CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an introduction to the study and is divided into five parts. The first part is the research background. This part contains an explanation of the research problem and rationale of the study. The second part is the research question part. This part contains the identification of problems that the study aims to solve. The third part is the writing method. This section contains how the author designed the method used by the author in conducting the study. The fourth part is the significance of the study. This part refers to the potential contributions that the study can make. The last part is the systematic writing. This section provides an overview of the structure and organization of the writing. By including these five key parts, the introduction provides a comprehensive overview of the research study and sets the stage for the rest of the paper.

1.1 Research Background

The phenomenon of swearing is fascinating among many language phenomena in society. In communication, sometimes people have to pour out their emotions by their expressions and chosen words. People will choose the words that are right to express their feelings. Sometimes, people tend to swear to express their emotions. Swearing is simply an action of uttering swear words to vent emotions such as anger and stress, and even to express excitement, closeness, and intimacy. Most people consciously or unconsciously utter swear words. For instance, as cited in Glover by Maria Fe Suganob, on average, people – who for them swearing is a habit – swear roughly 80-90 times a day.[1]

Swearing and taboo language exist in various cultures and languages around the world. While some cultures and languages may have more taboo words than others, it is generally true that most societies have some form of prohibition against certain types of swearing. However, the cultural attitudes towards swearing and taboo language vary across different languages and societies. For instance, in Chinese culture, certain words and expressions are considered taboo

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[1] Maria Fe Suganob-Nicolau, "Swear Words Among Young Learners: A Case Study of Elementary Students", *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching,* 11:2 (Jakarta, October 2016), p. 118.

and are avoided in polite conversation.[2] On the other hand, some languages, such as Hindi, have a rich tradition of swear words and colorful expressions.[3] It is important to note that the use of swearing can be influenced by various social and cultural factors, and can also have different meanings and functions depending on the context in which it is used.[4]

In Indonesia, the culture places great emphasis on politeness and respect, and the use of offensive or vulgar language is generally frowned upon.[5]Children are told by their parents that they should not use swear words. Adults know that they should control their language and where to use and not use swear words.[6] Swearing has shown a significant impact on problems at home, in school, and at the workplace. Society condemns the use of swear words because of the feature of offensiveness that they carry. Swear words are vulgar, shocking, offensive, and hurtful for the addressee – without denying the fact that the use of swearing pragmatically can raise closeness among people. Swearing can inflict emotional pain and disagreement which may lead to quarrels, physical violence, and even a matter of a country. For instance, the world of television in Indonesia has to replace swear words with beep tones for censorship. This shows that swear words are powerful emotionally, physiologically, and of course socially.[7]

Nevertheless, swear words are also important. People use swear words to express the strongest human emotions – in moments of anger, fear, shock, and bliss. Accordingly, swearing plays a central role in verbal communication activities among people in society because it plays one of the important functions of language, namely the motive function. Jay and Janschewitz mentioned that there is no other language as efficient or effective at conveying emotional

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[2] C. Shei, "Chinese taboo words and expressions", *Foreign Language Annals*, 40(3) (USA: March 2007), p. 476.

[3]Timothy Jay, "The Utility and Ubiquity of Taboo Words", *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 4(2) (USA: April 2009), p. 154.

[4] B. J. Sagarin, "Curse words and language universals",*Journal of Politeness Research*, 3(2), (Berlin: 2007), p. 268.

[5] Ross King, "Indonesia: Languages, literacies and literatures", in R. King, N. Huijbregts, & L. M. Tsung (Eds.), *Language and Education in Multilingual Settings*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 156.

[6] https://raisingchildren.net.au/school-age/behaviour/common-concerns/swearing, accessed June 3 2023.

[7] Benjamin K. Bergen, *What The F* (New York: Basic Books, 2016), p. 9.

information as swearing.[8] It implicitly means that swearing is a natural part of human language and this is why swearing is fascinating.

The use of language is an important tool for human communication, and it is expected that individuals should be able to control and adjust their language style to meet the needs of different social contexts. When using language, individuals must consider the function of the language and the norms of language usage in society in order to effectively communicate their ideas and feelings to others. By choosing their language style carefully, individuals can ensure that both the speaker and the listener are able to understand each other, fostering effective and meaningful communication. In this way, language becomes not only a tool for exchanging information, but also a means of building connections and relationships with others.

