

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Since language is used by people all around the world to communicate, it becomes a very important aspect in human's life. Language is a mean to connect people and to exchange information about anything. It is used to express people's feeling toward something and to specify each person's needs and wants. Without language, people will live in isolation from their family and society. Words are used to reflect a speaker's attitudes, beliefs, and point of view about something. In other words, speakers identify themselves and others through their use of language. People use considerably more standard forms to those they do not know well and more vernacular forms to their friends or social groups (Holmes, 1992, p 246). The use of vernacular language is including the use of unacceptable and rude words or bad language. The unacceptable and rude words or a bad language referred in this research is swear-words. Swear-words are the strongest and the most offensive words; stronger than slang and colloquial language (<http://www.usingenglish.com/glossary/swear-words.html>).

Before nineteenth century, swear-words were not popular because those words were strictly forbidden, mainly by religion. For example, the religion emphasized that the Lord's name should not be taken in vain so references to God in oaths were taboo. Another example is a reference to sexuality and bodily function was also taboo. However, in the beginning of nineteenth century, swear-words were no longer causing shock in society. The changes in social attitudes bring a significant effect to the use of swear-words. In the second half of the twentieth century, the attitudes toward sexuality could be expressed more freely. As an example, *fuck* and *cock* are words commonly used in writing, as well as in television, radio, and film. However, there are seven *dirty words* that are prohibited in broadcasting media in the United States, including both over-the-air television and radio station (<http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Swear%20word>). Those words are

shit, piss, fuck, cunt, motherfucker, tits, and cocksucker. In film, the usage of these words is only permitted in a PG-13-rated film. Swear-words generally offensive and is not considered appropriate in any occasions. Ironically, the use of this kind of words becomes more and more common.

The writer used movie entitled “8 Mile” as her data. The writer chose a movie because movie shows the characters gestures, facial expressions, other body language appropriate to the dialogue, has universal appeal across cultures, and providing current language usage (<http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Gebhardt-MovieTrailers.html>). The writer chose “8 Mile” movie because of several reasons. According to Entertainment weekly, the wall street journal and rolling stones, “8 Mile” movie is includes in the ten best movie in 2000. The other reasons are because the characters in that movie are mostly teenagers and the writer found that there are tendency of using swear-words in almost their conversations although the characters talked to their same sex or their opposite sex. They can use the swear words not only when they have strong emotion, but also when they joke with their friends, or even call their friends’ name without causing any anger, and to express their disobey towards parents, school, and strict rules. Theoretically, these words are not good but they still appear in their informal conversations

Gender has an important role in communication; the speakers have to be concerned with whom s/he talks to whether male or female. As stated in Holmes (1992, p 12), the participant of conversations (who is speaking and who are they speaking to?) and the participant relationship (a social distance scale) influence the language choice. Because men and women belong to different cultural groups (Holmes, 1992, p 333), the way they use language and communicate to each other is different. For instance, someone will receive respond when s/he discusses a problem or topic. The response, which s/he gets, will be different when s/he discusses the problem or the topic to his or her male and female addressees. The male addressee tends to interpret the problem as an invitation to help solving the problem, whereas the female addressee might respond instead by relating a problem of their own. In the use of swear-words, according to Susan Brook’s experiment at the University of New York (1974), it is stated that people, especially men, are more likely to swear when conversing in the same-sex

interactions than when the conversation participants are of both sexes (male and female). Interestingly, men were found to weaken their use of swear-words when they talk to women, while women tended to strengthen theirs in the company of men (<http://www.georgetown.edu/faculty/bassr/githens/theories.htm>).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The problem in here is about the use of swear-words by the movie characters in their daily conversations with the others although swear-words are vulgar and forbidden. Therefore, the writer wanted to know the use of swear-words by the main male and female characters in the “8 Mile” movie and the differences between male and female swear-words based on the questions that are reflected in the research questions as follow:

