

## Swear Words Used by The Mobile Legends Game Players

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### ABSTRACT

This study is done to analyze the types and functions of swear words used by the Mobile Legends players, and the types of swear words appearing in each function. This Sociolinguistic study is conducted applying the theory of Holmes (2013). supported by the theories of Montagu (2001) on swear words, Wijana and Rohmadi (2007) for the types of swear words, and (Ljung, 2011) for functions of swear words. Moreover, this study was done by using the qualitative participative method, utilizing the transcribed data that was used in the analysis. The findings revealed that the Mobile Legends players used six (6) types of swear words: activity, animal, circumstance, part of body, profession, thing. In term of functions, there were eleven (11) functions of swear words: 1)anaphoric use of epithet, 2]expressing high degree of meaning: adjective intensifier, 3)indicating that the speaker dislikes: disliked adjective, 4)giving emphasis on adjective or adverb, 5)interjection: anger, 6)interjection: surprise, 7)interjection: pain, 8)interjection: even joy, 9)interjection: disappointment, 10)interjection: incredulity, and 11)expressing speaker's wish in order to harm: informal cursing. In addition, there were different types of swear words found in each function. To conclude, analyzing swear word types, functions, and the relation between types in each function contribute some understanding about the swear words used during the Mobile Legends game situation.

**Keywords:** mobile legends; participative qualitative; swear words; types; and functions

### INTRODUCTION

Sharing information and making arguments with others, language serves as both a tool and a symbol of human communication. According to Keraf (2005:1), language is specifically defined as a medium of communication between members of society that takes the form of sound symbols created by speaking. In line with that, interacting with others may happen in a variety of settings, including the job, public home, school, and internet. People specifically utilize their language to communicate in cyberspace on social media, websites, and online gaming. The multiplayer online game has participants that are connected through a network. Players can connect to a LAN or the Internet, and the network might be wired or wireless. The wireless connection uses 4G mobile broadband WiMAX, LTE, Bluetooth, or WiFi. Players participate in a distributed virtual gaming world while connecting over a network. These virtual worlds resemble enduring social and material settings and are loosely organized by unrestricted (fantasy or fictitious) storylines. Players are mostly free to act anyway they wish in these settings.

In the game Mobile Legends, the goal is to take down the opponent team's tower. Five participants make up one group, and each of them is allowed to play one hero. In this game, a map is separated into three paths: center, top, and bottom. Three towers make up each segment of the route. This online game has been popular across a variety of demographics globally. On September 24, 2016, a Chinese game developer named Moonton launched this game, which has now received over 100 million downloads. The teams will communicate utilizing the communication facilities

offered by the game developer while the game is in progress or when deciding on the formation before playing. By pressing the microphone button on the left side of the screen, players can communicate verbally with their teammates exclusively.

The participants frequently communicate with one another in their native tongue, which might lead to misunderstandings about the intent of their words and writing. Additionally, many people who play mobile games have a tendency to curse or use other languages that have a profound emotional impact on them when they are angry or depressed. Swear words are associated with negative things throughout many countries and cultures. Swearing is more than just using words that sound nasty, disrespectful, or improper. Additionally, there are several factors that contribute to swearing. The intentions of the speakers will determine the reasons for using expletives, such as to offend, amuse, or signify friendliness. In order for us to understand the types, purposes, and context with regard to the other players in the game, I want to break down the various swear words and how they are used in gaming.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

A quick introduction in the Mobile Legends game is presented in this section. They consist of Montagu's idea of profanity and Holmes' (2013) sociolinguistics theory (2001). Additionally, I have included the idea of swear word types by Wijaya and Rohmadi's (2007) theory of swear word function by Ljung's (2011).

### **Sociolinguistics**

The purpose of this study is to clarify why humans communicate differently in various social circumstances. Their focus is on figuring out how speech serves social purposes and communicates social meaning. A plethora of knowledge about language, social interactions in a society, and how people express and build elements of their social identity through their language may be learned through observing how people use language in various social circumstances (Holmes, 2013). Additionally, the main topic discussed or examined in sociolinguistics is the review of language in the context of social and cultural, linguistic connecting factors, speech traits, linguistic diversity, circumstance, social factors, and artistic, as well as the review of the social functions and the use of language in society.

