

Swearing System in Melayu Ternate Language: Sociolinguistic Studies

Ety Duwila*¹, Sulmi Magfirah², Ermansyah Malik³

^{1,2}Khairun University, Ternate, Indonesia, ³National Dong Hwa University, Taiwan

Correspondence*

E-mail: etyagusabid@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study aims to depict the swearing system in Ternate Malay language that covers the form, meaning, and function. This research used qualitative research. Research on the swearing system in Ternate Malay language was conducted by a qualitative descriptive method that is trying to describe the forms of swearing in Ternate Malay language. The results show that there are three forms of swearing, namely swearing in the form of words, phrases and clauses. Some of these forms of swearing have references and some on the contrary. Swearing forms that have references are grouped into swearing forms which refer to animals, names of fruits, body defects, circumstances, objects, kinships, and professions. Some forms of swearing seem like greetings, especially those that refer to body defects, but in their utterance, they are conveyed in an angry state with a high tone and such hard pressure which makes them categorized as swearing. The use of these forms of swearing is to express anger, irritation, disappointment, admiration, and to insult or mock the interlocutor. It can be concluded that Swearing itself is a noun which means vile words uttered out of anger.

Keywords: Swearing system, function, meaning, sociolinguistics

INTRODUCTION

Language has a pivotal role for human life. All kinds of human activities are mainly carried out through language. With language, humans can formulate their thoughts, feelings and desires (Sujarwo, et al, 2022). What is thought is conveyed to others, so that cooperation can be created between fellow humans. Language is a system of arbitrary sound symbols used by members of social groups to work together, communicate and identify themselves (Cipta, R., & Arkanleema, P. S. E. Achmad, dan Alek Abdullah. 2013). With language, humans can express their feelings and expressions (Sasabone, et al, 2021). Feelings of joy, disappointment, sadness, anger can be expressed through language other than non-verbally. When disagreeing or differing opinions with others, for example, then the form of language used can be in the form of improper words or diatribe words or also referred to as swearing. Wijana and Rohmadi (2011) explain that language speakers can use various swearing, in addition to harsh words or subtle innuendo, to express their displeasure, hatred, or dissatisfaction with the situation they are facing.

In *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia Edition V* (Indonesian Online Dictionary) (2016), the definition of swearing is explained, namely the vile word spoken out of anger and so on. The United State and the United Kingdom have been long considered that swear words are as offensive language and considered as taboo to be expressed in formal situation such as in television or formal broadcasts (Andang & Bram, 2018). The swearing is included in the exclamatory utterances of a negative nature, that is, exclamatory utterances in the form of swearing.

Expression of anger in everyday life with use this mother tongue directly and indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally also maintain the culture and mother tongue, especially Malay (Lubna, 2016). Swearing is not new in communication (). We often encounter these forms of swearing in the surrounding environment, such as in the play environment, in the market, and in the neighborhood, sometimes even occurring in the learning environment, such as when teachers get angry with their students if they ask questions but the students cannot answer. For example, the word *otak gonofu* 'stupid' in a sentence "*Otak gonofu ni, pertanyaan gampang saja kong tar bisa jawab*". The sentence was expressed by the teacher in Ternate Malay Language when the students did not pay attention to the teacher when teaching so that they were given a punishment to answer questions. In the example above, the word *otak gonofu* consists of two words, the word brain '*otak*' and coconut fiber '*gonofu*' which form a compound word that means 'stupid'. The word has a reference to a limb with the intention of expressing annoyance.

Research on Ternate Malay language is very interesting to be studied because this language is one of the variations of Malay language included in the Austronesian family but because of its existence in the middle of non-Austronesian languages (Ternate, Tidore, and Tobelo, Galela) so that the structure of phonology, grammar, and lexicon much affected from the local language. Previous research on this

language was carried out by Alhadar and Rudi (2021) on the reduplication of Ternate Malay language in the form of repetition of prefixes. Research conducted by Duwila and Nurain (2021) on the possessive construction of the Ternate Malay language which describes the form of possession of the *pe* 'punya' which is repeated in noun phrases. In terms of vocabulary, research conducted by Litamahuputty (2014) on the word and meaning of Ternate Malay language describes the ability of Ternate Malay words to fulfill various syntax roles with different meanings.

