

Constructing the Character of Deadpool through Swearing Words Exploitation: A Sociolinguistic Analysis of Deadpool 2 Movie

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ABSTRACT

This study is a qualitative research implementing sociolinguistic approach which aims to gain deeper insights on swearing words exploited in Deadpool 2 movie by the main character of the film. Focusing on the analysis of types and functions of swearing words, the data of this study were taken in the form of utterances produced by Wade Wilson or Deadpool as the main character of the film containing swearing words. Using the conceptual framework of swearing words and their functions proposed by Anderson & Trudgill (1990) and theory of types of swearing words suggested by Battistella (2005), the result of the analysis of this study reveals that the use of swearing words by a character in a film as directed by the director provides a unique way to understand the basic characteristics of the character. Through the analysis of this research, despite having traumatic background and producing more swearing words than any other characters in the film, Wade Wilson can be considered somewhat of a good person worthy of the title ‘superhero’.

1. INTRODUCTION

As humans, we are drawn to one another and communicate with each other in a variety of capacities (Yemi & Faleti, 2017). Language is a device to communicate among people in the society, and it is made for uniting people around the world. In its use, language has purposes. According to Savignon (1983), “the use to which language is put, the purpose of an utterance rather than the particular grammatical form an utterance takes”. Language has several functions one of which is to express feeling or behavior. For example, a speaker/writer expresses his/her emotion through exclamation and/or swearing.

The production of swearing words to express emotion cannot be defined in a simple sentence. There are some factors influencing the production of swearing words with cultural and social factors are the most influential factors among others. Generally, the use of language, which in this case takes form as swearing words, is both influenced by and influential to the culture where the speaker/writer lives within (Goodenough, 1957). However, one cannot discuss the concept of culture without implicitly defining society. The relation between language and society is very much clearer and more explicitly seen through the exploitation of language in daily activities. To gain an understanding about this kind of theme, Sociolinguistics takes the stage to function as a study that assumes that human society is made up of many related patterns and behaviors in linguistic projections (Spolsky, 2008). To come to the point, Sociolinguistics is a field of study that concerns with how language is used in society. Sociolinguistics tells us what messages people are really giving when people speak, messages that are not put into actual words, how and why people feel uncomfortable, even hostile to other people in the perspective of language’s relation to social matters. In this scope, the discussion of swearing words suits best, not only to understand the real meaning of the utterance as done through pragmatic approach but also to explore the background and effect of the swearing words in cultural and social terms.

Anderson & Trudgill (1990) could be the first to give a clear distinction on words that are regarded as swearing, and those considered as taboo. Even though there is a close relation between taboo and swearing words which makes them somewhat similar, people tend to relate something as taboo to be said when they are considered vulgar, without having any feelings or attitudes expressed by the speaker/writer uttering them (p.55). On the other hand, swearing word is simply a bad language with intention(s) of giving attitudes or feelings to express in the making (p.53). This distinction makes every word considered as taboo not always function as swearing word, but swearing words may take taboo forms.

While most swearing words are categorized as taboo expressions, some of them are in the forms of words that are considered 'holy' for some people. This type of swearing words is defined by Battistella (2005:72) as profanity. However, swearing words taking forms of taboo words are classified into epithet which is usually realized through attribution to a noun (subject or object) as animals or least-respected professions such as whore (p. 73), vulgarity which takes sexual parts of human body as the projection (p. 74) and obscenity which use less vulgar words than vulgarity, such as excretory parts of human body or sexual activities (p. 75).

Using swearing words can create problems for many people if they do not understand the desired function of the speaker/writer expressing them. In this case, Andersson & Trudgill (1990) provide a sophisticated classification of functions of swearing words. The first function of swearing word is called expletive swearing, which is to express a speaker's/writer's emotion, e. g. shock, anger, joy, sadness, etc. The second function is called abusive swearing which, as clear as its name, aims to hurt other people's feelings through verbal offenses, insults, and attacks. The other two functions are humorous which aims to get people attention in a good way and auxiliary swearing directed to emphasize the intention of the production of utterances by the speaker/writer.

A lot of researchers have examined swearing words that are produced in movies. Studies conducted by Maulidiatsani (2015), Khoirunnisa (2016), Permadi (2017), Rahmadi (2017), Yuningsih (2015), Januarto (2017), Esterika (2016), Pupitasari (2017), Mahamurah (2015), and Dewi (2017) have only emphasized types and reasons of using swearing words without mentioning the function of swearing words. Furthermore, there are some categories used to analyze types of swearing words used by the speaker. However, the function has important roles in swearing words, because swearing words are used to stimulate the hearer to understand the function and meaning of the utterance. In other words, the speakers want to deliver a meaning behind the utterance (Grundy 1995:40).

