

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF AMERICAN AND BALINESE SWEARWORDS

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk membandingkan bahasa kasar, Amerika dan Bali. Desain penelitian ini adalah penelitian deskriptif yang mana dilaksanakan melalui studi pustaka, observasi, dan metode introspektif. Subyek penelitian ini adalah orang Bali asli dan film Amerika. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan persamaan bahasa kasar Amerika dan Bali dilihat dari bentuk, referensi, dan fungsinya. Terdapat tiga bentuk dari bahasa kasar: (1) dalam bentuk kata, yang mana juga terbagi menjadi dua: monomorfemik {Bahasa Bali (*pirate, pletan*, dll), Bahasa Amerika (*dick, pussy, cock*, dll)} dan polimorfemik {Bahasa Bali (*matan, polone*, dll.), Amerika (*fucker, fucking*, dll.)}, (2) dalam bentuk frasa {Bahasa Bali (*ndas teli, lengeh buah* dll.), Amerika (*fucking crazy, shut up*, dll.)}, (3) dalam bentuk klausa {Bahasa Bali (*lengeh ti cai, gebuh bungut nannie*, dll.), Amerika (*what the hell it is, fuck your mouth*, dll.)}. Referensi dari bahasa kasar mengacu kepada: (1) agama, (2) jenis kelamin, (3) kotoran, (4) hewan, (5) latar belakang personal, (6) penyakit kejiwaan, dan (7) aktifitas sex. Fungsi dari bahasa kasar tersebut adalah : (1) untuk menarik perhatian, (2) untuk menyampaikan kekesalan/stress, (3) untuk memprovokasi, (4) untuk membentuk identitas interpersonal, (5) integrative, (6) agresif, (7) regresif, dan (8) penekanan. Perbedaannya dari bahasa kasar Amerika dan bahasa Kasar Bali sangat jelas terlihat, bahasa kasar Bali hanya digunakan oleh orang Bali, begitu juga sebaliknya.

Kata Kunci: bahasa kasar, bentuk, fungsi, referensi

ABSTRACT

This study aimed in comparing swearwords, Balinese with American. The design of this research was a descriptive research, observing, and introspective method. The subjects of this study were original Balinese and American movie. The results of the study show that the similarities of the Balinese and American swearwords can be seen by their forms, references, and functions. There are three forms of swearwords: (1) in the form of word, which also are subdivided into two: monomorphemic {Balinese (*pirate* ‘ancestor’, *pletan* ‘male genital’ etc.), American (dick, pussy, cock, etc.)}, and polymorphemic {Balinese (*matan* ‘eyes’, *polone* ‘brain’, etc.), American (fucker, fucking, etc.)}, (2) in the form of phrases {Balinese (*ndas teli* ‘female genital’, *lengéh buah* ‘so crazy’, etc.), American (fucking crazy, shut up, etc.)}, (3) in the form of clauses {Balinese (*lengéh ti cai* ‘you are so crazy’, *gebuh bungut nanine* ‘you are a liar’, etc.), American (*what the hell it is, fuck your mouth*, etc.)}. The references of the swearwords were related to: (1) religion, (2) sex, (3) excrement, (4) animals, (5) personal background, (6) mental illness, (7) sex activity. The functions of those swearwords were: (1) to draw attention, (2) to provide catharsis, (3) to provoke, (4) to create interpersonal identity, (5) integrative, (6) aggressive, (7) regressive, and (8) emphasis. The differences of the American and Balinese swearwords are clearly seen; Balinese swearwords are only used by Balinese, vice versa.

Keywords: *swearwords, forms, functions, references*

INTRODUCTION

Language is important part in human life. The effect of language is remarkable, because language is always used by humanbeing in daily life. Language is verbal tool which is used for communication (Chaer, 2003; p30). Through language, the interaction of life in a country can be formed, nurtured and developed and also be passed down for the

next generations. However, there are some languages which are so taboo and became a bad language for communication which is called *swearwords*.

Swearing is seen as a type of linguistic behavior that society regards as disrespectful, vulgar, and even offensive (Ljung, 2011:183). Hughes (1991) stated that swearing draws upon such powerful and incongruous resonators as religion, sex, madness, excretion, and nationality, encompassing an extraordinary variety of

attitude, including the violent, the amusing, the shocking, the absurd, the casual and the impossible. It means that the use of swearwords give negative impacts on the hearers. Meanwhile, Dutton (2007) mentions that swearwords have negative meaning because they are disgusting, rude, and offensive. He also stated that most people found words, such as *fuck* and *cunt* offensive at least to a degree and associated negative ideas with those who use such words.