### **Concept of Swear Words**

Using profanity or harsh statements is against etiquette since most people view them as blasphemous. The justification given above further demonstrates that offensive words are those that are not recommended. Additionally, profanity is regularly used in casual interactions. Because of this, swear words are often used to communicate strong emotions. The listeners will be affected differently when you use foul language. According to Montagu (2001), the term "motherfucker" has a negative connotation and is frequently used by Black people as a slur, profanity, epithet, and intensifier. Therefore, it frequently causes violent reactions when used in the personal sense of intensely unpleasant and conflicted feelings. Rensus Hartogs, a psychiatrist with extensive experience working with adolescent offenders in New York, claims that there is a great deal of emotional dread associated with the epithet "motherfucker."

The sexual phrases motherfucker and fuck are scored higher than bastard and bitch among swear words. Sexual anatomy is prioritized above damnation and hell, including the ass, asshole,

feces, cunt, and dick (p. 19). As a result, the level of offensiveness of each curse word changes through time and differs from swear words from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In addition, regardless matter how foul the language is, the main targets are always the same: sex, religion, and bodily excretions.

### **Types of Swear Words**

Based on Wijana and Rohmadi (2007, p. 119-124) the types of swear words can be categorized as the invective system in Indonesian. The explanation of each of these types is as follows:

#### a) Circumstance

The most typical linguistic unit employed to communicate curses appears to be phrases that denote an unpleasant condition. In general, three things—a mental condition—can or may be related to this unpleasant state, such as being mad (*gila*), an idiot, crazy (*sinting*), dumb (*bodoh*), or a fool (*tolol*), among many others. This kind of curse is said when one is really agitated, and it produces an attitude that is quite noticeable to the one being cursed.

#### b) Animals

Animal-related linguistic units are figuratively employed. That is, just those traits of the animal that are comparable to or similar to the person or circumstance that is the object of insults.

#### c) The Ghost

The phrases ghost (*setan*), (*setan alas*), and *Iblis* are three that are frequently used to utter curses that relate to ghosts. Everybody has a spirit that frequently messes with people's daily lives.

#### d) Things

Identical to the names of spirits and animals, Objects that are frequently used to curse have names that are also connected to poor references.

e) Body Parts Particular body parts that are directly tied to sexual activity are highly private and are not allowed to be mentioned in public, with the exception of certain forums. These body parts are frequently used to communicate curses.

#### f) Kinships

Several kinship terms, such as mothers (*ibu*), fathers (*bapak*), grandfathers (*kakek*), grandmothers (*nenek*), and so on, relate to reputable people or typically impart excellent values and morals to the younger generation.

#### g) Occupation

Language users frequently utilize a person's occupation, especially a poor profession or one that is prohibited by religion, to curse or convey his dissatisfaction.

#### h) Activities

Swear phrases that have bad associations with certain behaviors. Some of the terms are often used by East Java-based Indonesian speakers.

### **Function of Using Swear Words**

According to Ljung's (2011) argument in his book *Swearing Cross-Cultural Linguistic Study*, swearing serves two key purposes. Based on its purposes, swearing may be divided into numerous categories. The speaker's intent distinguishes the function of cursing.

#### **1. Stand alone**

##### **a. Interjections**

Interjections are utterances of swear words expressing surprise, pain, fear, anger, disappointment, even joy, emphatic, disagreement, incredulity, and speaker stance. Moreover, stated by Ljung (2011) Expletive interjections are often used to show the speaker's reaction in a certain situation, such as an unexpected accident that may cause anger and irritation.

##### **b. Curse**

Curse basically expresses the speaker's desire to harm another person. There are two types of curse, namely serious cursing (formal) and non-serious cursing (informal) (Ljung, 2011: 108). In serious cursing, the speaker believes that curse can bring harm into another person's life.

##### **c. Unfriendly suggestion**

Unfriendly suggestions are used to express aggression directed at somebody. It is not a real suggestion even if the literal meaning may encourage such interpretation.

#### **2. Slot filler**

##### **a. Adverbial or adjectival intensifier**

Based on Ljung (2011) Adverbial or adjectival intensifier is to express a high degree meaning of the following adjective or adverb. The intensifier has the same function as very, highly, or extremely.

##### **b. Adjectives of dislike**

Adjective of dislike or disliked adjective is used to indicate that the speaker dislikes the referent of the following pronoun, usually a human being or inanimate things.

