

SWEAR WORDS USED BY UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF ENGINEERING COLLEGE IN SURABAYA

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Abstract

Swear words are kind of forbidden words that most of people think it does not allow occur in their conversation. However, some people try to break the rule; by using swear words in their daily conversations. It often occurs among undergraduate students, that is why the researcher find it interesting to identify the swear words choice that are used by undergraduate students of Engineering College in Surabaya as well as the type of swear word and their purposes. The researcher got the data through observation, recording and questionnaire. After collecting the data, the findings were analyzed by classifying, categorizing and describing the swear word that undergraduate students of Engineering used. The result of this research indicates that although many students came from outside Surabaya, the swear words which is more frequently they used is the term of sex such as “*cuk*” and “*Jancuk*”. Now swearing has become habitual in their social life, most of them use swear words just to express some humor or display closeness in friendship rather than to insult or to show their emotion.

Key words: purpose, swear words, taboo.

1. Introduction

Some words can be characterized as forbidden word, because people believe that it might not be said, not because they cannot be, but because people do not talk about those things. Based on Trudgill (2000:18), taboo can be characterized as being concerned with behavior which is believed to be supernaturally forbidden, or regarded as immoral or improper; it deals with behavior which is prohibited in an apparently irrational manner. There is a relation between taboo and swearing. This relation is clearly explained by Jay who states that swearing is the use of taboo language with the purpose of expressing the speaker's emotional state and communicating that information to listeners (2008:265). Swear words are a part of taboo words. Wardaugh (1986:239) states that Tabooed subjects can vary widely: sex, death, excretion, bodily functions, religious matters, mother-in-law, certain game animals, and use of your left hand.

Just because some language such as taboo or swear words are forbidden, does not mean that it will never be heard, according to Wardaugh, there are always those who are prepared to break the taboos in an attempt to show their own freedom from such social constraints or to expose the taboos as irrational and unjustified, as in certain movement for “free speech” (2006:239). In order to avoid direct mention of forbidden word, some of them resorted, renaming and repackaging the word to make it sound attractive, it is called euphemistic. According to Hughes (1991:08), euphemistic presumably pacifying, circumlocutions which have been resorted to in earlier stages of the culture in order to avoid direct mention of creatures which exercised a totemic force.

Someone who is swearing may interpret different meaning from that word because swear words can be used to achieve a variety of personal and impersonal outcomes that may be positive or negative. So, there are some reason why someone use a swear words, Jay (2009:155) argues that, the primary use of swearing is for emotional connotation, which occurs in the form of epithets or as insults directed toward others. Beside emotional, he further states that there are positive social outcomes that can be achieved by using taboo words in jokes or humor, social commentary, sex talk, and storytelling. In addition, Coates statement in Thelwall (2008:04) argues that the decision to swear might have the purpose of expressing identity (*e.g.*, being cool), or group membership or displaying closeness in friendship.

Now swearing is very common and it becomes such as behavior or habit, it has become the norm for a wide range of people. Sadly, it is now impossible to avoid hearing swear words being used on a daily basis because swear words are a part of our language. “Swearing takes place in a public or private location, but people is more likely to swear in relaxed environments than in formal environments” (Jay, 2008:273). Many people from old, young people and even a child use swear words openly in their daily conversation especially in informal situation. But Young people especially college student will frequently use swear words, particularly when they are out and about in a group, as a means of fitting in with their peers. According to Jays in Fagersten’ view, swear words as well as the most frequently word that occur in the spontaneous speech of university

student populations (2012:18). Almost similarly, Ben in Hoo's view, that it seems almost impossible not to find those words in students' conversations (2006:2). Based on two views above, the researchers interested in researching swear words that used by college student in their conversations and the reason they used such swear word.