Choosing the diction and style of language used is very important. There is a proverb that "language reflects who you are." It means that from the type of words a speaker uses, the listeners may see who the speaker is, how he reacts to the situations around them, what his backgrounds are, and what status he has in society. As explained by Blot,

> Language is inescapably a badge of identity…Whenever we open our mouths to speak we provide those who hear us, chosen interlocutors and mere bystanders alike, with a wealth of data, a congeries of linguistic clues others use to position us within a specific social stratum. Our particular uses of language may situate us geographically, physically (by sex or age), ethnically, nationally, and, especially in stratified societies, according to class or caste.[9]

Language is often categorized into different labels such as "polite language," "informal language," "offensive language," "poetic language," and "scientific language," among others. These labels are used to illustrate the various differences in language use and speech forms. Such metalinguistic labels are related to pragmatic effects that can be applied, including the social image of the speaker (such as women or upper-class individuals), the level of formality or politeness in the speaker's relationship with the interlocutor, and the social

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[8] Timothy Jay and Kristin Janschewitz, "The Pragmatics of Swearing", *Journal of Polite Research*, 13: 4 (2008), p. 267.
[9] Richard K. Blot (ed.), *Language and Social Identity* (USA: Praeger, 2006), p. 3.

practices associated with the language use (such as religious, literary, or scientific activities).[10] These labels are generally understood intuitively by speakers of the language, as they reflect the various ways in which language is used in different social contexts.

In sociolinguistics, these different labels are referred to as registers. A register is a language variation based on its domain. In other words, the register is a variation of the language used based on the field of use, style, level of formality, and medium of use. Agha describes a register as a linguistic stock that is interrelated to the practice of social life and the people who practice it.[11] A register is generally linked to systems of language style and its components are the easiest recognizable pieces. This means that registers are connected to specific styles of language use, and these styles are made up of identifiable components that distinguish them from each other.[12] For example, the language used in a legal setting will have its own specific vocabulary, grammar, and tone that are different from the language used in a casual conversation among friends. From its function, the register is distinguished from various kinds of practice in social life, for example, conversation related to law, medicine, education, etiquette, observance of respect, status, and gender. Therefore, registers are capable of making one catch - even at a glance - the background of a speaker. The register can also reveal and reflect social processes, such as occupations, contexts, specific activities, and the specialty of the speaker. A register helps people to construct the interlocutors' identity at a specific time or place.

Accordingly, a person has more than one role in society. A student at Ledalero Institute of Philosophy and Creative Technology as a candidate for the priesthood or a religious brother, for example, is a young male philosophy student from a particular ethnicity with a unique background, and belongs a religious congregation. These facts affect the way he speaks. People who do not know his background as a religious brother can easily capture that he is a religious brother only by the way he speaks. When he uses philosophical terms, people know that

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[10] Edwin L., "Bad Language Are Some Words Better Than Others", *Philosophy and Literature*, 27:1, (USA: 2003), pp. 117-120.
[11] Asif Agha, "Registers of Language," in Alessandro Duranti (ed.), *A Companion to Linguistic Anthropology* (USA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), pp. 23-45.
[12] *Ibid.*

he is a philosophy student or at least people can assume that he studies philosophy. Thus, he cannot use only one variation of language. He cannot use philosophical terms with his younger brother at home because they would not understand him. He has to play another role at home, talk to his younger brother as a "common" brother, and change his spoken language style. People's language indeed reflects who they are, but at the same time, they play many roles in society. Therefore, people should modify their language based on the context around them.

Swearing can be considered a register in linguistic terms.[13] A register is a variety of a language used for a particular purpose or in a specific social setting. Swearing is a type of language use that is associated with informal, emotional, or colloquial contexts and is often characterized by the use of vulgar or taboo words. In this sense, swearing can be considered a specific register of language use that is used to express strong emotions and convey informality or intimacy. It is a distinctive form of language that is distinct from other forms of language use. For example, sociolinguist Penelope Eckert defines register as "a variety of language that is used for a particular purpose or in a particular social setting."[14] This definition highlights the idea that swearing is a specialized form of language use that is distinct from other types of language use, such as formal or polite speech.

