies became an identity because of how constant swear words are used by the characters. The writer chooses *Deadpool 2* movie because, among other R-rated movies, it is uprising to be the top in 18-year-history, surpassing *Fifty Shades of Grey* (2015) (D'Alessandro 2018). D'Alessandro (2018) states as well that according to Fandango, *Deadpool 2* is ranked third-best advance-ticked seller of 2018 in its first 24 hours since presales were announced. Also, in *Deadpool*, no character is unique enough to be researched. Different from it, *Deadpool 2* has a main character that is a teenager who plays an important role in the plot that uses and practices frequent swear words that can be compared to an adult main character which becomes the reason for choosing this movie.

Age categories of younger speakers vary, same with younger speakers of swear words. In this case, teenagers are the younger speakers of swear words that will be discussed in this study. In *Deadpool 2* movie, there is one of the main characters named Russell Collins. This character is a teenager who undergoes dreadful occurrences in his life which influence the diction that he chooses on his speech. He can be categorized as a teenager aged 14 based on a dialogue on the movie by the character Deadpool on minute 46, "What kind of spineless shit stick tries to kill a 14-year-old boy?". He practices a plenty amount of swear words for

someone who is his age. In the movie, he is the only teenager among other main characters, and that makes him the only underage who practices swear words surrounded by adults. This becomes the reason why the writer chooses this character as one of the subjects.

In terms of the adult, it can be defined as a person who is capable of assuming responsibilities of their own problems and it starts somewhere between 18 and 21 years (Aiken 2013). In *Deadpool 2* movie, there are many adult main characters, one of them is named Cable. This character is a man from the future whose family is murdered by the future Russell Collins, that is why he goes back to the past to prevent his family to be murdered by planning to kill the present time Collins. He can be categorized as an adult by his own speech that talks about family and how he tries to turn back time so his family won't be murdered; "So he keeps killing, and killing, and killing, and killing. Until one day, he kills the wrong fucking people. My people", "You remind me of my wife" and "It's not dirt. It's the blood of my dead daughter". According to Aiken (2013), there are many tasks of an adult who is in adulthood and some of them are establishing a relatively permanent sexual/love relationship with a partner, having and raising children, and maintaining and affirming ties with family and friends. From this, it can be said that Cable is an adult. Although he is not the only adult who utters swear words in this movie, he is the only adult who owns a child among the main characters. This becomes the reason why the writer chooses this character as the other subject that will be compared with the first subject.

There are several previous studies that have been conducted about swear words. Three of them are by Aditia (2011), Septiyani (2015), and Esterika (2016). They conducted studies about swear words in movies. Aditia (2011) conducted an analysis of taboo words and swear words uttered by all of the characters in *How High* by Dustin Lee Abraham movie. He found that all of the types of swear words that appear in the main characters' speech. Septiyani (2015) compared two of the main characters' use of swear words in *The Wolf of Wall Street* movie with different gender. She found that the male character uses more types and functions of swear words than the female character. Esterika (2016) analyzed white and black characters' speech in *12 Years a Slave* movie. She found that half of the types of swear words appear in the characters' speech.

In *Deadpool 2* movie, from several characters, there are several main characters that help build the plot of the movie. From those main characters, there are two unique main characters from the perspective of age that is interesting to be researched. From three previous studies above, none compared swear words used by the main characters based on the age of the swearers. This study tries to compare the types and functions of swear words spoken by the main teenager and adult characters from the perspective of age using Wajnryb's (2005) theory.

1.2 Statement of Problems

Based on the explanation of the background of the study above, the writer formulates the statement of the problem as follows:

1. What are the types of swear words used by the character Russell Collins as a teenager compared to Cable as an adult in *Deadpool 2* movie?

2. What are the functions of swear words used by the character Russell Collins as a teenager compared to Cable as an adult in *Deadpool 2* movie?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Following the statement of the problems above, the writer wants to:

1. Compare the types of swear words used by the character Russell Collins as a teenager and Cable as an adult in *Deadpool 2* movie.
2. Compare the functions of swear words used by the character Russell Collins as a teenager and Cable as an adult in *Deadpool 2* movie.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of this study provides both theoretical and practical contributions in the branch of linguistic study, specifically in the area of sociolinguistics about swear words. Theoretically, this study is conducted to contribute and increase the comprehension of swear words as a subject of sociolinguistics, especially to show that swear words are used heavily by underage such as teenagers. Practically, the significance of this study is to expand the readers' knowledge of English swear words in order to use it wisely and appropriately. It also serves the purpose of making parents aware of their children's speech thus their children will not say inappropriate words from an early age.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

1. **Swear Words** : Words that are used to constitute "swearing" and words that are used to refer to "swearing" (Wajnryb 2005)

2. **Types of Swear Words** : Precise and consistent meta-language of foul language (Wajnryb 2005)
3. **Functions of Swear Words** : Indication of swear words speakers' state of mind (Ljung 2011)
4. **Age** : An individual's ascribed characteristic (Pitti 2017)
5. **Movie** : A recording of moving images that tells a story and that people watch on a screen or television (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed n.d.)