The usage of swearwords has negative effect for others and for the people who use the words is considered as the less educated people. Swearwords are natural part of language, and they are undoubtedly one of the most efficient ways to show expression of exultation or anger in difficult situations. In addition by Hughes (1991) says that people swear by, people swear to (do something), people swear at (somebody or something), and sometimes people swear simply out of exasperation. Swearwords may be a factor in reducing stress (Crytal as cited in Karjalainen, 2002). It means that swearwords are parts of language expression used by the participants themselves.

People know what nasty words are. Although they know the word, they keep using it in communication. One of the ways is through swearing. Nasty words

are never studied at schools, universities, or classroom interactions and how to use swearwords in communication. It means that people know and get the swearwordss are greatly influenced by their environments. In fact, references show that swearwordss are not only used in negative meaning, such as to insult people, to hurt someone, to put someone's down, but swearwordss can be used for positive responses. Jay (2006) says that overall, the scientific evidences suggest swearing is good for people. "We are the only animal that can curse", he says, which sometimes helps us to avoid physical violence. It allows us to express our emotions symbolically and at a distance.

People often hear swearwords, such as *shit*, *fuck*, *damn it*, or *nuts* when they meet with American people and *cicing*, *naskeleng*, *pirate* for Balinese people. However there are many similarities and differences between American swearwords and Balinese swearwords, like their forms, references, and their functions. Swearing which has a purpose to insult or put down is no longer a trend in America society, but it becomes a way of life for many people. As the word *fuck*, *shit*, *damn* in American and *cicing*, *naskeleng*, *pirate* in Balinese all of those words are complicated and a little bit

confusing. References show that swearwords are usually in the form of word related to the religion, sex, excrement, animal terms, mental illness, sex activity, and personal background. Other reference show that swearwords are usually in the form of sex, excrement, and equating people with animals. Each swears word have different type and meaning based on the context when it is uttered (Huges, 1991).

In every nation there are plenty of differences when it comes to local parlance. Aside from laying claim to inventing the word “selfie”, American’ for example, love of slang may be unrivaled anywhere else in the world. The word like, the C-word (it's not cookie) may be just as common as “mate” in Oz, and can range in connotations from insulting someone (“you useless cock”), to calling a friend cool (“he’s a sick cock”). Balinese language also has several kinds of swearwords, the example of Balinese swearwords are, *cicing*, *naskleng*, *katuk*, *sundel*, *teli*, *etc.* The word ‘*sundel*’ in Balinese means ‘*whore*’ and the type of these swearwords is as abusive swearing which is used to abuse or intimidate or insult of others.

The uses of swearwords are common in Bali, especially in Singaraja. The local

people use swearwords when they talk to each other. American also use swearwords in their daily communications like what is shown in the movie. When it comes to the real life, Balinese are often communicating with American foreigners. In their conversations, it might lead to misunderstanding. When the misunderstandings occur, the swearwords are uttered. The problem is the swearwords used by Balinese and American foreigners are different. Balinese does not know how much about swearwords used by the foreigners and vice versa. Looking from this phenomenon, the researcher wants to conduct a library study to compare the swearwords used by American and Balinese. By doing this comparison, the researcher want to describe the similarities and the differences between American and Balinese swearwords in terms of the forms, the references, and the functions. The researcher wants to distinguish which swearwords are hard and nasty, so lots of people know when and how to use swearwords properly and to avoid hurting someone’s feeling.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used descriptive qualitative research by using qualitative analysis. It could give complex details

about particular phenomena which were difficult to be expressed with quantitative method. The purpose was to compare American and Balinese swearwords based on the linguistic forms and to know the similarities, the differences and meaning of American and Balinese swear words. The subjects of the study were the originally people from Bali and originally American movie. Besides that, there were also several resources from internet and journals. The objects of this study were on the American and Balinese swear words. This study was conducted because it had unique factors to be researched and unique variation in spoken expressions. In collecting the data, the researcher was the main instrument. It was because the researcher was an integral part of the research process. The researcher had to chosen those subjects based on the consideration of the swearwords frequency used in a conversation. After the researcher got the subjects, the researcher then recorded the language that they used in the conversation. The researcher did the recording in several places according to the location of the subjects using the swearwords. The researcher also used the hidden recorder. While recorded the conversations. The used of the hidden recorder was to make the subjects did not aware that they were

being recorded. Transcribing the conversation the researcher should transcribe the record data into written text. This activity would not make the missing data, because the researcher transcribe all the recorded data by herself. In analyzing the conversation, the researcher tried to use conversation and interaction analysis. Conversation and interaction analysis was chosen as other method of analysis which focused on the language use and production of meaning. As their data, this study used video or audio recording make from naturally occurring interaction. In collecting the data, there were several steps done by the researcher. Those were:

- 1. Observation**

In this study, the researcher did an observation. The observation was used to find out the kinds of swearwords used by American and Balinese people, what were the motives of swearing uttered by American and Balinese people. In this techniques there was a device that was used, such as writing description. This technique could be done by taking note about everything that researcher observed which were related to the subject, the environment, the situation and the process.