##### **c. Emphasis**

This type of slot-filler is used to put stress on the following noun so the attention focuses on the noun. In other cases, it appears after the interrogative pronoun or adverb.

#### d. Anaphoric use of epithet

According to Ljung (2011:34) Epithet is a swear word that is classified into a noun. The examples of the anaphoric use of epithet are *asshole*, *bastard*, *bugger*, *motherfucker*, *son of a bitch*.

## METHODS

The study's methodology is qualitative. According to Cresswell (2013) and Dornyei (2007), a qualitative study has the following qualities: (1) The writer served as the main research tool; (2) The data analysis result was descriptive or verbally communicated; and (3) The data comprised films that had been textually transcribed. (4) The conclusion was based on the writer's analysis of the information. Ashley (2021) suggested the participatory qualitative approach, which I also utilized. The mobile game on the smartphone served as the data source. I played Mobile Legends: Bang Bang after downloading it from the Play Store. In the games, I made advantage of the voice call function. The information was restricted to swear words spoken by my teammates and included only the four other players in our squad, not including the writer. The foul language spoken by players throughout the game has been highlighted or bolded.

In collecting the data, Several steps were applied by me to get the data as a whole. First, four of my pals and I played the game. The game lasted 17 minutes and 19 seconds when it was recorded on September 27, 2021. Five participants were allegedly anticipated to play together in the same area of the home, but one of the competitors was a person Vincent met online. As a result, he talked to the other players through the voice call. As a result, there were three other players there while I was having fun in my home. The participants' conversations throughout the game were recorded and afterwards typed up. I recorded every word said by my squad throughout a single game since we were unable to communicate verbally with the other side. The two-digit numbering scheme was used to provide numbers to each statement made throughout the dialogue. The speakers are identified by the first digit, while the utterance is identified by the second digit.

In the first stage, I looked up each curse word using the appendix's transcription to get further information. I then translated the transcription of the dialogues into Bahasa. Then, using the numbering scheme I outlined in the previous section on data gathering, I entered each word that was said. Additionally, I bolded every swear word that was said by participants throughout the game. In addition, I divided and categorized the curse words that I discovered in the screenplay into the various sorts and roles in the columns. I described the type, purpose, and setting of the profanity used. Finally, I assembled all the information to determine the kind and purpose of expletives.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

There were six (6) types of swear words and eleven (11) functions of swear words found in the transcribed data.

### 1. Types of Swear Words

This part discusses the types of swear words uttered by the players in the Mobile Legends game.

**Activity:** I found there are eight (8) swear words related to the activity. The terms are *ancik* (meaning engaging in sexual activity), *bacot* (thrash discourse), *cok*, *cuk*, *hancik* (engaging in sexual activity), *hancok*, *jancok*, and *ngentot* (fucking).

**Animal:** I discovered five (5) curse words with an animal theme. *cur* (bitch), *asu* (dog), *kirik* (literally, "puppy"), *anjir* (dog), and *jangkrik* (cricket) were among the curse words that arose

**Circumstance:** Broadly speaking there is something that can or may be connected with this unpleasant state, which is a mental state. In my investigation, I discovered nine (9) curse words that are relevant to the sort of event. Swear words such *bangsat* (bastard), *brengsek* (asshole), *bodoh* (stupid), *cacat* (defect), *elek* (sucks), *gaonok otak* (brainless), *goblok* (dumbass), *jamput* (damn), and *jamput* were used.

**Part of Body:** They are extremely private and may only be spoken about in certain forums. In the data analysis, I came across eight (8) curse words that were associated with a bodily component. *Cangkemmu* (your mouth), *cukimay* (vagina), *jembut* (pubic hair), *kontol* (prick), *matamu* (your eyes), *mbot* (an acronym for pubic hair), *memek* (cunt), and *selet* (ass) are examples of curse words.

**Profession:** Mobile Legends users frequently use these profanity-related terms to curse or show irritation, particularly if the profession is one that is beneath them or is prohibited by their religion. I discovered three (3) profanity-related curse phrases. Examples of the terms in context are *bajingan* (crook or bastard), *cung* (lackey), and *lonte* (whore).

