

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The first chapter divides the background of this study into several sections to provide readers with an overview of the research. These sections cover the research background, which includes previous studies used as references for this study, the problem statement, the research purpose, the research significance, and the definition of key terms.

1.1 Research Background

Men and women use language differently as the outcome of socialisation processes and cultural expectations. In society, a woman is supposed to have a feminine side and to be a mother who cares for her children at home. Man, on the other hand, should have a masculine side as the leader of the home and the breadwinner. Gender disparities between men and women are also reflected in language. According to Talbot (2010), society and social distinctions based on gender are mirrored in a pattern of language use. Women are known for their gentleness, according to Aini (2016). In the opinion of Holmes (2013), they also communicate with people in a more pleasant manner. Women are typically more sensitive than men, thus it is understandable that woman prefers to be praised or appreciated more on beautiful things. Women, according to Holmes, lack self-confidence when interacting, particularly in public (2013). As therefore, many men assumed that women were still inferior. As an instance, women are more cautious and preserve their attitudes when dealing in society. As this occurs, it is widely assumed that women's language is more respectful than men's.

In 1975, Robin Lakoff, a female linguist with an interest in this subject, published an article titled *Language and Woman's Place*. According to Lakoff, as part of their societal interaction, women are compelled to develop a weak, insignificant, and submissive manner, which is effectively training how to be subordinate. In other words, she sees how women looked as a representation of their powerlessness and men's dominance over them. This means that gender influences the potency of language employed by men and women. Women's positions in

society are now equal to men's positions. Women have taken significant roles in industries that males used to lead, such as politics, economics, education, and others. Women's language theory, as developed by Lakoff, experienced fluctuations as society progressed. One of the conflicts in the application of women's language can be noticed in modern language. Several aspects that are inappropriate for women's language standards, particularly in swearing or using offensive language, can be noticed in the use of social media, TikTok, by women named Kayla, Katie, and Heba when expressing their opinion about the conflict of Israel-Palestine. According to Lakoff (as cited in Holmes, 1992), women often avoiding strong swear words. Moreover, Holmes states that women as subordinate people must be polite. However, Kayla, Katie, and Heba use several strong swear words in their videos.

Swearing, offensive language, and taboo words share a connection, yet they are not precisely identical. Swearing pertains to the utilisation of profane or filthy language, which can be insulting but does not necessarily violate social taboos. Taboo words, conversely, are prohibited or limited in a specific civilization, and their utilisation is frequently deemed unsuitable or objectionable (Candra & Megandari, 2018; Farkhan, 2007; Lestari et al., 2019). Edwin Battistella states in his book "Bad Language: Are Some Words Better than Others?" that the term "offensive language" is not always distinct from taboo words or swear words. In furtherance, according to Edwin Battistella (2005), "offensive language" is any phrase that is seen as rude, harmful, or improper in a specific social setting. Offensive language is a comprehensive term that includes swearing, taboo words, and other forms of language that may be perceived as disrespectful or cruel. Offensive language encompasses more than mere profanity; it encompasses words or phrases that belittle, degrade, or discriminate against persons or groups based on variables such as race, gender, religion, or other attributes.

Offensive language is a broad category that encompasses various synonyms, including filthy language, rude language, bad language, dirty language, taboo language, banned language, swear language, bawdy language, cuss language, and

strong language. Non-slandered language refers to the use of words that accurately describe things that are forbidden or taboo in society and that go against its traditions, morals, and religion. Offensive words are universally seen as indecent, disrespectful, undesirable, and prohibited in all societies. Hughes (2006) verifies that this form of language encompasses "a specific selection of words or vocabulary considered suitable for a specific subject or social context".

Offensive terms have the potential to ridicule or offend individuals or a collective of people (such as aggressive acts directed towards a particular culture, social subgroup, race, or ideology in a rant) (Rasavi, 2010). Using these words for swearing or insulting others would be considered offensive language. Offensive language is employed to convey intense emotions such as rage, discontent, and astonishment. Typically, these rituals revolve around elements that society holds as sacred, such as religion or family, or entail actions that are deemed taboo or forbidden. They may also be employed as a means to personally humiliate someone (Sinambela, 2010).

According to the meanings above, offensive language is a harmful term to use in public. In its usage, offensive language refers to a variety of offensive utterances. Speaking offensive phrases technically means wishing mental harm on someone. This study will employ the hypothesis given by Battistella (2005) for the sorts of offensive language, which are: epithet, profanity, vulgarity, and obscenity. Some specialists also presented their theories on how offensive language works. According to Wardhaugh's (2006) hypothesis, offensive language fulfils four functions. He stated that breaking linguistic offensive is commonly done "to draw attention to oneself, show contempt, be aggressive or provocative, or mock authority."