Based on the review above, many researchers still leave problems which can further be examined more deeply. First, they have not discussed the functions used in the use of swearing words. In other words the previous researchers have only emphasized on the types and categories of swearing words without mentioning the function of swearing words. Besides, there are some researchers who have only explained functions without mentioning the types and categories used in swearing words.

In exploring types and functions of swearing words more deeply, the study finds it suitable to analyze *Deadpool 2* as an object study because the main character in *Deadpool 2* does not reflect the behavior as a hero in general, he speaks bad words and does negative deeds instead. Within the context of traumatic background that *Deadpool* has and a harsh society he lives in, this study raises questions of types and the functions of swearing words produced by the main character. Through answering those questions, this research attempts to describe the trends and issue in the social and/or even cultural level.

2. METHOD

This research applies descriptive-qualitative method by analyzing and describing the utterances of the character Wade Wilson as *Deadpool* in the movie *Deadpool 2* to identify the types and functions of swearing words using sociolinguistic approach. This research uses triangulation technique on source of data collection and research instrument to get valid data. This research uses purposive sampling technique by reading the movie script and identify utterances of the main character that contain swearing words. Thus, the primary data of this research are swearing words produced by Wade Wilson or *Deadpool* in which then are categorized into its types and functions. Meanwhile, the secondary data are all information related to swearing words, any corpus information related to the movie, theories, the character, and *Deadpool* comic book to support the understanding of the primary data.

Data analysis were conducted through several steps. The first step was making a list of utterances of Wade Wilson or *Deadpool* containing swear-words, understanding the context of each utterance, then identifying the type of swearing word in every utterances. The second step was interpreting the function of each swearing word. The last step is finding the relation between the types of swearing words and the functions of each swearing word. The last step is comparing the ratio of types and functions of swearing words; observing the most and the least dominant types and functions without ignoring the data related to social and cultural aspect surrounding *Deadpool 2* movie.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Result

3.1.1. Types of Swearing Words

Based on the analysis of this study, it is found out that all types of swearing words are used by *Deadpool* or Wade Wilson. The distribution of the data about the types of swearing words uttered by the main character in *Deadpool 2* movie can be seen in table 1.

Table 1 Types of Swearing Words Employed by Deadpool in Deadpool 2.

Article I.	Movie Types of Swearing Words	Quantity	Percentage (%)
Epithets		15	16%
Profanity		30	31%
Vulgarity		11	11%
Obscenity		40	42%
Total		96	100%

According to Battistella (2005) epithet is a type of swearing word which is related to race, gender sexuality, appearance, disability, and other characteristics, such as bitch, motherfucker, and bastard. In addition, Esterika (2016) has said that the use of animal terms is also categorized as epithets, e.g. bullshit, shit, dog or pig. In short, epithets cover up all forms of swearing word which refers to social issues.

In *Deadpool 2* movie, there are 15 utterances produced by Wade Wilson in the whole movie, which means 16% of all types of swearing word; the second of the least used type of swearing word by Wade Wilson in the whole movie. Here is an example of epithet swearing produced by Wade Wilson in *Deadpool 2* movie.

Deadpool: What kind of spineless shit stick tries to kill a 14-year-oldboy? You might wanna start talking! Cause I got a long history of firing at times like this!
Cable: My name's Cable. I'm from the future, just walk away! (E44: Aux: 00:56:54 – 00:56:55)

What happens around this conversation is that *Deadpool* and *Cable* are fighting for trying to save *Russel* from *Cable* who is going to kill the kid for what he has done although he plans to do it in the future. *Deadpool* makes this utterance as he is trying to dodge from *Cable's* attack which is meant for *Russel* to get hit. The utterance above is defined as epithet. However, for those setting aside the context of the dialogue, they may find it difficult to define it whether as an epithet or obscenity. The literal definition of the word *shit* refers to “feces; a waste matter expelled from the bowel as a residue of digestion process”. However, the contextual meaning of the word *shit* may refer as “a worthless person” since the word *shit* in the utterance functions as the head of the nominal group *shit*. In this dialogue, *Deadpool* utter a swear word in his question to *Cable*.