**Things:** The names of items that are frequently used in cursing and are also connected to offensive references are included in this list of curse words. Five (5) curse phrases that were connected to various topics, were discovered. For instance, the phrases *gateli* (waste in the genital region), *guateli* (short for *gateli* and having the same meaning), *shit* (crap/waste), *taek* (waste), and *telek* are similar terms (chicken faeces).

## 2. Functions of Swear Word

As shown in the table, eleven (11) functions were found from the analysis. Each type of the functions will be explained, presented below.

**Anaphoric Use of Epithet:** The result of the analysis revealed that there was one example from this function.

- Data 3.56 “*Lho Darwin iku Smartfren selet!*” (Whoa, Darwin is using Smartfren **asshole!**)

The function of swear words used by Vinci was to replace and call Joshua’s name to call him as ‘*selet*’.

**Expressing High Degree of Meaning: Adjective Intensifier:** The intensifier has the same function as very, highly, or extremely. It elevates the meaning of the modified words

- Data 2.16 “*Cung guoblok cok, isok di leboni cok*” (**Damn** he’s so **fucking stupid**, he goes to him **fuck**)

The function of the swear word is to intensify the sentence showing the enemy's stupidity in order to make the enemy look very stupid.

**Indicating That the Speaker Dislikes: Disliked Adjective:** The result of the analysis showed that the players of Mobile Legends used a disliked adjective function.

- Data 5.44 “*Wush! Wush! **Gaonok otak***” (Whoa! Whoa! **Brainless** enemy)

The function why Jonathan said this swear word is to show dislike to the enemy hero, Lancelot because the enemy was so annoying.

**Giving Emphasis on Adjective or Adverb:** The data analysis of this study showed the players employed the emphasis function in the swear words, as shown in following examples.

- Data 4.7 “*Oh kelemahan e gitu, kelemahan e gitu **bacod, memek!***” (That's the weakness, you **talking too much, cunt!**)

The function of the swear words is to give emphasis to what the player said in order to give repetition to Joshua's sentence.

#### **Interjection: Expressing Anger**

- Data 2.58 “*Wes lah **kontol!** pengganggu e dipateni sek*” (Okay you **prick!** This disturber should be killed first)

The function was to express annoyed feeling, later on became anger because the enemy bothered the speaker so much

#### **Interjection: Expressing Incredulity**

- Data 2.9 “*Hah? **Matamu** ndi ono **cok***” (Huh? **Your eyes** how come that happened **fuck**)

The function was to give hesitation about the new updated rules in the game. The speaker showed distrust to the gameplay.

#### **Interjection: Expressing Surprise**

- Data 2.48 “*Oh iki Malay a **cok asu!** Iyo Malay iki*” (Oh, these enemies are from Malaysia **fucking bitches!** Yes they are from Malaysia)

The function was to show surprise feelings because the speaker just knew where the enemies came from.

#### **Interjection: Expressing Pain**

- Data 5.9 “***Cuk** Cyclops apa apaan ini sakit sekali*” (**Fuck!** Cyclops's damage is so painful)

The speaker showed pain because his hero almost died after getting attacked by the opponent. Also by saying “cuk” and “painful damage” he gave stress to his pain.

### Interjection: Expressing Joy

- Data 4.12 “*Celaka kau Yarjit ngentot, hahaha*” (Woe to you **fucking** Yarjit, hahaha)

The speaker also expresses his happiness by laughing at Joshua’s stupidity. The function of Vincent’s sentence is showing an excited feeling that Vincent can make fun of Joshua.

### Interjection: Expressing Disappointment

- Data 3.54 “*Tiwas PD aku mang, ancok ono ulti maneh*” (I am confident enough to get him, but he has his ulti **fuck**)

The speaker uttered swear words to show his disappointment because he wasted his chance to get the enemy.

**Expressing Speaker’s Wish in Order to Harm: Informal Cursing:** The informal cursing is used to express the speaker’s dislike towards something or someone. The result of data analysis showed the Mobile Legends players used informal cursing to mock other players.

- Data 2.29 “*Cok makro koyok taek!*” (**Fuck** your macro ability is a piece of **shit!**)

The function of the swear word uttered was to mock and describe that Joshua’s action was very careless so the speaker described him as ‘*taek*’.

