**An Analysis of Swearing Used**

**by the Main Characters**

**in the *Cop Out* Film**

By

Dayu Widarti

English Department

[viedayniez@yahoo.co.id](mailto:viedayniez@yahoo.co.id)

Abstract

The research examines swearing occurs in *Cop Out* film using a sociolinguistic approach. The research is aimed to analyze the types of swearing and reasons of swearing which are portrayed from *Cop Out* film. In conducting this research, the researcher uses descriptive qualitative method. The data are utterances used by the main characters in the film and the context surrounding the interaction. The research instrument is the researcher herself. She acts as the planner, the data collector, the data analyzer, and the data reporter of the research. The findings of the research show that the types of swearing found in *Cop Out* film could be categorized into 6 (six). The findings show that sexual activities theme is the dominant. Then, in expressing emotions reason which occurs is specified into 5 (five) reasons. The findings show that the dominant reason influencing people to swear is to insult. Swearing has become a part of social life and must be careful to people not to use it in daily conversation especially formal situation since it is a badlanguage.

*Key words: Analysis, swearing, main characters, cop out film*

1. **Background**

People always associate swear word with a bad word or inappropriate word, especially for Moslem community, which is not allowed to be used in a conversation and categorized in bad words. However, there are some groups consider that swear words are the appropriate media to express strong emotion such as express anger, frustation, surprise, shock, insult. Swearing is the activities which produce swear words.

Swear words can be analyzed from the film. The researcher chooses film because through film the researcher is able to look directly at the expressions shown by the speakers of the swear words, so it becomes easier to analyze and know the context when swear words are spoken. The researcher’s reason choosing *Cop Out* film to be analyzed is that the film has many swear words are spoken by the main characterswhich are easy for the researcher to analyze. The main characters in this film are Jimmy Monroe (Bruce Willis) and Paul Hodges (Tracy Morgan) as two NYPD cops. The film is an action comedy about Jimmy whose rare baseball card is stolen. Since it is his only hope to pay for his daughter’s upcoming wedding, he recruits a partner, Paul, to track down the thief.

1. **Research Method**

This research employs qualitative method since the aim in this research is to identify and to describe the types of swear words which occur in *Cop Out* Film, and to describe the reasons influencing the main characters of the film. In qualitative research, the researcher acts as the main instrument. The researcher is the planner, the data collector, the data analyzer, and the data reporter of the research. The data of this research are dialogues containing swear words uttered by the main characters of *Cop Out* film.

1. **Finding and Discussion**

After analyzing the data, the researcher finds 48 swear words. These swear words are classified into types of swearing and reasons of swearing. There are six types of swearing. The first type is religious/supernatural theme with 12 data (25%). Second is scatological theme with 5 data (10.4%). Third is sex organ theme only 1 data (2.1%). Fourth is sexual activities theme with 20 data (41.7%). Fifth is mother/family theme with 8 data (16.6%). The last one is animal theme with 2 data (4.2%). Then, the reasons of swearing used by the main characters could be categorized into two. The first reason is hearing/seeing something strange with 1 data (2.1%). Then, the expressing emotion reasons are specified into 5 (five) reasons. First is to express hatred with 11 data (22.9%). Second is to express anger with 15 data (31.25%). Third is surprised with 2 data (4.2%). Fourth is to insult with 17 data (34.9%). The last one is to express frustation with 2 data (4.2%).

Types of swearing could be categorized as follows:

1. The religious/supernatural theme

For example:

*Jimmy :* ***Jesus Christ****, now he’s doing Al Pacino from Heat.*

From the dialogue, ***Jesus Christ*** which uttered by Jimmy was categorized into religious theme because the existence of the word ***Jesus***. ***Jesus*** was a God of Christian people.

1. The scatological theme

For example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Jimmy* | : | ***Shit****. I can’t go in there and tell them I got suspended* |

From the conversation above, ***shit*** which uttered by Jimmy was categorized into scatological theme because ***shit*** was related to the excretion. ***Shit*** had a meaning feces or a solid waste matter from the anus.

1. The sex organ theme

For example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Paul* | : | We’re not, you ***prick***. |

From the dialogue, ***prick*** which uttered by Paul was categorized into sex organ theme because prick had a meaning of penis. Penis was a sex organ of male.

1. The sexual activities theme

For example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Jimmy* | : | What? Suspended without pay?  ***What the fuck***, Jack? |

From the dialogue, ***what the*** ***fuck*** which was uttered by Jimmy was categorized into sex activities theme because ***fuck*** had a meaning of having sex with somebody.

1. The mother (family) theme

For example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Paul* | : | You just shot at the wrong, ***motherfucker, motherfucker.*** |

From the dialogue, ***motherfucker*** which uttered by Paul was categorized into mother theme because the existence of the word mother*.*

1. The animal theme

For example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Jimmy  Paul | :  : | I hate anniversaries, Paul.  ***Animal***. |

From the dialogue, ***animal***which uttered by Paul was categorized into animal theme because of the existence the word animal.