1.2.1 Research Question

In this thesis, the writer deals with several questions, that is:

1. What kinds of swear-words are used by the main male character, Jimmy, to his addressees?
 - a. What kinds of swear-words are used by Jimmy to his male addressee, Future?
 - b. What kinds of swear-words are used by Jimmy to his female addressee, Alex?
 - c. What are the differences between the swear-words used by Jimmy to his male addressee and those used to his female addressee in terms of the type and frequency?
2. What kinds of swear-words are used by the main female character, Alex, to her addressees?
 - a. What kinds of swear-words are used by Alex to her male addressee, Jimmy?
 - b. What kinds of swear-words are used by Alex to her female addressee, Stephanie?
 - c. What are the differences between the swear-words used by Alex to her male addressee and those used to her female addressee in terms of the type and frequency?

3. What are the differences between Jimmy's swear-words and Alex's swear-words in terms of the type and the frequency?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Through this observation, the writer wants to know the swear-words that are used by the main male, Jimmy, and female, Alex, characters in the "8 Mile" movie to their male and female addressees. Besides that, the writer also wants to find out whether there are or there are not differences between Jimmy's swear-words and Alex's swear-words in terms of the type and the frequency.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Practically, the use of swear-words are considered having negative image towards other, like for instance to offend the hearer(s), provoke a violent reaction. However, many people do not know the facts that swear-words might also be used for different purposes, like for instance showing someone's personal identification or someone's intimacy.

The writer of this thesis conducts this research in order to help the English learners understand more about the categories of swear-words, the examples of swear-words and the differences between male swear-words and female swear-words. Besides that the writer also wants to help the readers understand more about males and females language, especially when males talk to the same-sex (males) and opposite-sex (females) and females talk to the same-sex (females) and opposite-sex (females).

Finally, the writer expects this research can encourage the students of English Department of Faculty of Letters, especially Linguistics student to do more research in Sociolinguistics on language and gender, and swear-words. The finding hopefully will contribute something to anyone in this area and encourage for further research.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

In this research, the writer uses Sociolinguistics study. The writer chooses Sociolinguistics study because according to Holmes (1992, p 1), this subject

explains about the relation of language and the society. The writer also limits her research. She only concerns on the swear-words which are related to verbal obscenity being used by the main male character, Jimmy, to his male (Future) and female (Alex) addressees and the main female character, Alex, to her male (Jimmy) and female (Stephanie) addressees. The writer chose these four characters because based on the movie; the writer sees that the relationship between each other is very close. Jimmy and Alex are the main characters in the “8 Mile” movie and their relationship is close since they are lovers. Future is chosen as Jimmy’s male addressee because he is Jimmy’s best friend. As best friend, they must know each other very well. The writer chose Stephanie as Alex’s female addressee because they also have a close relationship as a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

In this research, the writer uses several terms, that is:

1. Swear Words: the obscenity words which are used to swear and view as indecent and taboo in the society; those words are used to insult, to curse, to offend, or to mock at something or someone when the speaker strong emotions. (Hughes, 1991)
2. Verbal Obscenity: a type of swearing which uses the indecent terms, such as copulative terms, excretory terms, human genital terms. And other terms which are viewed as indecent and taboo in society. (Liedlich, 1973)

1.7 Organization of the Study

The writer divides her study into five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction, which explains about the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation, the definition of key terms, and the organization of this thesis. In the second chapter, the writer writes about the review of related literature. It explains about the theories which she uses in analyzing the data, and review of related studies. Chapter three tells about the methodology of the study; the writer gives

explanations about the source of data, the instrument for collecting the data, the procedures of collecting the data, and method that use to analyze the data. Then, the next chapter, which is chapter four, is about the findings and interpretations. It consists of two parts; the discussion on the findings in which the writer reports the result of the research and the interpretations of the findings. The writer concludes all her works in chapter five, as conclusion of this study.