The second type of swear-words, profanity, according to Battistella (2005), is a swearing word that uses religion terms and something which is sacred. In addition, Jay (1992) has stated that profanity is not addressed to denigrate God or religion but it would be based on the unawareness of these matters, such as *Jesus Christ, God, hell* and *goddamn* and 30 (31%) expressions in the movie are profanity. This number is highly unexpected due to the background of the main character himself. The following dialogue is an example of profanity swearing word uttered by Wade Wilson aka *Deadpool* in *Deadpool 2* movie:

Deadpool: What, you mean that your.... Vanessa: Baby factory's open for business
Deadpool: Oh, my God! I want a boy! Or a little girl! Definitely one or the other!
 (P14 : Exp: 00:12:27 – 00:12:29)

The dialogue above is situated as *Deadpool* comes home from his work as a superhero. *Vanessa*, his wife, gives him a big surprise stating that his contraception has been removed so that they can have their own babies. It is a normal situation and they decide to settle down in their life.

Thus, the situational context is a pleasing and the moment is thoughtful. However, the surprising news is responded with swearing expression. His happiness is blown out by uttering *Oh, my God!* The word *Oh, my God!* in the dialogue above is an exclamative expression which has bigger focus on the word *God*. Literally or contextually, this kind of expression is categorized as profanity because it directly quotes a religious term and sacred word, for the word *God* is a sacred word for people who believe in a religion.

Vulgarity refers to the sex differentiating anatomy or excretory functions but it focuses on the sex anatomy of a human (Batistella, 2005). Furthermore, Jay (1992) states that vulgarity is the language of the common person, “the person in the street”, the unsophisticated people, or undereducated people. The words that include into vulgarity are *ass, dick, and anal*. From the data, the research finds 11 (11%) expressions of vulgarity in the movie. The following dialogue shows the vulgarity used by the main characters of *Deadpool 2* movie.

Deadpool: We're here. You have to grab your dream dick and make it rain
Dopinder: I don't know what that mean Deadpool: Me too.
 (V12 : Hum: 00:10:27 – 00:10:30)

The dialogue above is a conversation between Deadpool and Dopinder in the car. Dopinder has an interest in joining Deadpool who has already been in a killing business. But Deadpool prohibits him to join in the killing business because he does not have the capability of being a killer. Before he leaves the car, Deadpool gives Dopinder a motivational speech which ends up to the conversation above. The word *dick* is a noun referring to the male sex anatomy as vital part in sexual activity which also be called as “dick”. Furthermore, it is considered “street” language because it is embarrassing to talk about a taboo part of a human body.

Both obscenity and vulgarity have a close relation and similarity because both connotes to sex which differentiates it from human anatomy and excretory function. However, obscenity is not as rough and explicit as vulgarity. Furthermore, obscenity focuses more on the excretory functions of human body. On the other hand, vulgarity focuses more on the sex anatomy of a human. Esterika (2016) has said that obscenity emphasizes the sexual activity and bodily functions. Moreover, an obscene word is often used to replace another word in the sentence or phrase. From the previous table, it shows 40 (42%) expressions of obscenity in Deadpool 2 movie. The following example is the obscenity used in the movie.

Deadpool: Papa, can you hear me? And nobody fucking realizes it
Weasel: Wade, you got to go home. You’ve been here for three days, okay?
 (O17 : Exp: 00:19:33 – 00:19:35)

The dialogue above shows the conversation between Deadpool and Weasel in the bar. Deadpool is so upset after his wife, Vanessa is death. He tells Wasel what makes him upset the most, and Wasel tries to cheer him up. The word *fucking* is an adjective categorized into obscenity because it has a close relation sexual activity in its literal meaning. The main reason of why this swearing word is not categorized as other forms of swearing word is because its meaning in the conversation; the word *fucking* is added to emphasizes his sadness.

3.1.2. Functions of Swearing Words

All functions of swearing words, such as expletive, abusive, humorous, and auxiliary can be found in Deadpool 2 movie. The function which mostly appears in the movie is auxiliary (41%) because the main character often uses *fuck*, *fucking*, *asshole*, and *goddamn* in the utterances with no clear intention provided through the contextual situation. Some are expletive (30%). It is also found some humorous (24%) because the main character often uses *bitch*, *son of bitch*, *dick*, and

badass intended to entertain or to be humorous. Others are abusive (5%) because the main character often uses *fuck*, *fucker*, *ass*, and *son of bitch* in the utterances to insult, offend, attack, and even degrade his opponent in conversation. More detail information of the distribution of the data of functions of swearing words can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2 Functions of Swearing Words Employed by Deadpool in Deadpool 2 Movie