- 2. Interview**

Interview technique was the technique which was the researcher listen to the spontaneous use of expressions thoroughly and while noting, the researcher also noted to a relevant data according to the goal of doing research.

3. Document study

Document study is a technique used to gather requirements during the requirements elicitation phase of a project. It describes the act of reviewing the existing documentation of comparable business processes or systems in order to extract pieces of information that are relevant to the current project, and therefore should be consider projects requirements.

4. Introspective method

The term introspection could be used to describe both an informal reflection process and a more formalized experimental approach, also known as experimental self-observation (Wilhelm Wundt).

The data analysis of this study was done qualitatively through interaction analysis (Miles& Huberman, 1984). This analysis would be done while the required data had been collected, which used flow model.

1. Pre-analysis: transcribing the recorded conversation into written text.

2. Classifying the data

The next stage was classifying the data.

The recorded data that had been

transcribed and selected then would be chosen and classified based on Balinese swearwords classifications data problems.

3. Answering the problems of the study and stating the findings

There were three problems of the study that should be answered by the researcher. The reasons of the Balinese people using the swearwords, and also how often they speak the swear words.

4. making conclusion

The last stage was making the conclusion. The problems that would be answered contain many answers which came from the result of the data. In this case, in order to make it easier to be understood, the researcher made a conclusion. The conclusion contain important things that discussion in this research, such as kind of swearwords which were exist in Bali and America, the reason why they were using the swear words, and how often they used it.

Findings and discussion

The findings and discussion consists of three parts. The first part is the similarities and the differences of the forms of American and Balinese swearwords, the second one is the discussion about the similarities and the differences of the references of American

and Balinese swearwords, and the last one is the discussion about the similarities and the differences of the functions of American and Balinese swearwords.

1. The Similarities and Differences of the Form of American and Balinese Swearwords

1.1 In The Form of Words

There were 20 Balinese swearwords in the form of words and 11 American swearwords in the form of words. Those words were divided into two: monomorphemic and polymorphemic words. In the form of monomorphemic words, the researcher found 10 Balinese swearwords and 6 American swearwords. In the form of polymorphemic words there were 10 Balinese swearwords and 5 American swearwords.

The researcher found the similarities of American and Balinese swearwords. The similarities of both swearwords can be seen from the forms of polymorphemic words. The Balinese swearwords in the form of polymorphemic word such as *matan* 'eyes', *polone* 'brain', *gobane* 'face', *ngamah* 'eat', *nidik* 'eat', *nyundel* 'doing prostitute', etc. And for

American swearwords in the form of polymorphemic word are *fucker*, *asshole*, *fucking*, etc. But there is the different of American and Balinese swearwords. Those swearwords actually are clearly different. The Balinese swearwords are used by Balinese people while American swearwords are used by American people.

1.2 In The Form of Phrase

Swearwords that were found in the form of phrases were divided into three categories, namely, noun phrases, adjective phrases, and verb phrases. There were 11 Balinese swearwords and 5 American swearwords that were classified as noun phrases. There were 8 Balinese swearwords and 5 American Swearwords that were classified as adjective phrase. The last was there were 7 Balinese swearwords in the form of verb phrases and 5 American Swearwords that were classified as verb phrase.

It can be concluded that swearwords in the form of phrases are similar with the studies conducted by Wijana and Rohmadi (2007), Budasi (2012), and Intania (2017). The differences are this study shows the comparison of the

phrase from two swearwords, American and Balinese. Two swearwords are compared based on the similarities and the differences of the form of phrase. Those phrases categorized the phrases into three specific categories such as noun phrases, adjective phrases and verb phrases in order to see the difference categories for each swearword.

1.3 In the Form of Clauses

The next form of swearwords is in the form of clauses. In this study, the American and Balinese swearwords were commonly used to emphasize their utterances. In Bali, it was found that the use of swearwords in the form of clauses were used by adding pronominal (*cai, nyai, nani, awake,* and *siga*) in the end of the swearwords. There were 16 Balinese swearwords and 11 American Swearwords classified as swearwords in the form of clause

2. The Similarities and Differences of the References of American and Balinese Swearwords

Swearwords in the forms of words, phrases, and clauses then were analyzed and classified based on their

references. In this study, there were found 9 references of American and Balinese. Those were religion, sex, excrement, animal terms, sex activity, personal background, and mental illness. Those references of American and Balinese swearwords are described as follows:

1.1 Religion

Based on the finding, there was 1 Balinese swearword which referred to religion, which may include the names of god or the death. That swearword was *pirate* 'ancestors'. The word *pirate* was categorized as a religion term because of the existence of ancestors which is related to any sort of religious and sacred thing. And for American swears word, there was also 1 American swearword which referred to religion. That swearword was *hell*. The word *hell* was categorized as a religion term because of the existence of hell which is related to any sort of religious.