The researcher is interested in researching swearword that used by undergraduate students of Engineering College in Surabaya because there are many students who came from different area outside of Surabaya (different ethnic and different linguistic background) such as from Jakarta, Bali and so on. Each of them has their own native swear words which can be heard a lot in their conversation. Jay states that different cultures and different language, of course, present different sets of linguistic and semantic constraints on dirty word use (2000: 20). Jay further states that individual speakers in one society might use of swear word is determined by his or her psychological development within a cultural environment. Based on the phenomena above, this research is intended to find the answer of the problem of swear words, types and reason to use them

2. Methodology

This research is naturally descriptive qualitative because the data are not concern with the number of sample used in the research, but on sample that can provide a lot of answers to the research question. The data of this research are words, phrases, and sentences that contain swear words which were found during the observation. The data were collected since April until Mei 2013. It was taken around *Keputih* Street, *Mulyosari* and other places in Surabaya where undergraduate students of Engineering usually gather.

The data was collected by using three techniques. They are observation, recording, and questionnaire which consist of background knowledge of respondent, how often, where, who and when do they swear. The subject of this research is 109 (one hundred and nine) undergraduate students of Engineering College in Surabaya, 44 (forty four) of them are recorded while they were talking and 65 (sixty five) of them were asked to filled out the questionnaire. The

subjects were classified as respondent since they are still study as undergraduate students of Engineering College in Surabaya.

Before analyzing the data, the recorded conversations of undergraduate students of Engineering Surabaya has to be selected, related to swear word before transcribing. Then, the data are analyzed based on the research question of this research. Here are the details steps of analyzing data: 1) Classifying the swear words according from recording and questionnaire, and put them in the table. 2) Classifying the swear words based on theory that proposed by Wardaugh. 3) The data will further analyze and explain each of type. 4) The data from the questionnaire are counted the total number of each type. Then, counting the frequency and made the percentage of each term. 5) Describing the reason and the intension of using swear words.

3. Finding And Discussion

3.1 Swear Words Used by Undergraduate Students of Engineering College in Surabaya

There are 27 (twenty seven) swear words that are used by undergraduate students of Engineering College in Surabaya at their conversations. 13 (thirteen) swear words are found during recording and 24 (twenty four) swear words are found from questionnaires that filled out by undergraduate students of Engineering College in Surabaya. The table below shows the swear words occurred during recording and swear word found from questionnaire.

Table 1 Swear Words Used by Undergraduate Students of Engineering College in Surabaya

No	Swear words	Recording	Questionnaire
1	Jancuk, Jancok	✓	✓
2	Jasyit	✓	
3	Cuk	✓	✓
4	Cik	✓	✓
5	Jancik, Hancik, Hancuk, Hancok	✓	✓
6	Ancik	✓	
7	Ancuk	✓	
8	Jangkrik	✓	✓
9	Bajingan, Bangsat, Brengsek		✓

10	Gateli, Gatel	✓	✓
11	Matamu	✓	✓
12	Silit		✓
13	Dobol		✓
14	Damput	✓	✓
15	Tuaek , Taek, Telek, Tai	✓	✓
16	Asu, Anjing, Anying, Anjir	✓	✓
17	Bedes, Monyet		✓
18	Babi		✓
19	Wedus		✓
20	Asem		✓
21	Perek		✓
22	Lonte		✓
23	Matek		✓
24	Sempak		✓
25	Kontol		✓
26	Simbud		✓
27	Raimu		✓

3.2 Types of Swear Word that Used by Undergraduate Students of Engineering College in Surabaya

Based on the list of swear words above, the swear words are categorized based on Wardaugh's statement. However, not all kinds of swear words in Wardaugh could be found in this research. Through classifying the data, there are only six kind of swear words could be found, Besides, there are some swear words which are not suitable with any kind of type that Wardaugh suggested, and then they putted as another term of swear words. The following is further explanation of each type:

3.2.1 Sex Term:

This term refers to sexual activities or things that related to sexual intercourse between man and women. Then, in this term the swear words that are used by undergraduate students of Engineering Surabaya are *jancuk*, *jancok*, *jancik*, *jasyit*, *janput*, *cuk*, *cik*, *hancik*, *hancuk*, *hancok*, *ancik*, *ancuk*, *jangkrik*. *Jancok*, *jancuk*, and *jancik* come from the word "diencuk" that means fuck or having sex. While the meaning of *jangkrik* semantically is cricket in English, but *jangkrik* comes from the word "diangkrik" that means having sex. It is called euphemistic, some words are renaming such as "diencuk" becomes *jancuk*,

hancuk and so on, and to make it sounds interesting some of them resorting such as “cuk” resorting from the word *jancok* and “cik” from the word *jancik*. The total use of this term that found in recording are 59 times; out of 72 swear words that occurred during their conversation. The following sentences are the example from sex term:

1. B: Larang *cuk*, PS 3 iku (PS 3 is expensive *cuk*!)
2. A: Ayok *cuk* lek main (Come on *cuk*, if you want to play)

3.2.2 Death:

This term refers to something that makes people fear to face it. In this case undergraduate students of Engineering Surabaya used swear word that refers to death term in their conversation for instance, *matek* that means death in English. Sadly, this term was not found during recording but it appeared in the questionnaire 32 times. They rarely use it just to show their emotion, to insult, and they even use it to tell story or express some humor.

3.2.3 Excretion:

Excretion comes from the word excrete which means to separate and eliminate the solid waste matter from our body through the anus. In this term the swear words that are used by undergraduate students of Engineering Surabaya are *tuaek*, *taek*, *telek*, *tai* that the meaning “shit” in English. The researcher got 2 (two) swear words from this term that occurred in undergraduate students of Engineering Surabaya conversation.

1. B: *Tuaek* arek iki.. (Shit, you are)
2. B: *Nahjong cuk*! (Shit *cuk*!)

Tuaek or *taek*, *telek* is the Javanese language that means *tahi* (shit) in Indonesia. It has the same meaning with excretion that is the noun from the word excretes; it means solid or liquid waste matter from the body through the anus. In addition, the data from questionnaire is showed that undergraduate students of Engineering Surabaya also use *nahjong* at their conversation. The word *nahjong* comes from Jakarta; it is euphemism from “najis” which means excrement.

3.2.4 Bodily function:

This term are related to the human’s body or human’s genitals which means the sex organs of human being. But in this term, most of undergraduate

students of Engineering Surabaya used swear word *gatel* or *gateli* (damn), *silit* (asshole), *dobol* (ass), and *kontol* (penis) in their conversation. In this case, *kontol* (penis) is extremely vulgar word, and then they so rarely use this word. The following are the example of conversation:

1. A: *Gateli, gak enak Jum'at-Jumat main PS goblok*
(Damn, Friday is not good day for playing PS idiot.)
2. D: *Yo opo sih ah? Ohgatel . . . sik rokok ku*
(How is it? Oh damn! Wait where my cigarette is)
3. A: *Sing tuwek dikongkon kongkon guatelli arek-arek*
(The elder was got a commend, damn they are)

Gathel or *gatheli* appears 6 times during recording. *Gathel* take from the word “gatal” which means of penis that refers to human’s genital. Beside those words, undergraduate students of Engineering College in Surabaya also used *matamu* (your eyes) and *raimu* (your face) at their conversation. In Surabaya *matamu* and *raimu* are included into taboo word but not every conversation is taboo, it depends on the intonation and the context of conversation. The example is:

B: *Oh...limangewu (5000) telung jam* (Oh, five thousand each three hours)
A: *Matamu!* (Your eyes!)

3.2.5 Mother in law:

This term is used to describe a person who does not have permanent partner for sexual intercourse or explain that the person likes to change a sex partner. The words related to this term are such as *perek* (bitch). The words related to this term were not found during recording, but the data from the questionnaire is showed that undergraduate students sometimes use *perek* (bitch) and *lonte* (bitch) at their conversation.