In most social settings, including religious communities, the use of swear words is generally considered inappropriate. Religious brothers are expected to use language that is respectful and dignified, particularly in the presence of fellow members, superiors, and during religious ceremonies. Swearing may be seen as disrespectful or irreverent and can influence how they are perceived by outsiders. Members of the public may hold religious brothers to a higher standard of behavior, and the use of swear words may be incongruous with their religious commitment. Furthermore, the use of swearing can damage the reputation of the brother or the community as a whole. Linguistically, religious brothers are expected to have a distinguished language style and should not swear. Swear words carry offensiveness and can cause disputes, which goes against the

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[13] Timothy Jay and Kristin Janschewitz,*loc. cit.*
[14] Penelope Eckert, *Jocks and Burnouts: Social Categories and Identity in the High School* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1989), p. 21.

expectations and norms of their religious community, and may be seen as disrespectful or inappropriate.

It is likely that brothers use swear words. This raises several important questions that warrant further investigation, such as "what specific types of swearing brothers use," "why they swear," "how swearing is expressed," and "what factors influence their use of swear words."However, answering these questions requires referencing existing research, which is limited in this area. Some argue that swearing is difficult to study, and many linguists are hesitant to openly discuss the topic due to its taboo nature. Swear words are often viewed as vulgar or inappropriate, which may contribute to the lack of research in this field.

Swearing is a topic that has not been extensively researched in the Indonesian context. This is because most linguists in Indonesia tend to focus on the theme of euphemism[15] rather than swearing or swear words. Additionally, data on swear words in Indonesian is rare, making it difficult to study. Furthermore, due to cultural norms and values, people in Indonesia tend to avoid using swear words.[16]

While research on swearing in the Indonesian context is limited, there have been some theses that have explored the phenomenon of swearing or swear words, such as the writing of Hendri Aditya, Albertus Rahadion Astoto, Permadi, and Ririn Susetyaningsih. However, most of these studies focus on how swear words are portrayed in films, movies, or radio broadcasting. Their writing will be explained by the writer in the second chapter. Notably, no research has been conducted on the use of swear words among religious brothers.

The writer is interested in conducting a study on swearing among religious brothers, given their unique position in society and the perception that they are far removed from the use of swear words. The writer hopes to explore why religious brothers use swear words and what specific types of swear words are used. It is worth noting that some of the examples provided in the study may be considered vulgar. The writer views this study as an important contribution to the field of linguistics, in line with Timothy Jay's assertion that the phenomenon of swearing

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[15] Euphemism is a mild or pleasant word or phrase that is used instead of one that is unpleasant or offensive. For example, using "eliminate" as a euphemism for "kill", see Merriam-Webster, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2003), p. 256.
[16] I. D. P. Wijana & M.Rohmadi, *Sosiolinguistik: Kajian Teori dan Analisis*(Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu, 2015), p. 112.

deserves attention from psychologists, linguists, and others interested in language and communication.[17] As such, the writer plans to conduct a sociolinguistic case study of students at Ledalero Institute of Philosophy and Creative Technology, with the title of the research being "**Swearing Among Religious Brothers: A Sociolinguistic Case Study of Scalabrinian Brothers Studying at Ledalero Institute of Philosophy and Creative Technology**".

1.2 Research Questions

Before formulating research questions, it is essential to identify the research problem or issue. In this study, the issue at hand is the use of swear words by Scalabrinian brothers studying at Ledalero Institute of Philosophy and Creative Technology. The use of offensive or vulgar language is generally considered inappropriate in religious communities, where members are expected to conduct themselves with dignity and respect. Therefore, the use of swear words by religious brothers is an issue that requires further investigation. This study aims to explore the types of swearing used by the brothers, the reasons behind their use of offensive language, the nonverbal cues associated with the use of swear words, and the factors that influence their use of such language. To achieve this aim, the following research questions have been formulated:

1. What are the types of swearing used by the Scalabrinian brothers studying at Ledalero Institute of Philosophy and Creative Technology?
2. Why do the Scalabrinian brothers studying at Ledalero Institute of Philosophy and Creative Technology swear?
3. How do Scalabrinian brothers studying at Ledalero Institute of Philosophy and Creative Technology use nonverbal cues in uttering swearing?
4. What factors influence the use of swear words among the Scalabrinian brothers studying at Ledalero Institute of Philosophy and Creative Technology?

By exploring these questions, this study aims to shed light on the use of offensive language in religious communities and provide insight into the factors that contribute to the use of swear words by religious brothers. This research will

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[17] Timothy Jay and Kristin Janschewitz, *op. cit.* p. 268.

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contribute to a better understanding of language use in religious communities and highlight the importance of respectful and dignified communication in such settings.

1.3 Writing Method

This study focuses on two main variables: swearing and the Scalabrinian brothers studying at Ledalero Institute of Philosophy and Creative Technology. The use of language in a social context is a fundamental aspect of sociolinguistics, and this study adopts a descriptive-qualitative approach, specifically utilizing the case study method.

