INDONESIAN YOUTHS’ PERCEPTION TOWARD SWEARING AND TABOO EXPRESSION

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Abstract
Language is a tool used by humans in communicating and interacting. Swearing words are part of a language used by people in expressing themselves. Currently, swearing words are being discussed by many people. This condition was triggered by a decision from KPAI (Indonesian Child Protection Commission) in September 2020 regarding the prohibition of the use of a swear word. The aim of this study is to find out the perceptions of the Indonesian youth generations regarding the use of swearing words. In this research, the researcher used a descriptive qualitative method with a questionnaire via Google form. The questionnaire was used as an instrument to reach wider and easier participants. In this study, researchers used age criteria for participants ranging from 15-26 years. This research was attended by 111 participants from various backgrounds and various cultures in Indonesia. As the result, the researchers found that most of the participants thought that swearing had a bad impact on future generations. In addition, the use of swear words is a form of the speaker's expression in communicating. Subsequently, the researcher also found that the use of swearing words has various perceptions depending on the context and content being discussed.

Key words: Indonesian youths’ perceptions, language, Swearing and taboo expression

INTRODUCTION
Language is the tools of communication for human being. Without the language human cannot communicate each other. It shows that language has important function in human life. According to Geoffery Leech (1974) there are five function of languages; informational,
expressive, directive, aesthetic, and phatic. On the other words, the researcher will concern in expressive function of type language. Leech stated that it can be used to express the speaker feeling and attitudes. Swear word and exclamations are the most real example of this. This function could give a truth image for the personality of the communicator.

Swear word have a central position in the activity communicate verbally as reflect the function of emotive language. It also supported by Wijana (1996) that stated emotive function (to express feelings) as the most important function of language rather than the other, which are conative, referential, multilingual, poetic, and phatic function. Kaye and Sapolsky (2009) noted that many general public and language scholars still use offensive language and 'dirty words' in communicating. Based on Rassin and Muris (2005) the use of swearing words is included in the "use of taboo words" (p. 1669). According to KBBI (edition 2008:863), taboo is defined as vile words spoken in anger; cussing means utter obscenities. Taboo language is the form of language to express anger.

In sociolinguistics, taboo or language that is considered impolite in its use has a variety of expressions in it. Swear words are a taboo language used in many societies. However, nowadays this word is a word that is often used among the public. They often insert the word in communicating. The use of swear words and taboo language can be affected by various factors. Environmental factor is one of the most important factors in influencing someone to use the word.

Nowadays, swearing and taboo expression is being discussed in Indonesia because of the letter launched by KPAI (Indonesian Child Protection Commission). In the letter, KPAI prohibits the use of one swear word. There are pros and cons from Indonesian especially the youth of Indonesian. Based on this problem, the author did the study about Indonesian youth’s perspective toward swearing and taboo expression in daily life. Youth perspectives have the important role in society. Youth has much idea to faces the problem. Because of that, the object of this research is youth perception. The researchers used qualitative approach as the method and questionnaire as the instrument in collecting the data.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The use of language is one of the communication tools used by humans in conveying messages to recipients. There are various ways of expressing a message, including taboo sentences. Taboo language is an expression that has a more negative meaning (Dutton, 2007). The use of the names of animals and physical parts becomes a different negative meaning when someone gives tone, emphasis, and other nonverbal gestures. However, some people or groups use these words casually. In addition, taboo language usually occurs in close friends, relatives, or fellow interlocutors of the same age.

It can be seen that the research conducted by Patricia Rosenberg, Sikstrom, and Gracia (2017) mentioned through their research on the relationship between the affective component (A: level of offensiveness/intensity), the behavioral component (B: frequency of use), and the cognitive component (C: the use of taboo words as part of an individual's natural language). The results showed that in the study there were more than 10 taboo words which were commonly used by 900 residents every day, then in the second study there were 1000 residents as the object of research, resulting in more than 30 taboo words and were asked to be sorted. the most offensive regular and how often to mention it. As a result, there are "new" words in the
community as taboo words that seem more offensive than words in previous studies. From study II, based on the ABC hypothesis, it also shows that the offensive level (A) can predict the daily use of the word (B) that has become part of a person's language (C).