3.2.6 Certain game animal:

Certain game animal is related to the behavior of animals or refers to some animal names. In this term, there are four kinds of animal which are used to swear by undergraduate student of Engineering College in Surabaya. They are *babi* (pig), *wedus* (ship), *monyet* but most of them say *bedes* in Javanese (monkey) and used the word *asu* or *anying* or *anjir* which has the same meaning

with *anjing* (dog). The following are the example of conversation that related to this term:

1. D: *Hahaha...apa cie? hahaha anying anying*
(Hahaha whats up? hahaha? Dog dog)
2. D: *Eh mending, loe buka ntu halaman dua, loe centang ntu semuanyahahahahanying* (It's still better, open page two, you stick all of them hahahaha dog)

3.2.7 Others:

After analyzing the recorded conversation and questionnaire, that was found three swear words that undergraduate students of Engineering Surabaya used, they are *asem* (sour), *sempak* (panty), and *setan* (devil). They rarely used those swear words as literally they mean but to show their emotion, to insult, or even to express their humor. In this case, from all the type based on Wardaugh statement, there is no type that refers to those swear words. That is why the researcher put them in others type of swear words.

4. Intention and Reason Undergraduate Students of Engineering College in Surabaya Used Swear Words

If we see table 1, it shows that undergraduate students of Engineering College in Surabaya used a lot of swear word in their conversations. It proves Jay statements that individual speakers in one society might use of swear word is determined by his or her psychological development within a cultural environment (2000: 20). The data from questionnaires show that most of them came from different places around Indonesia, then the researcher put them into 2 categorizes; there are Surabaya 15 (23%) and out of Surabaya 50 (77%). It means that there are many students who came from different area outside of Surabaya. From 65 undergraduate students, 46 of them have been living in Surabaya for 1-5 years, and 5 of them have lived in Surabaya for 6-10 years and 14 of them have lived in Surabaya for 11-25 years. Cultural environment influenced them in choosing swear word at their daily conversation. That is why, they do not only use Surabaya swear words but also swear words from outside of Surabaya.

Besides, undergraduate student of Engineering College in Surabaya is most frequently used swear word at their conversation. There are 25

undergraduate students answered often out of 65 undergraduate students in total which account for 38%. Next, sometimes and rarely have same result by occupying 31% with 20 undergraduate students who answered sometimes and 20 of them answered rarely. There might be some reason, why they used swear word at their conversations.

Before analyzing the intension and reason of using swear words, context of swearing needs to analyze. Jay points out that swearing is influenced by pragmatic (contextual) variables such as the conversational topic, the speaker-listener relationship, including gender, occupation, and status, and the social-physical setting of the communication with respect to whether the swearing takes place in a public or private location, one's jurisdiction over the location, and the level of formality of the occasion (2008: 272). In order to gets more a better sense to evaluate swearing as a function of context, the questionnaire was distributed to get more data such as who they swear with, where and on what condition undergraduate students of Engineering College in Surabaya swearing. First, who they usually swear with, the data showed that most of them answered that they swear to friends (63%), next is senior (16%), junior (10.5%), and college employee (10.5%).

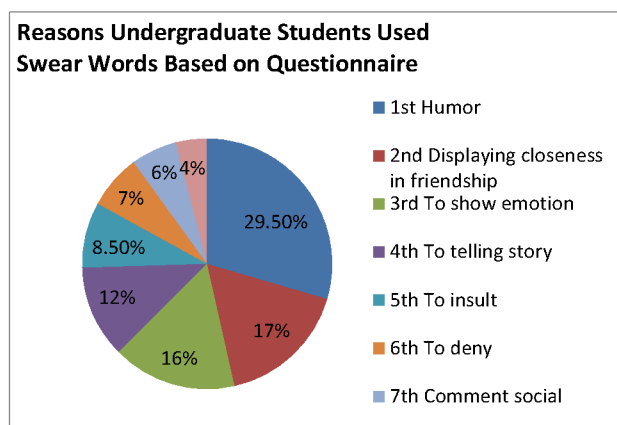
When we talk about places, Jay suggests that people are more likely to swear in relaxed than in formal environment. The place where the conversation took place is also important. In this case, undergraduate students of Engineering College swear at Class 20 (16%), Canteen 16 (12.5%), Parking lot 14 (11%), Exercise building 13 (10%), Dormitory 36 (28.5%), Library 6 (5%), Sidewalk 14 (11%), and Student senate office 8 (6%). In addition, the recorded conversations were also taken at canteen, parking lot, and side walk. It proves jays' theory that they prefer swearing in relaxed environment.

