THE USE OF SWEAR WORDS IN SCARFACE 1983 MOVIE SCRIPT

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ABSTRACT; *This thesis aims to analyze the use of swear words in the movie script Scarface (1983) by Oliver Stone. The study focuses on two main problems. The first problem purposed to identifying the types of swear words used by the characters in Scarface (1983), and for second investigating the meanings behind the use of these swear words. The research uses a qualitative approach, which focuses on interpreting and understanding the meanings conveyed through the use of language. The data source for this study is the movie script Scarface (1983), and the data were collected from the utterances of the characters who use swear words in their dialogue. The results show that, based on Pinker's (2007) theory, there are five types of swear words used in the script, namely abusive swearing, cathartic swearing, descriptive swearing, idiomatic swearing, and emphatic swearing. The most frequently used is abusive swearing, while descriptive swearing is the least frequently used. Meanwhile, based on Leech's (1974) theory of meaning, the swear words in the film predominantly carry connotative meaning, which depends on context and the speaker's emotions. This occurs because swear words are not simply used at random; instead, they reflect attitudes, emotions, and power relationships among the characters.*

Keywords: *Swear Words, Movie Script.*

ABSTRAK; Tesis ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis penggunaan kata-kata umpatan dalam naskah film Scarface (1983) karya Oliver Stone. Penelitian ini berfokus pada dua masalah utama. Masalah pertama bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis kata-kata umpatan yang digunakan oleh karakter-karakter dalam Scarface (1983), dan yang kedua menyelidiki makna-makna di balik penggunaan kata-kata umpatan tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, yang berfokus pada penafsiran dan pemahaman makna-makna yang disampaikan melalui penggunaan bahasa. Sumber data untuk penelitian ini adalah naskah film Scarface (1983), dan data dikumpulkan dari tuturan-tuturan karakter yang menggunakan kata-kata umpatan dalam dialog mereka. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa, berdasarkan teori Pinker (2007), ada lima jenis kata-kata umpatan yang digunakan dalam naskah tersebut, yaitu umpatan kasar, umpatan katarsis, umpatan deskriptif, umpatan idiomatik, dan umpatan empatik. Yang paling sering digunakan adalah umpatan kasar, sedangkan umpatan deskriptif adalah yang paling jarang digunakan. Sementara

itu, berdasarkan teori makna Leech (1974), kata-kata umpatan dalam film sebagian besar mengandung makna konotatif, yang bergantung pada konteks dan emosi penuturnya. Hal ini terjadi karena kata-kata umpatan tidak digunakan secara acak; melainkan mencerminkan sikap, emosi, dan hubungan kekuasaan di antara para tokoh.

Kata Kunci: Kata-kata Umpatan, Naskah Film.

INTRODUCTION

Swear words are harsh words that offend and are considered taboo to use in public; in social life this is often viewed as a negative thing. However, the use of swear words is not just an expression of anger or dissatisfaction, but also has complex social and emotional functions. By understanding the different types of swearing, we can better appreciate how language functions in the context of everyday human interaction. According to Pinker (2007) in his book The Stuff of Thought, swear words, often considered a form of "bad language", play an important role in human communication, reflecting cultural norms, emotional expression, and social dynamics. According to Karjalainen (2002), swearing is a subset of taboo words that not only refer to socially unacceptable things but also evoke strong emotions. This study aims to explore the various dimensions of swearing, mainly focusing on its types and meanings as articulated in the existing literature according to Pinker's (2007) theory.

Nowadays, swear words also develop along with the times; not only examined in daily social life but also can be analyzed from a dialogue in a film. Susetyaningsih (2014) says that movies are one of the best revelations of real communication between people. Characters from a movie use swear words to express feelings of anger, happiness, shock, anxiety, and to mock or demean other characters. This phenomenon also certainly happens in everyday life today when people swear during conversations without realizing that they are actually using swear words. For example, the movie Scarface by Oliver Stone (1983) emphasizes the hard life of a mobster where there are a lot of swear words uttered by the character who expresses his feelings from various aspects of the situation, such as when he is angry, nervous, sad, or makes fun of his opponent's character, even when a swear word is thrown just as an affix or emphasis in a sentence. This also often happens in everyday life when

people interact socially and swear, without realizing whether or not they are using swear words. In some of these aspects, there are several types of swear words which in this study are analyzed to discover each of their types and purposes in the Scarface film. This topic is quite interesting because most people think that swear words are bad words, but in reality, they still have a role in human communication and carry meanings and motives that reflect the context of their use.