Additionally, this study aims to look into the types of offensive language that women TikTokers use in accordance with Wardhaugh's (1986) theory and Battistella's (2005) theory of offensive language. The researcher selected women TikTokers, named Kayla, Katie, and Heba as subjects of study due to their status as prominent TikTok content makers and social media influencers, boasting a

substantial following and high engagement rates on their TikTok accounts. They gained popularity by sharing videos on their account that focused on political and social issues, comedic content, sarcastic content, beauty, and fashion, as well as other daily content. Because of the content they made, Kayla, Katie, and Heba experienced an increase in their social standing and garnered significant attention. In line, Botha and Reyneke (2013) state that regardless of the creator's initial level of reputation, any work that is posted on social media has the potential to go viral and have an impact on thousands of people. Despite the prevalent disrespect for women's opinions and viewpoints in discussions pertaining to conflict and politics, Kayla, Katie, and Heba possess the capacity to effectively engage a global audience, wield influence over public opinion, and potentially shape governmental policies (Wiley, 2023).

The researcher utilises particular clips from Kayla, Katie, and Heba's TikTok accounts, which pertain to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and incorporate the Free Palestine campaign, in order to analyse and comprehend the types and functions of offensive language employed by the women. The Israel-Palestine conflict is an intricate and complicated problem that has persisted for several decades. From the American perspective of Kayla, the Jewish perspective of Katie, who lives in America, and the Palestinian perspective of Heba, who also lives in America, it is intriguing to observe their alignment in supporting the cause of free Palestine. This convergence of viewpoints offers a unique opportunity to examine the conflict from multiple angles, shedding light on the diverse interpretations that individuals can have of the same situation.

Americans typically view the war from the perspective of global affairs and the study of geography's influence on politics. Throughout history, the United States has consistently shown strong support for Israel, with many Americans considering the conflict a crucial issue related to national security and geopolitical concerns. Nevertheless, there is a significant number of Americans who endorse the Palestinian cause and perceive the war as a question of human rights and social justice. For Jewish individuals, the struggle is frequently perceived from the

perspective of their identity and sense of belonging to a community. A significant number of individuals of Jewish descent possess a profound emotional attachment to the nation of Israel, perceiving it as a representation of the endurance and strength of the Jewish people. Nevertheless, there is a significant number of Jews who express disapproval towards Israel's policies and actions, perceiving the conflict through the lens of human rights and social justice. Palestinians frequently perceive the war in terms of forced removal and control of their land. A significant number of Palestinians have been forcibly removed from their residences and are currently residing in refugee camps or living under occupation. They saw the war as a question of survival and self-determination, and a significant number of individuals are actively advocating for their rights to reclaim their ancestral territories.

Moreover, the fact that the conflict between Israel and Palestine has attracted significant attention from a global audience is the main justification for using their videos as data. The subject matter has gained significant attention, particularly within the realm of social media platforms. The significance of social media in the context of this conflict has expanded, resulting in heightened worldwide consciousness and involvement with the matter. There are deep political, religious, and racial tensions in the current conflict, which makes finding a lasting solution a difficult task.

There have been some studies about swearwords and offensive language. One of the research done by Ade Ricky Syahril Sahputra and Slamet Setiawan from State University of Surabaya (2019). The title is *Swearword Used by Main Character Shannon Mullins in "The Heat" movie*. The researcher emphasises on the character's kinds, theme, intensity, and base power when swearing. The goals of this study are to categorise the varieties of swearwords uttered by main character Shannon Mullins in the film "The Heat," as well as to define the reasons for the speaker's passion in uttering the swearword, and what base force causes her to swear in this film. According to the findings, there are five varieties of swearword expression, five types of theme, two types of impoliteness viewpoint, and one type of base power. Finally, the researcher learned the sorts and themes of each uttered

swearword, as well as the reasons why the main character used specific swearwords and the base power that supports the main character in stating swearwords in her everyday life.

Alternatively, Venny Christie Sembiring (2019), student of Bina Darma University did a research that was called *Swear Words By Andersson's Theory in The Movie Whiplash*. Using Andersson's theory, the goal of this study is to classify the sorts of swear words and analyse the causes that motivate the characters in the movie to utter the swear words. The descriptive method is used in this study to analyse all of the swear words discovered in the film. The researcher then searched for and downloaded the screenplay on the internet, and finally, using Andersson's theory, detected all of the swear words, organised all of the data, and classed it according to the types and motives. The researcher discovered that Auxiliary swear words are the prevalent kind with 69 data (64,48%) and Linguistics reasons are the dominant motives that encourage the characters to use swear words with 52 data (48,60%) as a result of this investigation. According to the data, most of the characters in this film use swear words to spice up or emphasise their dialogue, implying that not all swear words are used for bad objectives.

Next, there was a study entitled *An Analysis of Taboo Words in The Movie 'Scorsese Casino (2022)* by students of State University of Medan, Grace Rotua Simanjuntak and Fauziah Khairani Lubis. The goal of this research was to identify the types of forbidden words in Scorsese's Casino Movie, delete the taboo phrases, and determine why these offensive language were stated. The descriptive qualitative method was employed in this investigation. This investigation found 68 data points; here are the results of the analysis. In Scorsese's Casino, there are four categories of offensive language: epithet, profanity, vulgarity, and obscenity. Taboo phrases are spoken for four reasons: to bring attention to oneself, to demonstrate contempt, and to be provocative. According to the data, most of the characters in Scorsese's Casino utilise epithet and obscenity to insult; these two sorts of phrases are the most influential. While the primary motive for using banned terms is to

express contempt. As a result, this study is beneficial to the community in that people can take better care of their words when talking by utilising better language.