It is undeniable that taboo words will also enter the environment of students. Therefore, the research conducted by Eileen Finn aims to provide several positive reasons to teach ESL students about swearing as a learning goal. Although the theme may be less formal, a teacher for ESL may be able to assist students in understanding the consequences of these words, avoiding dangerous situations, and how to use them to shape social progress. Although there are actually positive and negative impacts in its use, therefore the teacher needs to provide an explanation of swearing. Even so, seeing the meaning conveyed is negative, there are more meanings and taboo words that lead to bad things. Gay and Susanti (2017) describe the format, reference, and background of taboo language in Ternate society. Although this research is focused on the Ternate region, we can take it from the background of the Taboo language itself as a reference material. As a result, usually in society there is a dominant taboo language according to age, for example teenagers, adults, and the elderly.

The leads to a lower social group namely at the elementary school level. Based on the nature of children who like to observe and imitate, it is undeniable that the environment teaches them indirectly. Suganob-Nicolau (2016) who also observed the use of swears words in early childhood students, especially elementary school students. They want to know how often a word is spoken, the meaning of the word that produces a particular emotion, strategies for suppressing it, and the contributors to learning to swear. The result of this study is that children follow the environment around them and are not really aware of its meaning, so the role of parents and educational institutions is needed in responding, providing understanding, and direction to children. Because of the constant state of saying these things and the evolution of the language that continues to develop, parental guidance and understanding from the surrounding community is very much needed.

Therefore, the perspective of the community needs to be known to be able to shape the next step. Currently, taboo language reaches various levels of society, even to children. Tragically, those who do not know the true meaning only follow suit because the environment often does it. Seeing the negative meaning of taboo language and its use which also leads to negative things, society needs to provide good teaching to children. Because language cannot be separated from the form of communication, a good perspective and the right way of using it in time and place are expected.

**METHOD OF RESEARCH**

Qualitative approach is used in this study. According to Quinn and Cochran (2007) qualitative research has the goal to recognizing other facet of social existence and distinguishes by its technique of producing term as evidence for examination. Qualitative approach is the method which explores and understands the meaning of individual that is considered as the social res. The researcher collected the data by giving questionnaire to the participants who are the youth of Indonesia. Based on Cam & Tran (2017) questionnaire is very useful method of collection because researchers can reach many participants and respondents in a short time, and it does not need cost too
much. The procedures in collecting the data were making the questionnaire, asking the participant to fulfil the questionnaire and finally collecting the answer from the participant. After the data collected, it will be analysed.

**Data Collection**

The researchers did some procedures for collecting the data, it’s as follows:

1. **Making the questionnaire**
   The researchers were making the questionnaire in the form of Google form. It chose as the instruments in collecting the data because it does not too much cost and can reach the participants as many as can.

2. **Asking the participants to fulfil the questionnaire**
   Participants of this study were the 111 youth of Indonesia. The researchers asked the participants to fulfil the questionnaire. To reach the goal of this study there are seven questions prepared which used the format of open ended question, yes/no question, scale question, and multiple choices question. The questions prepared were:
   a. As the youth generation of Indonesia, how do you think about swearing and taboo expression?
   b. As the young generation of Indonesia, have you ever used swearing words?
   c. If so, how often do you use swearing words?
   d. As the youth generation of Indonesia, in your view, what is the reason someone uses swearing?
   e. What are some swearing and taboo expression that you have use or heard in the environment?
   f. As the young generation of Indonesia, in your view, can swear words have a negative impact on Indonesia's young
   g. Give reasons for your answer to question number 6

3. **Collecting the answer from the participants**
   After the data were obtained from the participants, the researchers collected and it will be analysed.

**Data Collection Technique**

Since this study was investigate the youth perceptions, the researcher chose descriptive qualitative approach for presenting the data. Descriptive qualitative defined as the method that used by the researchers to describe the youth perception toward the taboo words. Hancock, Okleford and Windridge (2007) believed that qualitative research is concerned with explaining opinions, experiences, and feelings of individuals producing subjective data. The data questionnaires were displayed in the form of table percentage and description. The highest percentage for each questions considered as the representations of participants perspective. The data was analysed and the result was converted into descriptive analysis in terms of its goodness. There were 111 participants who contributed to the process of collecting the data. The subjects of this research were Indonesian youth, and the research conducted in Indonesia in September 2020.
There are several steps of the data collection. First, the authors composed the question, second make the questionnaire on Google form, third share the link of Google form, and then collected the data from the questioner has been answered. After the data were collected, the researchers analysed it by reading all participants’ responses and analysing the responses to get the finding.