Furthermore, this study also applies Leech's (1974) theory of meaning, which comprises seven types of meanings. Among these, connotative and affective meanings are particularly relevant for this study. Connotative meaning refers to the additional meanings a word carries, influenced by context and associations, while affective meaning expresses the speaker's emotions and attitudes. By applying Leech's theory alongside Pinker's, this research aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of swear words in communication, not only from a linguistic perspective but also from a semantic perspective. Therefore, this study aims to explore not only the types of swear words in the Scarface movie script but also the meanings and motives that lie behind their use. This will provide a more comprehensive view of how language reflects human emotions, relationships, and attitudes in a cinematic context.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts the research methodology outlined by Creswell (2018), with a focus on qualitative methods to analyze language use in film. The primary data source is the 1983 film Scarface, directed by Brian De Palma and written by Oliver Stone. This film was selected because of its frequent use of swear words, which makes it highly relevant to the research topic centered on Pinker's (2007) classification of swearing. The process of data collection was conducted using the documentation method, which involved systematically reading the official movie script, identifying swear words used by the characters, and marking the relevant scenes. These swear words were then categorized based on the type and intent, using Pinker's five classifications of swearing. The method of data analysis followed a qualitative approach, where each instance of swearing was carefully analyzed for its type, frequency, and meaning within the context of the character's dialogue. The analysis also aimed to interpret how swear words function as tools for emotional expression, social

interaction, and identity portrayal in the film. To present the findings, the study employed an informal and descriptive technique, allowing the results to be communicated in an accessible and engaging manner. This approach not only highlighted the nuanced use of profanity in Scarface but also encouraged deeper understanding and further discussion of its linguistic and sociocultural implications.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter analyzes swear words in the script of the film Scarface (1983), by examining the types of swearing from the perspective of Pinker's (2007) theory of swear words and elaborating on Leech's (1974) theory as a supporting theory that is a reference for the meaning of each type of swear word.

Abusive Swearing

According to Pinker (2007), abusive swearing is used to directly insult, demean, or attack another person. It is confrontational and typically occurs in high-tension interactions. This study identified 41 abusive swearing instances in the Scarface (1983) script, making it the most frequent type found.

[Data 3-1] (p.3)

Tony: What the fuck's wrong with this guy? What's he thinks I am?

In this scene, Tony is being interrogated by a man who questions his masculinity in a demeaning way. Tony's response, "What the fuck's wrong with this guy?" is a direct expression of anger and insult. The word "fuck" functions here as a verbal weapon, used to degrade the other person and push back against the perceived insult. This swear word carries social meaning, reflecting the relationship between Tony and the officer. It challenges the expected power dynamic, showing Tony's refusal to be disrespected, even during a formal interrogation. The swearing asserts dominance and distance, turning the power imbalance on its head through bold, offensive language.

Cathartic Swearing

Pinker (2007) defines cathartic swearing as spontaneous outbursts triggered by pain, shock, or emotional stress. It is not directed at anyone but instead acts as an emotional release. This study found 13 examples of cathartic swearing in the Scarface script.

[Data 3-4] (p.83)

Tony: What the fuck is she doing here?

In this scene, Tony sees his younger sister Gina dancing at a nightclub, a situation that triggers his protective instincts and emotional distress. His spontaneous reaction, "What the fuck is she doing here?" is a clear example of cathartic swearing. The word "fuck" expresses his affective meaning, which reveals his inner emotional state—panic, shock, and frustration. It is not meant to insult but to release a surge of emotions. This moment illustrates how swear words can function as emotional coping tools in intense, personal situations.