Besides, the questionnaire is designed to know more about the contextual such as when, who, where and why. Then, based on the condition when they say some swear words from 114 answers, 21 (18.5%) of them answered angry, 23 (20%) frustration, Happy 13 (11.5%), Humor 38 (33%), Shock 19 (17%). From all the result of the frequency, it is obvious that swear words are most frequently

used in the condition of humor or joke. On the contrary, the lowest frequency of the used of swear words is presented under happiness condition.

Jay suggests that the primary use of swearing is for emotional connotation, which occurs in the form of epithets or as insults directed toward others. Beside emotional, he further states that there are positive social outcomes that can be achieved by using taboo words in jokes or humor, social commentary, sex talk, storytelling (2009: 155). Besides, as the supporting theory where does not find in jays' argument, Coates statement in Thelwall (2008: 04) states that swearing is displaying closeness in friendship. To prove those two above statements, the questionnaire was distributed to know the percentage of the reason they usually swearing.

Chart 3. Reason undergraduate students of Engineering College in Surabaya used swear word.



Looking into the intension and the reason undergraduate students Engineering College in Surabaya in using swear word. As is shown in chart, humor makes up the largest percentage in the reason of using swear words. Beside the questionnaire, the recording conversations also need to analyze. After analyzing the recorded conversation, it was found that undergraduate students of Engineering College in Surabaya seems to use swear words a lot to display closeness in friendship (8 times) than the other intention of the students in their conversations. They call their friends names or nicknames without causing anger,

so they use it not to insult, to mock and to offend their friends but they use the swear words just to make him and his friend closer or to indicate their friendship. For example:

D: *Mana jokere?* (Where is the joker?)

C: *Yoe wis mari cuk entek* (finish *cuk*, it ran out)

In this conversation they used swear word *cuk* in their conversation as replacement name of his friend. The custom in Surabaya, they call their friend's name with *cuk* or *cik* which is the meaning just like bro or guys to show how close they are as friend, and also it only happens when the speaker and the listener are close friends.

Besides, it was found from recorded conversation that undergraduate students also use swear words to express their negative or positive emotions (7 times). When people are annoyed, they think they have almost a right to swear, not necessarily at someone else because swearing lets someone say how they feel and lets their anger out. So, they tend to release their emotional feeling by swearing. For example:

A: *Seneng aku ngene iki cak* (I am so pleasure with this bro)

D: *Nomer pitu kabeh...bercanda?kabeh* (Number seven all, joking? all)

A: *Ancuk!pilihannya isok misuh kabeh, mbak hubungannya sama bahasa Inggris apa?* (*Ancuk*, all the choices are swear words, sis what is the correlation with English?)

In this conversation speaker A said the word *ancuk* spontaneously, it was because he saw an unexpected or unpredicted question of the questionnaire, then he used *ancuk* to express his emotion of unexpected predicaments. It proves Stapleton's statement, that swearing as a form of emotional expression that can be used to convey a range of inner states and orientations but not all of them are negative. Besides angry and frustration Swearing can occur with any emotion and yield a positive or negative outcome. It means that there are some more emotions that people show when they swear, it can be positive and negative feeling. In order to know what swear word they used to show their emotion, the questionnaire was distributed and the result is the word "*jancuk/jancok*" is the most common swear word and "*cuk*" takes up the second place that undergraduate

students of Engineering College in Surabaya used when they express their emotion.

Besides, there is a time for swear word does not have to be emotional, it can be used to show some humor rather than to hurt someone. When they utter swear word they want to make surround them laughing by using those swear word. From the percentage of questionnaire, the word “*cuk*” is the most common swear word and “*jancuk*” or “*jancok*” takes up the second place that used when they express some humor. While from recorded conversation it happened 6 times. The following is the example conversation that to show humor:

A: *Kabeh?* (Is it all?)