**DISCUSSION / RESEARCH FINDING**

**Finding**

In this study, the research will find out about the perceptions of the Indonesian youth generation about swearing and taboo expression. Swearing and taboo expression is a phenomenon that is being discussed by many people. This research is useful to find out the response of participants using a questionnaire distributed and disseminated by the youth generation of Indonesia about swearing and taboo expression. The questionnaire contains questions related to the acceptance or perception of the Indonesian young generation of swearing and taboo expression. Besides that, the questionnaire also asked participants about their opinions, whether they could accept or reject the existence of swearing and taboo expression in depth and in detail.

In this section consists of the results of research and how they are discussed;

<table>
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<th>Variable</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sample %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
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In the first table, it is used to identify the number and gender of participants who have filled out the questionnaire that have been share by the researchers with Google form. In these table shows that there are 42.3% male or equivalent to 47 participants that has fill the questionnaire. Meanwhile, female participants occupy 57.7% with a percentage of 64 participants who has filled out the questionnaire. From this explanation, it can be concluded that the largest number of participants were female with a percentage of 57.7% or the equivalent of 54 participants.

<table>
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<th>Variable</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
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In the third table above, show about the percentage of the range of age that participant must fill the questionnaire. This table has shown that the respondent who has participated in filling questionnaires about their perception of free sex is between 16-26 years old. In this table, the total participant in 15 years old has 1.8% or 2 participant who have fill the questionnaire and for 16 years old there are 3.6% of total participant or 4 participants. Then, there are 5.4% or 6 participants for 17 years old. Furthermore, there are 5 participants or 4.5% who was filling the questionnaire for people who 18 years old and 15.3% or 38 participants for 18 years old.

Subsequently, there are 15.3% means 17 participants for the 19 years old that has filled this questionnaire. Besides that, for 20 years old respondents are 29.7% or 33 participants and for 21 years old there are 25.2% or 28 participants. Then, there are 7.2% or 8 participants have filled the questionnaire for 22 years old, 23 years old with 3.6% or 4 participants who has fill the questionnaire. Next, there are 1.8% or 2 participants for 24 years old. However, there are no participants with 25 years old who participate in this questionnaire. Last there are 1.8% or 2 participants for 26 years old who has participate in this questionnaire.

In the first question, it shows that all participants have knowledge regarding what is meant by taboo language and swearing. They explain in their own language and point of view regarding it. They are well aware of the meaning of the language. They assume that the language is a language that is often used, but its use will have various perceptions depending on the situation. There is the participant said “When swearing words are used in the right situations and conditions, in my opinion it doesn't matter even though when we look at it from a norm perspective it is not a good thing. However, many linguists say that there is no better or worse language”. On the other words, there is another the participant also said “Usually, curse is interpreted as a word or sentence that is harsh, dirty and inappropriate to express. However, in my opinion rough or not depends on the perspective of each individual in its use. There are individuals who use it with the aim of communicating with other people and some are used as a form of resistance to oppression because when someone is being bullied, that person will usually get angry so they can say swearing”.

On the other hand there are participants who think that the use of taboo language and swearing also shows how close the person is to his friend. This is shown by the answer “Swearing words are sometimes used to distinguish how close we are to the other person. However, the use of swearing words must also look at conditions, where often other people think that swear words are harsh and impolite words said. This is because the Javanese, especially, are people who are required of good, refined and polite norms and ethics”. In addition, there are also participants who think that this language is also often used to show something that is considered bad. The participant said “Swearing words always develop in Indonesia, both in local and national languages. This shows the rapid spread of language in the community. Swearing words are words that people often see as a reflection of someone's bad behavior”.