1.2 Sex

In this study, the researcher found some Balinese swearwords in the terms of sex. Those swearwords like *teli* 'female genital', *ndas teli* 'female genitals', *ndas celak* 'male genital', *naskleng /kleng* 'male genital', *pletan* 'male genital', *celak* 'male genital',

butuh 'male genital', and *jit* 'butt'. And for American swearwords, the researcher found 4 swearwords in the terms of sex, those were dick, cock, pussy, and cunt.

1.3 Excrement

Excrement was also the other reference of Balinese swearwords. Those were *tai* 'faces', *bangkaan* 'dead body', *dakin teli* 'vagina excrement', and *sien teli* 'vagina excrement'. The American swearwords in the terms of excrement were *shit*, *piss*, *turd*, *frst*, and *snd crap*. The use of excrement in swearing was caused by the mental concept that excrement was dirty and disgusting.

1.4 Animal Terms

In this study, there were 8 Balinese swearwords and 6 American swearwords which were related to the animal terms. The use of animal terms in swearing was used to show creepy and dirty animals. Those Balinese swearwords were *cicing* 'dogs', *cicak* 'lizards', *bojog* 'monkeys', *celeng* 'pigs', *kebo* 'cow', *lubak* 'fox', *lutung* 'monkeys', and *ubuan* 'pet'. And for American swear words were *dog*, *bullshit*, *pig*, *bitch*, *chick*, and *hog*.

1.5 Sex Activity

In this research, there were some swearwords in the terms of sex activities. The Balinese swearwords that are categorized in the terms of sex activities are *ningkang* 'straddle', *nyelek* 'poke', *ngecul* 'having intercourse', *lumbahin* 'having intercourse', *katuk/ngangkuk* 'having intercourse', and *nyundel* 'doing prostitute'. And for American swearword, it was only *fuck*.

1.6 Personal Background

The researcher found 2 Balinese swearwords related to personal background such as *gendong* 'beggar' *bencong* 'transvestite' and *sundel* 'whore'. Meanwhile for American swears word, those are *sod*, *bugger*, *fucker*, *bastard*, *slut* and *fug*. The uses of these swearwords were related to the professions that were frowned by the society.

1.7 Mental Illness

There are 5 mental illness terms in Balinese swearwords, such as: *lengéh* 'crazy', *buduh* 'crazy', *belog* 'stupid', *olog* 'stupid', and *sedeng* 'crazy'. Meanwhile, there are 6 American swearwords in the terms of mental illness, such as: *idiot*, *crazy*, *moron*, *cretin*, *prat*, and *stupid*.

Based on the explanation, it was found the similarities of American and Balinese swearwords. The similarities of both swearwords can be seen from the references. In the Balinese swearwords, there are swearwords categorized as religion, excrement, sex, animal term, mental illness, personal background, and sex activity. It goes the same with the American swearwords. While the difference of Balinese and American swearwords are really clear. Balinese swearwords are only use by Balinese people. American swearwords are only used by American people.

3. The Similarities and Differences of the Functions of American and Balinese Swearwords

The uses of swear words are stigmatized negatively in the society. However the uses of swear words are not only use for negative purpose, but also for positive ones. In Bali and America for example, the use of swearwords is a common phenomenon. The uses of swear words in Bali and America actually serve several function such as: to draw attention, to provide catharsis, integrative, aggressive, emphasis. Swearwords that

were used by American and Balinese people were not only used for negative purposes. It is in line with the statement proposed by Crystal (2003), who reveals that swear word is not only a powerful tool to reduce pain, distress, and frustration, but it is also used to show intimacy towards others. He adds that swearwords can be seen as a symbol of friendliness among community, because certain community shares jokes and intimacy by provoking swearwords. In this research, it was also found some positive functions of swearwords, such as: to provide catharsis, provide interpersonal identification, and regressive or for joke. Those can be seen as the similarities of the American and Balinese swearwords.

SUGGESTION

It can be suggested that, this research is only limited on comparison of the similarities and the differences of the American and Balinese swear word, especially to compare the similarities and the differences of the forms, references, and the function of American and Balinese swearwords. It is hoped that there will be another research to conduct a research

about the comparison of swearwords of the other country. The prospective researchers who are interested to conduct the similar study in the future are better to discuss that problem.

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