The researcher employed a triangulation method to gather data on the use of swearing among Scalabrinian brothers studying at Ledalero Institute of Philosophy and Creative Technology. This method involves using three data collection techniques to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied. The three methods used were observation, survey, and interview. The first data collection method involved observation, where the researcher observed the daily activities of the religious brothers and took note of instances where they used swear words. The observation process took place over a period of several weeks to ensure that enough data was gathered. The second data collection method was a survey, which involved the distribution of a questionnaire to the brothers to gather information about their use of swear words. The survey was designed to be anonymous to encourage honest and open responses from the participants. The third data collection method involved interviews, where the researcher conducted one-on-one interviews with selected religious brothers to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences and attitudes towards swearing. The interviews were semi-structured, allowing the researcher to ask follow-up questions and explore the participants' responses in more detail.

1.4 Research Objective and Significance of the Research

The aim of this study is to investigate the types of swearing used by the Scalabrinian brothers studying at Ledalero Institute of Philosophy and Creative Technology, explore their reasons for swearing, examine how they use nonverbal cues in uttering swearing, and identify the factors that influence their use of swearing.

Moreover, since the research on the phenomenon of swearing is lacking, this research is expected to add new perspectives in the current studies that concern the phenomenon of swearing. The significance of the study lies in its contribution to our understanding of swearing behavior in religious communities like the Scalabrinian brothers studying at Ledalero Institute of Philosophy and Creative Technology. This study can provide valuable insights into the different types of swearing used by the brothers, the reasons behind their use, and the influence of nonverbal cues on their swearing behavior. Additionally, the study can reveal the factors that drive the utilization of swear words in this specific community.

The results of the study can inform future research on the communication patterns and cultural norms of religious communities, and contribute to the development of more effective communication strategies within these groups. Moreover, the study's findings can have practical implications for those working in fields related to communication, education, and religious studies. In summary, the significance of the study lies in its potential to deepen our understanding of swearing behavior and to inform and improve communication within religious communities.

1.5 Organisation Structure of the Writing

This thesis is a comprehensive exploration of a swearing phenomenon among Scalabrinian brothers studying at Ledalero Institute of Philosophy and Creative Technology. It is structured into five chapters that build upon each other to form a unified thesis content. Chapter I serves as a preliminary chapter that sets the stage for the thesis. It describes the research background, the research questions, the writing method, the purpose of the study, and the organizational structure of the thesis. The chapter provides readers with a clear overview of the thesis and what to expect from each subsequent chapter.

Chapter II is dedicated to the literature review. Here, the author provides a critical review of existing theories and research related to the study topic. The chapter is divided into three major parts. The first part discusses relevant theories, providing a theoretical foundation for the research. The second part reviews studies that have been conducted on swearing, examining their methodologies and

findings. The third part presents the theoretical framework, which guides the analysis and interpretation of the data in Chapter IV.

Chapter III focuses on research methodology. This chapter is structured into four parts that detail the research design, participants and research setting, data collection process, and data analysis process. The chapter provides readers with a comprehensive understanding of how the research was conducted, including the tools, procedures, and techniques used to collect and analyze the data. The chapter also describes the context in which the research was conducted, offering readers insight into the environment and participants that were studied.

Chapter IV is the findings and discussions chapter. This chapter presents the results of the study and their discussion. The chapter is divided into four sub-chapters, each addressing one of the research questions outlined in Chapter I. The first sub-chapter examines the types of swearing used by the religious brothers and classifies them using Ljung's theory and criteria of themes and functions. The second sub-chapter investigates the motives behind the use of swear words among the brothers, utilizing Andersson's theory to identify psychological and social motives. The third sub-chapter analyzes the non-verbal language of swearing, using the theory of multimodal communication to examine the verbal, vocal, and kinesic aspects. The final sub-chapter explores the factors that influence the use of swear words among the brothers, drawing upon Jay's theory to determine the relevant factors. By structuring the findings and discussion in this way, the chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of the swearing phenomenon among religious brothers, linking the results back to the research questions and objectives.

Finally, Chapter V is the conclusion and recommendation chapter. Here, the author summarizes the findings of the study and offers recommendations for future research. The chapter provides readers with a clear understanding of the implications of the research and its potential impact on the field. It also offers suggestions for how the results of the study can be utilized in practical settings.