Besides that, the researchers also give the participants question of their point of view in swearing words. The question is, as the young generation of Indonesia, have you ever used swearing words? The researchers use yes/no questions type in this part. The result shows that there are 92.8%
who chose “yes” or 103 participants. While for the “no” answer there are 7.2% or 8 participants. On the other words, it can be concluding that most of the participants this that the swearing words can give the bad impact for the next generation. Then, for them who chose “no” in this part think that swearing words could not give the bad impact for the next generation. Because they think that, swearing words is not only about something bad in their communication.

Subsequently, for the next question is how often the participants you use swearing words. In this part, the researcher use some range for the answer. There are five for the answer, number 1 if they never use the swearing words, 2 if they ever use it, 3 if they sometimes use it, 4 if they often and 5 if they very often use the swearing words in their daily conversation. In a result, there are 8.3% or 9 participants who never use swearing words and 32 participants or 29.6% who chose ever. Next, there are 30.6% or 33 participants who sometimes use swearing words in their communication. Besides, there are 22.2% or 24 participants who chose often and 10 participants or 9.3% that very often use swearing words when they communications. In the conclusion, the largest choice by participants in this part is sometimes. The participants sometimes use swearing words in their communication.

Next question is as the youth generation of Indonesia, in your view, what the reason someone uses the swearing word, are some swearing and taboo expression that you have use or heard in the environment. In this part the researcher use essay as the type for the participants’ answer. However, the researcher just takes some answer in getting the data of participants’ reason. The researchers just take five answers as a sample that representing the overall opinion that has been given by the participants. The researcher found that some of participants describe the swearing words into two arguments. They think there are two possibilities, firstly because of emotion so that people use these swearing words to representing their emotions. Second, they argue that people use swearing words because it has become their language in vent something whether it’s a joke or not and also it can be representing something funny to someone.

They consider that the use of this word can be interpreted as a joke and a person's closeness in a community. There was a participant who said "In my opinion the reason someone uses the swearing word, if it is used as a communication medium, it is because they want to be more familiar and outspoken with their friends, but if used as a medium of resistance it is usually to bring out the resentment or emotions that are in them”. There is participant also said “In my opinion, a person is in a condition or atmosphere that is not good, angry, bad mood or the like and is taking it out on other people or things. In addition, it could be the reason for being joking and not being serious about saying the swear word”. There are also participants who think that the word is also used by someone when they discuss something funny. The participant said “To respond and as a form of expression of things that are annoying, disgusting, or even something very funny. People sometimes use swears words to make them more expressive in socializing in very close friendships”.

Then, the researchers give question the swearing words that usually participants use. In this field, the participants give a lot of example that usually they were use in their communication. Some of them also use the swearing use that had banned by the government. They think that swearing words is like the common words that usually people use to speak up their feeling of someone. In this part, the researcher can
conclude that, not of every swearing word express the negative feeling of someone.

Subsequently, for the next question is as the young generation of Indonesia, in your view, can swear words have a negative impact on Indonesia's young generation? In this part the researcher use yes/no questions type to get the data. The result shows that 73% or 81 participants think that the swearing words can bring the negative effect for the next generations. However, there are 30 participants or 27% who chose “no” as the response to this question. They think that swearing words are not bringing the negative effect to the next generations. In this situation, it can be conclude that most of them chose “yes” as their response through this question.

Afterwards, for the last questions which essay type as the response token question is give reasons for your answer to question number 6. In this part, the researchers took just five answers as the sample. This answer is representing the all participants in this question. Some of them argue that swearing words can have a negative impact if they are spoken to others in serious situations or conditions. In their opinion, if they using swear words that can hurt others in some situations, offend others and even make other people feel depressed are something to be avoided. However, they also give an opinion if it's just a joke and nothing more that they don't think it is a something wrong. They tend to know that someone is saying this really seriously or just as a joke.

Therefore, they also argue that as the youth generation also did not need to think too much about what other people say because many other people also did not think when they were saying. On the other words, they also have to be able to understand the situation that the person really said the swearing word seriously or not seriously. Then, they think they know that people are toxic to us or not. However, if they are a toxic person, just stay away or avoid them and also hang out with people who are in line. It can be work for some of them, so that they are comfortable making friends in the environment that they want. It is important to remember that they must not say things that are not useful, offend others, hurt others, or hurt others psychologically.