Other studies from I Komang Mariyanto (2022). He was a student at Mahasaraswati Denpasar University. His thesis was called *An Analysis of Taboo Word Found in Lil Dicky's Song Lyrics on Album Professional Rapper*. The primary goals of this research are to (1) classify the sorts of offensive language found in song lyrics and (2) examine and explain the functions of offensive language utilised in song lyrics. In this study, the descriptive qualitative method was employed to examine the use of banned words in song lyrics. This method was used to provide a clear analysis of data based on the theory presented by Battistella (2005) and Wardhaugh (2006). According to the findings of this study, four types of offensive language appear in the song's lyrics. There are four of them: epithet, profanity, vulgarity, and obscenity. The analysis yielded 295 data points pertaining to the types and functions of offensive language. Obscenity is the most prevalent type found. Obscenity is the most common category seen in the song's lyrics because it is thought to be the most efficient approach to insult someone. Profanity is the least common sort of banned word. Because the performer believes that profanity might successfully undermine other people's dignity, profanity is the least prohibited word in the song's lyrics. The song lyrics use banned terms for four purposes: to exhibit contempt, to draw attention to oneself, to be provocative, and to criticise authority. The most common use discovered is to demonstrate contempt, followed by mocking authority.

Finally, there was a study that is done by Amelia Putrilanel Sinaga, Florence Siregar, Sastha Theresia Pasaribu, and Rahmadsyah Rangkuti (2023). they are students of North Sumatera University. *The study was An Analysis of Taboo Words in Megan Thee Stallion's Song Lyrics on Album "Fever"*. The researchers discussed the different types, purposes, and meanings of the offensive language employed in Megan Thee Stallion's song lyrics. Megan Thee Stallion's album song "fever" used as the study sample, and its words were acquired utilising Google. The researchers applied Wardhaugh and Battistella theories to define the different sorts of offensive

language and their functions. To back up the information, the researcher examined dictionaries, the internet, and papers to find definitions of banned terms in Megan Thee Stallion's song lyrics. Data analysis revealed a total of 442 banned words. The album "fever" by Megan Thee Stallion has the highest percentages of obscenity (36.4%), epithet (34.3%), and vulgarity (28%). Three functions were also discovered to have the highest percentages of employing prohibited words. Some examples include displaying disrespect (45.57%), being offensive (31.41%), and attracting attention (23%). Words that mocked authority were then at the very least utilised.

Based on the foregoing study, it is feasible to conclude that many studies focus on films and song lyrics. This study, on the other hand, tries to investigate how women, in this case Kayla, Katie, and Heba, employ several types of offensive terms associated with women in real-life circumstances relating to the topic of human rights during the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. As a result, the findings of this study may help to fill gaps in the literature on women's offensive language studies in social media. The distinction between past studies and current research is in the object being researched, yet the similarity is that they both investigate offensive language.

1.2 Statement of Problems

Based on the background in the research above, the researcher formulates that there are two questions that will be the main focuses on this research, as follow:

1. What types of offensive language are used by women TikTokers in Free Palestine campaign?
2. How does offensive language function in the video produced by women TikTokers in Free Palestine campaign?

1.3 Research Purposes

Based on the formulation of the research question above, the researcher is intended:

1. To identify offensive language that was used by women TikTokers in Free Palestine campaign.
2. To report the function of offensive language in the video produced by women TikTokers in Free Palestine campaign.

1.4 Research Significances

The researcher expects that the results of this study can be useful and bring some benefits for the use of language, both theoretically and practically.

1. Theoretically, the study contributes to a more complete comprehension of the sociolinguistics subject. In particular, types and the functions of offensive language by women TikTokers in Free Palestine campaign from a theoretical point of view.
2. Practically speaking, readers can use the research to help them understand and apply the sociolinguistics theory that Edwin Battistella and Ronald Wardhaugh proposed. It is also intended that this study can serve as an empirical source for future researchers and readers who are interested in the types and functions of offensive language and will extend this research further in the future.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

This section provides a quick explanation of several noteworthy terms that occur often throughout this research. This section guides and supports the reader and researcher in focusing on the subject. Here's a brief overview of some major terms:

1. Offensive Language

Offensive language refers to words or expressions that we see as morally repugnant or personally hurtful when directed at us. In other words, offensive language is a harmful term to use in public, and in its usage, offensive language refers to a variety of offensive utterances.

2. TikTok

TikTok is a social networking platform that enables users to generate, distribute, and explore short videos. TikTok allows users to generate innovative material, often lasting between 15 seconds to 10 minutes, by utilizing a variety of audio tracks, visual effects, and filters.