Function of Swearing Words	Quantity	Percentage (%)
Expletive	29	30%
Abusive	5	5%
Humorous	23	24%
Auxiliary	39	41%
Total	96	100%

The most dominant swearing type in Deadpool 2 movie is expletive. According to Andersson & Trudgill (1990), expletive swearing uttered by the speakers as the expression of their emotion. It can be used to express an emotion such as anger, disappointment, frustration, shocked and panicked. In Deadpool 2 movie, it is found 29 (30%) expressions of expletive swearing words to express their emotion. The following example is the use expletive in Deadpool 2 movie:

Colossus: That's the exact opposite of what they're meant for!
*Deadpool: **Fuck!** Fine! I'll start from the beginning (O31 : Exp:00:40:49 – 00:40:50)*

The dialogue above is expressed when Deadpool tried to fight with Russell in front of the school. Russel is angry and out of control that makes Deadpool upset and wants to shoot Russel. Colossus reminds Deadpool of the agreed rules, which are not allowed to use violence. Then, there is a debate between Colossus and Deadpool, causing Deadpool to say the word *fuck*. He uses the swearing words to express his feeling or emotion when he is so upset with the existing rules that blocking his desire.

Abusive swear words uttered by the main characters directed to the other characters are sometimes in the form of a name-calling. Commonly, it is used to insult the other characters and it is offensive (Anderson & Trudgill, 1990). In *Deadpool 2* movie, the research has found 5 (5%) expressions of abusive swearing words. This function commonly appears in the movie to insult the other character. The following example would give an insight of the use of abusive swearing:

*Deadpool: But I did take 8th grade Spanish, so... Where is the library? Which literally translate to... I don't bargain pumpkin **fucker***
(O4 : Abu: 00:03:19 – 00:03:20)

The monologue above is expressed when Deadpool calls the Spanish to threaten. Because Deadpool does not know Spanish Language, Deadpool ignores that person's answers. Deadpool uses the swearing words pumpkin *fucker* when he is calling the Spanish. Thus, this swearing word belong to abusive because it is addressed to another character.

Humorous swearing is often expressed in a playful way, although, it is addressed to another character (Anderson & Trudgill, 1990). From *Deadpool 2* movie, the research finds 23 (24%) expressions of humorous swearing words uttered by the main character. It is the least type of swearing words which appears in *Deadpool 2* movie. Most of the time, the main character calls another character with some swearing words but it is not uttered in a playful way. The following example show the humorous swearing uttered in the movie:

*Deadpool: You're right. I was fighting a caped **badass**. But then we discovered his mom is named Martha, too.*
Vanessa: No Deadpool: Yeah, I'm lie
(V13 : Hum: 00:10:58 – 00:11:02)

The dialogue above happens when Deadpool come home and explain to Vanessa why him late. Deadpool expresses an unreasonable reason of why he is late. But, Vanessa does not believe his reason. Then, he swears in a playful way directed to Vanessa.

Auxiliary swearing is being a way of speaking from a certain person. This is not addressed or directed to another person. It is uttered in a non-emphatic tone and it is being the way of speaker to talk (Anderson & Trudgill, 1990).

In *Deadpool 2* movie, the research has found 39 (41%) expressions of auxiliary swearing words. The number of this type is quite big since most of the time, besides addressing the swear words to express their feeling and to another character, the main character uses the swear words because that is their way of speaking. They tend use the swear words to substitute some words or as an affix. The following example is the auxiliary swearing in the movie:

Buck: According to the Kubler-Ross model...Denial is just one of the five stages of grief
*Deadpool: **Jesus Christ**, Buck! (P20 : Aux: 00:21:08 – 00:21:11)*

This dialogue happens when Deadpool is drunk and wants to leave the bar but his body nudges Buck who is beside him. Deadpool feels fine, but Buck who knows the condition of Deadpool explains that he is not okay. But Deadpool replies with a sentence which contains the swear words. The swear words *Jesus Christ* refers to anything but Deadpool changes it into any *Jesus Christ* since it is his way of speaking and it is uttered in a non-emphatic tone.

3.2. Discussion

After carefully observing every datum gathered and categorizing the dominant types and function of swearing words used by the main character in *Deadpool 2* movie, the whole results can be seen in the following Table 3.