In addition, the word has also become a person's habit to emphasize something, in the sense as an auxiliary to confirm whether they are happy or annoyed. This is evidenced by the presence of participants who said "Every dirty word that is said if used continuously will become a bad habit. This also affects the character and attitude of a person which makes the norms of manners fade. Not everyone can accept spoken profanity. Not only that, the psychological condition of a person, which when he hears a curse can have a negative impact on his psyche, because everyone has different conditions. Not everyone feels comfortable with swearing even if it is just a joke. In addition, swearing provides a bad lesson to minors, especially when cursing is usually spoken in a harsh screaming tone which according to a study, screaming and yelling can damage nerve cells during children's development. So that is my reason why swearing has such a negative impact on Indonesia's young generation.”

Bad influence can be felt when inappropriate words are said by children. Of course this is a bad influence for one environment. There was a participant who said "Swearing words can have a negative impact if they are spoken to others in serious situations or conditions. In my opinion, if we say swear words that can hurt others, offend others, and even make other people feel depressed are something to be avoided. However, in my opinion if it's just a joke and nothing more I don't think it is a something wrong. We tend to know that
someone is saying this really seriously or just as a joke. Therefore, we as the younger generation also don't need to think too much about what other people say because many other people don't think before speaking. And we have to be able to understand the situation that the person really said the swear word seriously or not seriously. I think we ourselves know that people are toxic to us or not. If he is a toxic person, just stay away or avoid it also hang out with people who are in line with us so that we are comfortable making friends in the environment we want. It is important to remember that we must not say things that are not useful, offend others, hurt others, or hurt others psychologically”.

There are also participants who do not agree that the use of taboo and abusive words can have a bad influence. They think that as long as the word is used correctly and taken as a joke it can't have a bad influence. The participant said “Language is growing. Since long time ago there have been swear words, but swear words have changed from time to time. The word can have a negative impact when the recipient of the swear feels offended. But as far as I have seen, swear words are only jokes between friends and some even say that when in a friendship there are swear words when joking which results in their relationship getting closer. So that it doesn't have any negative impact on their generation. If there are swear words that have a negative impact, maybe the reasons are different from the context I have explained”.

The use of taboo words and swearing is an interpretation of the norms that are not good. It is considered that the word certainly has a bad impact. This was revealed by one of the participants who thought so. The participant said “Yes, swear words are not too good when spoken excessively and also to someone who is still very young and has a range of deviant associations and does not have full awareness of the socialization and norms that apply in society so that he is afraid he will say swear words to older people or in an inappropriate situation which would undermine the image of the Indonesian nation with friendly and polite criteria. Swearing is not prohibited, but one must know the rules and norms”.

Based on the entire sample that has been obtained, it can be concluded that the current younger generation thinks that swear words are words that are often used by the current generation. They think that the swear word is an affirmation of the sentence or expression they use. They argue that the word swear does not necessarily mean rude or impolite. The meaning of the swear words can be adjusted according to the context they are discussing. There are those who think that swearing is offensive language if they use it when they are angry or feel annoyed with something or someone else.

Discussion
Perception of Swearing Words

Swearing is an aspect of language that has been studied formally since at least 1901 and has developed until now (Ginsburg, Ogletree, & Silakowski, 2003). Currently, this topic is being discussed by everyone in Indonesia. This was triggered after a circular from the KPAI (Indonesian Child Protection Commission). In the letter, KPAI prohibits the use of one swear word. According to Kaye and Sapolsky (2009), it is noted that many general public and language scholars still use offensive language and 'dirty words' in communicating. Rassin and Muris (2005) suggest that the use of swearing words is included in the "use of taboo words" (p. 1669).

According to DeKlerk (1991) argues about the use of language that contains swear words, according to him 'swearing contains strong emotional and psychological content from someone who uses it, then this
word violates social taboos and is often used to surprise people with whom to communicate, or to show humiliation or neglect. Toward them and stresses strong emotions " (p.157). Given the emotional content associated with swearing and its nature, including language that is taboo, this can have the potential to give an inappropriate meaning to the listener. However, the use or absorption of meaning depends on the communicator, the relationship, and the characteristics of the context identified or the message to be conveyed (Burgoon, 1993).