Descriptive Swearing

Descriptive swearing, as defined by Pinker (2007), uses swear words in their literal, explicit form, often relating to taboo subjects like sex or bodily functions. It lacks figurative or emotional meaning and is typically blunt and graphic. This study identified 5 cases of descriptive swearing in the Scarface script.

[Data 3-7] (p.20)

Omar: My boss' gonna stick your head up your asses faster'n a rabbit gets fucked.

In this threatening line, Omar uses "fucked" in its literal sexual sense to create a violent and intimidating image. This is descriptive swearing because the term is used explicitly, not figuratively or emotionally. The word "fucked" here conveys connotative meaning—it suggests humiliation, domination, and violence, enhancing the threat's intensity. The language serves as a tool to reinforce Omar's authority and the dangerous environment surrounding drug deals..

Idiomatic Swearing

According to Pinker (2007), idiomatic swearing involves using swear words in set phrases or idioms where the meaning is not literal. These expressions are often used casually to express annoyance, frustration, or emphasis. This study found 15 examples of idiomatic swearing in the script.

[Data 3-10] (p.27)

Tony: Man, you just fucked up.

In this scene, Tony reacts to betrayal during a drug deal. The phrase "you just fucked up" is an idiom that means someone made a serious mistake. The word "fucked" is not meant literally, but figuratively, to emphasize the gravity of the mistake. This is idiomatic swearing with connotative meaning, as it reflects the speaker's judgment and intensifies the emotional tone. Tony's words carry an implicit warning, showing how idiomatic swearing can be used to reinforce authority and communicate consequences.

Emphatic Swearing.

Emphatic swearing, as described by Pinker (2007), is used to add intensity or emphasis to a statement, rather than to insult or express emotion. It enhances the force of an expression and reflects the speaker's attitude or urgency. This study found 40 examples of emphatic swearing in the script.

[Data 3-15] (p.136)

Tony: I can't even have a fucking little baby!

Here, Tony is in a deeply emotional argument with his wife. The word "fucking" is used not to insult her, but to emphasize the depth of his frustration and despair. This is emphatic swearing because it adds dramatic force to the sentence. The word "fucking" conveys affective meaning, expressing Tony's emotional collapse and sense of loss. It reveals his vulnerability and highlights how emphatic swearing can powerfully amplify personal suffering and hopelessness.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the analysis and discussion in the previous chapter, several points can be concluded. Swear words are words, phrases, or expressions that are considered rude, taboo, or impolite, and people use them to express their emotions, such as anger, disappointment, surprise, or sometimes to add emphasis. The use of swear words can be found in the movie script Scarface (1983) by Oliver Stone, where the characters use them to convey their emotions openly, honestly, and in a way that fits the situation.

The first research problem in this thesis is the types of swear words found in the Scarface movie script (1983). Based on Pinker's (2007) theory, the analysis shows that there are 41 cases of abusive swearing, 13 cases of cathartic swearing, 5 cases of descriptive swearing, 15 cases of idiomatic swearing, and 40 cases of emphatic swearing. In other words, abusive swearing is the most frequently used, while descriptive swearing is the least frequently used in the film. The second research problem in this thesis is the meanings of each type of swear word found in the Scarface movie script (1983), based on Leech's (1974) theory of meaning. The study finds that each kind of swearing is not used randomly, but instead carries a particular meaning and feeling. The swearing reflects the emotions, attitudes, and conditions of the character at a given moment. The use of swear words highlights the character's disappointments, sadness, anger, surprise, and other emotions. Through these words, the film shows a more vivid, human side of each character, making it easier for the audience to connect with their struggles and motives.

In conclusion, the use of swear words is not just a form of crude expression, but also an important tool to help us understand the personalities, attitudes, and emotions of the film's characters. By understanding the types and meanings of the swearing, the audience can appreciate the depth of emotions and human struggles that lie beneath the story of Scarface (1983).

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