### 3. Types of Swear Words that can be Identified for Each Function

Based on the data analysis that I have done, in this section I discuss about the types of swear words that can be found in every function produced by the Mobile Legends players

#### Types of Swear Words Found in Anaphoric Use of Epithet

Referring to the table of the findings analysis I have revealed there was only one type identified in this function which is part of the body. The analysis showed that part of the body is the only function that suits anaphoric use of epithet because the Mobile Legends players in the game rarely called their friend or enemy with epithet or swear words.

- Data 3.56 “*Lho Darwin iku Smartfren selet!*” (Whoa, Darwin is using Smartfren **asshole!**) (part of body)

#### Types of Swear Words Found in Expressing High Degree of Meaning: Adjective Intensifier

Based on the result of the analysis shown in the table, there were four (4) types in this function: activity, animal, circumstance, and profession.

- Data 5.2 “*Odette saiki absorb e ngaur cur ko Iwin*” (Now this **bitch** Odette is having great health absorb Ko Iwin) (animal)

#### Types of Swear Words Found in Indicating the Speaker Dislikes: Disliked Adjective



Based on the result of the analysis I have observed, there were three (3) types found in this function: activity, circumstance, and thing.

- Data 5.55 “*Taek iki!*” (This a **piece of shit**) (thing)

#### **Types of Swear Words Found in Emphasis on Adjective or Adverb**

As listed in the result of the analysis, I have identified five (5) types of swear words found in this function: activity, animal, part of body, profession, and thing.

- Data 4.6 “*Missing orang e kirik!*” (Someone’s missing, **bitch!**) (animal)

#### **Types of Swear Words Appeared in Interjection: Expressing Anger**

According to the analysis I have uncovered in the table there were six (6) types of swear words included in expressing anger’s function: activity, animal, circumstance, part of body, profession, and thing.

- Data 2.60 “*Sidelane lonte!*” ( you are **a whore** sidelaner!) (profession)

#### **Types of Swear Words Found in Interjection: Expressing Incredulity**

Looking from analysis, there were two (2) types of swear words belonging to this function: activity and part of body. When playing, the game players can use the word “*matamu*”, “*ndasmu*”, or other parts of the body to show hesitation to believe something.

- Data 2.9 “*Hah? Matamu ndi ono cok*” (Huh? **Your eyes** how come that happened **fuck**) (part of body, activity)

#### **Types of Swear Words Found in Interjection: Expressing Surprise**

As listed in the data and table of analysis I have found here were three (3) types of swear words identified in this expression of surprise. The types that were found were activity, animal, and part of the body.

#### **Types of Swear Words Found in Interjection: Expressing Pain**

As mentioned in the data and table of analysis above, I have seen there was only one (1) type of swear word related to this function: activity.

#### **Types of Swear Words Found in Interjection: Expressing Even Joy**

As we can see from the analysis, there were three (3) types of swear words belonging to this function: activity, body, and profession.

#### **Types of Swear Words Found in Interjection: Expressing Disappointment**

Based on the data of the findings, there were four (4) types of swear words about disappointment function: activity, animal, circumstance, part of body.

### Types of Swear Words Found in Expressing Speaker's Wish to Harm Others: Informal Cursing

As mentioned in the findings, there were four (4) types of swear words for this function: activity, circumstance, part of body, and thing.

- Data 3.42 “*Sok iye lu cuki!*” (Do not be pretentious, you cunt!) (part of body)

### CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the purpose of this study was to determine how the swear words used by Mobile Legends players may be categorized according to their types and purposes. On September 27, 2021, a game was played. It lasted for around 17 minutes. It became the source of data for my study, based on Holmes' (2013) sociolinguistics theory, supported by Wijana and Rohmadi (2007) and Ljung (2011). Explored the varieties and purposes of swear words, which were the sources for the study and theory of swear words that I used.

The findings revealed there are six sorts of swearing: activity, animal, occasion, a portion of the body, occupation, and object. The results of this study confirmed this. Additionally, this study demonstrated that swear words have eleven (11) different functions based on Ljung's (2011) hypothesis. The results also identified the different categories of expletives used in each of the eleven functions. I recommend that future scholars conduct research on the English swear words.

Additionally, it might be proposed that a subsequent study be done on swear words with a focus on other online games on any platform, including PCs, smartphones, and game consoles. Finally, I also hope that the results of this study will contribute to the field in question.

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