In this context, the fact of 'taboo' suggests that such use of the word swearing should be avoided by communicant. However, the reality is much more complex than one might think. In fact, the convention of its use lies in the complex operating in all languages as a means of communication (Dewaele, 2004). Meanwhile, there is a context in which the use of swearing can be accepted, maybe even expected to be used in a certain context, in other words its use is a means of conveying one's emotions which have unexpected consequences if used (Dewaele, 2004).

**Swearing Words as an Emotional Expression**

Discuss is a communication tool and interaction tool used by a person to communicate or convey messages, besides that language can also be studied both internally and externally. In linguistic studies, one of the disciplines that discuss language studies externally is sociolinguistics. The discussion in sociolinguistics covers a very broad field of study, not only concerning the formal form of language and the variations that exist, but also the use of language in a formal and informal speech community (Hudson, 1996).

Swearing is one of the words that exist in sociolinguistics, swearing is a word that has a low taste value and seems taboo by society. This word is generally used by a variety of societies, ranging from the educated to the ordinary. The use of language can be used as a parameter for someone to mark one's expression, this is because in the process of using language not only the logical elements are influential, but also the elements of affection contained, that is, everything that basically contains feelings and emotions in its use (Sudaryanto, 1982: 13). Swear word is a form of the word affective used by someone, this word is a word that is always related to their narrative and when spoken will contain a person's emotional value by venting their feelings in the form of words or utterances.

Mastery of knowledge about the appropriateness of language use is very important to someone. This mastery includes language production, understanding the meaning and social implications of spoken and written language used as a means of communication (Dewaele, “Appropriateness” in foreign language acquisition and use: Some theoretical, methodological and ethical considerations., 2008). Minimal language acquisition and lack of understanding of the wrong language can expose users to unwanted social consequences or have a bad impact (Bou-Franch & Garcés-Conejos, 2003; Boxer, 2002). This is because everyone has their own perceptions. In the use of the wrong language can cause someone to misunderstood through the content being spoken.

Swearing is a language that can be used not only to express strong emotions, but also to express responses or attitudes in a strong way (Mouat, 2004) as well as to refer to objects or actions that a person takes (Clark, 2006). In that statement, the use of swearing words can show or strengthen

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someone’s emotions when they communicate. It can be concluded that the use of taboo language especially swearing words, can be accepted by someone with the intention to strengthen their emotions in communicating.

CONCLUSION

Using the qualitative descriptive method used in this research paper, the use of questionnaire media is the right choice to get enough participants with appropriate data to be analysed. After the distribution of the questionnaire, the researchers obtained 111 samples from both men and women aged 15-26 years. In accord with the opinion of the young generation itself about the youth generation, the expression swearing words continue to develop over time, and this development is also due to the existence of users. Also, there is an additional opinion that as usual, this is not a good thing, and the view of swearing words is almost on average saying inappropriate comments, but as a contradiction, there is another opinion that we cannot deny that we will be influenced to say those words in certain situations.

Sometimes in certain situations and reasons, it can be said as when with peers or friends who are close to each other. There are also other reasons, if swearing words are a form of communication to a group that has a frequent scope of use, so to familiarize oneself it is necessary to have the same approach with the group. It can be seen from the results of the questionnaire that 92.8% of participants have mentioned swearing words and the intensity in their use sometimes touches 30.6% (the highest). Thus, from the above statement can be said that the study participants did not always use swearing words recklessly only in certain situations and reasons. These reasons were said by participants such as emotions, joking, expressing something, as a form of intimacy, so on. Even so, the perception of poor swearing words was acknowledged by the participants with an accumulated number that said as much as 73% for various reasons.

In addition, it can be concluded that the reason why swearing words are not good to say is because of the norms that regulate and reveal that swearing words are not appropriate words to say, not to mention if they hurt someone’s heart even though it is just a joke from a friend. Based on the results of the research above, the researchers hope that if people reduce their use of saying swearing words so that the habit may disappear because of the community's norms that govern if the words are not good to say and if they want to say the word, it is better not to say it to them that people who are not used to saying it so as not to hurt other people's feelings because that person does not know whether it is a form of joking or something serious.

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