B: *Iyo jancuk* (laughing). (Yup *jancuk*)

When speaker B answered his friends' question, he inserted the swear word *jancuk* in his sentence. Although he inserted *jancuk*, but he were replaying the question with laughing, it means that his intention in using swear word only to express humor.

In addition, it was found 5 times in recording that their purposes is telling story. The example is:

D: *Jancik* elek ngene (*Jancik* I got bad card)

[silent]

B: *Yeah hahahaha kesusu haha* (Yeah haha, your step too forward haha)

C: *Tujuane amu cuk padahal ini cuk.* (The goal *cuk* where as I meant this *cuk*)

B: Hahahaha

C: *Weah jangkrik bondo jokere akeeh cuk* (Wow *jangkrik* he has so many joker *cuk*)

From conversation above it can concluded that they did not mean to harmful anyone of them by inserted swear words in his story but to make it sounds interesting and also attract his friend attention. Besides, it also can make their story is not flatter.

Many languages have developed mechanisms for expressing emphatic utterance denial by swearing that are close to the oaths. To deny the truth of claims put forth in an utterance by arguing that these claims have no more value

than some negative or worthless entity. During recording the researcher got 2 (two) conversations that show to deny, the following is one of conversation:

D: *Koen pinter cuk ngengkei kartu koyok ngene cuk...masuk banget*

(You clever *cuk*, give me card such thing like this *cuk*)

A: *Sing ngengkekno iku sopo jamput.* (Who gave you those card *jamput*)

The conversation happened when they played card at one of parking lot Engineering College faculty. In this conversation speaker A did not accept of what his friend said, then he used swear word *jamput* because he felt that he did not deserve the blame. So, it shows that the speakers' intention was to deny of what his friend said to him.

Every people have different opinion about something that they see or they think in surround them. They will express their opinion by giving comment about something that he thinks right for him. But sometimes they insert some swear words and use it in emphasis to convince his comment about society such as politic, sport, education, and so on. It was found 2 times that used swear words to comment about social, for instance:

B: *Larang cuk, PS 3 iku* (PS 3 is expensive *cuk*!)

A: *Larang piro blok?* (How expensive stupid?)

B: *Limangewu (5000) telung jam e* (five thousand each three hours)

There were two undergraduate students they were planning playing PS. He was swearing with the swear word *cuk* because his intention was to comment about PS 3 that it is expensive.

To know what kind of swear word when they used to insult someone, the questionnaire was distributed and the results are the word "*jancuk/jancok*" and "*cuk*" are the most common swear word that undergraduate students of Engineering College in Surabaya used to insult. Insult usually derogatory and directed to others, like name – calling and other kinds of cursing, after analyzing recorded conversation it was happened twice. Below conversation is one of example conversation that the purpose is to insult. His intentions in using swear word *matamu* was insulting to make his friend shy because his friend, speaker B said that PS3 is expensive but the truth it is not.

A: *Larang piro blok?* (How expensive stupid?)

B: *Limangewu (5000) telung jam e, Oh..limangewu (5000) telung jam*
(Five thousand each three hours, oh, five thousand each three hours)

A: *Matamu!* (your eyes)

B: Hehe..

4. Conclusion

It can be concluded that undergraduate students of Engineering Surabaya use many kind of swear words in daily conversation and swear words have become a common thing among undergraduate students in present and that it is not a big deal when they are used. They do not think that it is offensive and impolite anymore. Because generally they swearing among their friends to show their friendliness or express a humor.

Finally, swear word is a part of our language, it is not bad at all but when we understand the purpose of swearing, hopefully it can reduce misunderstanding about swearing. Although it has negative and positive purposes, better for us not to use swear words in our daily conversation. It is not only harmful people but the meaning itself has negative connotation. And for final word, hopefully this research can be one of reference for any student who interested in an analysis about “swear words”.

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