Table 3. Relation between Types and Functions of Swearing Words Employed by Deadpool in *Deadpool* movie

Function	Types				Total Function
	Epithets	Profanity	Vulgarity	Obscenity	
Expletive	1%	20%	1%	8%	30%
Abusive	1%	-	1%	3%	5%
Humorous	8%	6%	8%	3%	25%
Auxiliary	6%	5%	2%	27%	40%
Total Types	16%	31%	12%	41%	100%

The Table 3 shows the distribution of the types of swearing words based on Battistella's (2005) and its each function in swearing. In epithets, the frequent function for swearing by the main character is humorous with 8% of the total number. Moreover, in profanity the most frequent function for swearing is expletive with 20% of the total number. Furthermore, in vulgarity the most frequent function is humorous with 8% of the total number. Finally, in obscenity the frequent function for swearing is auxiliary with 27% of the total number.

According to Spolsky (2004), sociolinguistics is the field that studies the relation between language and society. It assumes that human society is made up of many related patterns and behavior, some of which are linguistics. However, Deadpool's social environment influences him to get used to swearing words. Deadpool lives in Ohio, USA, in a slum area and street life. Wardhaugh (2002) defines language to be knowledge of rules and principles and of the ways of saying and doing things with sounds, words, and sentences rather than just knowledge of specific sounds, words, and sentences. However, language is important for humans being. Deadpool itself is familiar with using swearing words for saying to other characters in film and every swearing words spoken by Deadpool has its own meaning in a certain condition. Whereas, Deadpool knows to use polite swearing words or rude swearing words with the speakers. Moreover, Thanasoulas (2001) more directly compiles that language does not exist apart from culture, that is from the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determines the texture of our lives. However, culture can affect good or bad habits in behavior and language. Because they believe that their culture and beliefs will be inherited determine language habits. On the other hand, Anderson & Trudgill (1990) says that swearing word has a relation with taboo word because swearing word relate to something taboo to be said since it is considered vulgar. However, because Deadpool is accustomed to using swearing words, where the taboo thing he is accustomed to speaking with is even swearing in the utterances with kids or parents. Although, the purpose of Deadpool's swearing words does not mean to be offensive but only for additional words in the expression and for more use of jokes when speaking swearing words.

In relation to several previous researches, there have been a number researches with a similar focus. Mahamurah (2015), for example did a research on swearing words which not only did she focus on the types and the motives, but also define the function of swearing words in *A Good Day to Die Hard* movie. The movie is categorized into the action genre, similar with the film used in the research. However, *A Good Day to Die Hard* movie is not superhero like *Deadpool 2*. Although Mahamurah's research is also to find the types of swearing words and function of swearing words, it tends to discuss the level of swearing words and the relationship of swearing words with social class, not the type and functions of its use.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

There were four different types of swear words used by the characters of *Deadpool 2* movie. The first type is epithets which is categorized the swear words based on the social issues such as race, gender, sexually, disabilities or appearance and the use of animal terms. Based on the analysis, the swear words included as epithet is shit, shithole, son of bitch, bastard and bitch. The second type is profanity which is categorized as the swear words based on the religious terms. From the analysis, the swear words included as profanity is God, Oh my God, Jesus Christ, Jesus, Goddamn and hell. The third type is vulgarity which is categorized the swear words based on the use of sex anatomy or the hidden parts of a human body. From the analysis, the swear words included as vulgarity is dick, anal, badass, asshole and ass. The fourth type is obscenity which is categorized the swear words based on the use of excretory function of a human body and sexual activity. Based on the analysis, the swear words included as obscenity is fuck, motherfucker, shit, fuked up, fuking and fuker.

Moreover, there are four functions for swearing used by the main character of *Deadpool 2* movie. The first function is expletive swearing which is used to express the main character's feeling or emotion. The second function is abusive swearing which is addressed to another character to insult her or him. The third function is humorous swearing which is addressed to another character in a playful way. The last function is auxiliary swearing which is being the way of the main character to speak. Meanwhile, the main character of *Deadpool 2* movie often uses auxiliary swearing in their utterances since most of the time, they use the swear words to express their feeling or emotion to another character, the main character uses the swear words because that is their way of speaking.

From the relation analysis of types and functions of swearing words data this study observes, it can be concluded that the exploitation of swearing words is also a unique way of constructing a character. In *Deadpool 2* movie, Deadpool character is portrayed as good man worthy of the title as 'superhero' although he produces more swearing words than any other characters in the film. This conclusion serves as new evidence that quantitative cannot be applied as a scientific reasoning in a cultural, social, or behavioral research (Santosa, 2017). To understand a trend in this kind of research, one should consider each premise, causality, and relevance to clearly define a phenomenon, which in this case is the exploitation of swearing words in *Deadpool 2* movie by Wade Wilson to construct his character.

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