In addition, the researcher found the reasons of swearing used by the main characters, Jimmy and Paul, which categorized as follow:

1. Hearing/seeing something strange

For example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Jimmy  Paul | :  : | They’re on the roof.  What the ***fuck*** is that?  That’s called parkour. |

From the dialogue, ***fuck*** which uttered by Jimmy to swear because seeing something strange. Jimmy saw the Dave’s action was unbelievable because he never seen it before. Paul said that action Dave did was an martial art. The martial art was called parkour.

1. Expressing Emotions
2. To express hatred

For example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Jimmy* | *:* | *I’m not doing* ***shit*** *again.* |

From the dialogue, ***shit*** which uttered by Jimmy to express hatred. He did not like anymore to hear Jimmy talked about his wife’s cheating.

b. To express anger

For example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Jimmy* | *:* | *Paul. Paul. Paul.* ***Jesus.*** |

From the dialogue, ***Jesus*** which uttered by Jimmy to express anger. He wa angry with Paul because Paul could not hear his calling.

1. To express surprise

For example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Paul* | *:* | *You can’t be all time trying to slap.*  ***Jesus Christ.*** |

From the conversation above, ***Jesus Christ*** which uttered by Paul is to express the emotion of surprise. Paul was surprised since his car was shot by a man suddenly.

1. To express insult

For example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Jimmy* | *:* | *What? Suspended without pay?*  ***What the fuck****, Jack?* |

From the dialogue, ***fuck*** which was uttered by Jimmy to express emotion of insulting. Jimmy insulted Captain Jack because he had suspended Jimmy and Paul for thirty days without pay. Jimmy could not accept what Captain Jack did.

1. To express frustation

For example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Jimmy* | *:* | ***Shit****. I can’t go in there and tell them I got suspended.* |

From the conversation above, ***shit*** which uttered by Jimmy was to express the emotion of frustation. Jimmy couldn’t go to the restaurant and tell his daughter, Ava, that he was suspended.

1. **Conclusion and Recommendation**

Based on the findings and discussions above, some conclusions can be drawn related to the formulation of the problems and objectives of the research. The types of swearing found in Cop Out film can be categorized into 6 (six). The first type is the religious/supernatural theme with 12 data (25%). The second is the scatological theme with 5 data (10.4%). The third data is the sex organ theme with 1 data (2.1%). The fourth data is the sexual activities theme with 20 data (41.7%). The fifth data is the mother (family) theme with 8 data (16.6%). The last one, animal theme has 2 data (4.2%). The findings of types of swearing show that Sexual Activities theme swearing is the dominant type.

The reasons for the main characters of Cop Out film to swear can be categorized into two. The first reason is hearing/seeing something strange, which there is 1 data (2.1%) found. The second one is expressing emotion with 47 data ( 97.9%). Then, the expressing emotion reason is specified into 5 (five) reasons. The first reason is to express hatred with 11 data (22.9%). The second reason is to express anger with 15 data (31.25%). The third reason is to express surprise with 2 data (4.2%). The fourth reason is to insult with 17 data (34.9). The last one is to express frustation with 2 data (4.2%). From the expressing emotion reason, findings show that people tend to swear is to insult.

The researcher suggests that there will be other researchers who are interested in conducting the same research about swearing. Actually, there are still many objects that can be observed using swearing theory, for instance novel, short story, and comics. Then, hopefully, this research can be used by teachers to show that swearing is bad language especially in teaching sociolinguistics. Hopefully, students can understand about good language and not use bad language in their social life because the personality of somebody can be seen from the way they speak.

**Bibliography**

Chaer, Abdul. 2004. *Psikolinguistik Kajian Teoritik*. Jakarta: PT. Rineka Cipta.

Dinwoodie, D.M.W. 2003. *The Changing States and Status of a Scottish Dialect as Measured by the Attitudes of Its Speakers*. Unpublished Dissertation. School of Phylosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences, University of Edinburgh.

Holmes, Janet. 2001. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. London: Longman.

Hornby, A.S. 2000. *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hornby, A. S. 2005. *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*. Oxford: University Press.

Japutri, S.C. 2006. *A Study of Swear Words Used by All Characters in the Movie The Nutty Professor.* Unpublished Undergraduate Thesis. Petra Christian University.

Ljung, M. 2011. *Swearing: A Cross Cultural Linguistic Study*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

McEnery, T. 2006. *Swearing in English. Bad Language, Purity and Power from 1586 to the Present*. New York: Routledge

Meyerhoff, M. 2006. *Introducing Sociolinguistics*. New York: Routledge.

Moleong, L. 2009. *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Revised Ed). Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya.

Nunan, David. 1993. *Research Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Roberts, Edgar V. 2003. *Writing About Literature*. New Jersey. Prentice Hall.

Sugiyono. 2009. *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif dan R&D.* Alfabeta: Bandung

Vanderstoep, S.W & D.D. Johnston. 2009. *Research Methods for Everyday Life*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Wardaugh, R. 2006. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Oxford:Blackwell Publisher, Ltd