Research on the form, meaning, and function of swearing are interesting to be studied with the intention of exploring the values contained in the language used by the community. The problem can be formulated on how the form, meaning and function of swearing in Ternate Malay language.

Sociolinguistics is one of the external studies that studies language in relation to the use of that language in society. The subjects in sociolinguistics are speech community, language variation, bilingualism, code switching and code mixing, interference, and language retention (Chaer: 2010). The term sociolinguistics comes from the word *socio* which means society and *linguistics* is the study of language, so sociolinguistics is the study of language that puts language in relation to its use in society (Sultan: 2021). Sociolinguistics is the study that forms theories about the relationship of society with language. Related to the opinion. Sociolinguistics can be used to discuss society's aspects, especially the variety of languages related to factors of society or social. Consequently, it can be concluded that sociolinguistics is a study that talks about the relationship of language with society (Eriyanti, et al., 2020).

Related to sociolinguistic studies that study languages in relation to society, including the use of a language (Wardhaugh, R, 2012), swearing forms is an object of study in sociolinguistics. As one of the varieties of language, swearing are used to convey emotional outbursts. Horan (2013) mention that although swearing is one of the ways to express emotion, it has powerful manifestations of emotional language that may lead to dangerous and even physical threatening. The use of swearing is not only used by certain classes such as the lower or upper classes, the educated or not, but can be used by anyone, such as parents and even to the level of children often use it.

Swearing is emotional utterance in the form of rude words or innuendos, which usually function as expressions of anger or hatred directed at someone to the situation they are facing (McLeod, L, 2011; Azman, I. N., Maros, M., & Bakar, K. A, 2019). For instance, a word "fuck" in a tweet by traveller whose flight has been delayed may show annoying or anger to the airline, whereas in different context the word could respond to another meaning in other contexts (Coats, 2021). People who express swearing will feel relieved because they feel free from all forms and unpleasant situations. However, swearing is also often used to express joy, intimacy and amazement. Thus, the forms of swearing serve to carry out the emotive function of language. Related to the function of language, Language

has four functions, which are, as a tool of communication, as a tool to express self-expression, as a tool of social integration and adaptation, and as a tool of social control. This is as expressed which divides the functions of language into referential, emotive, conative, metalingual, phatic and poetic functions.

The referential function is to talk about objects or events around the speaker. The emotive or expressive function is that the speakers express an attitude towards what they are talking about, the speakers not only express emotions through language but also shows emotions when they convey their speech. Thus, the interlocutor can suspect the sadness, anger, or joy that will occur on the speaker. Conative function is to regulate the behavior of the interlocutor. The metalingual function is that language is used to explain the language itself. The phatic function is to establish relationships, maintain, show social solidarity. The poetic function is used to convey thoughts, ideas and feelings based on actual facts or imaginations. Added the six functions with the function of regulation or regulatory function of language, which acts to regulate and control other people.

Based on their opinions, swearing is included in the emotive or expressive function because in swearing the speaker pours out their heartfelt feelings. The feelings include anger, irritation, regret, and joy. Swearing is a derivative form of the verb form '*maki*' which is to express words (utterance) vile (dirty, rude and so on) as a release of anger or irritation and so on. Swearing itself is a noun which means vile words spoken out of anger and so on.

The appearance of swearing is caused by a certain event or reaction of the words spoken by the previous speaker, in short, swearing occurs due to a speech event. Speech events are the occurrence or ongoing linguistic interaction in one or more forms of speech involving two parties, namely speaker or locutor and interlocutor, with one subject of speech, in a certain time, place and situation.

METHOD

Research on the swearing system in Ternate Malay language is done by using a qualitative descriptive method that is trying to describe the forms of swearing in Ternate Malay language. The author is a speaker of the language that is the object of study of writing, so in terms of obtaining or obtaining data consciously and actively utilizing his intuition. This is allowed in language research as has been stated by Wijana in lectures (2008) that a good researcher is a researcher who examines the language he mastered. In terms of data collection, the author directly grouped the data with the subject of writing.

Data analysis in this study is conducted by grouping the data on the forms of swearing. Furthermore, the forms of swearing are put into the context of usage. In this case, As an introspective method that is by creating sentences by giving context to the forms of expression. Besides, the referential matching method is also used to determine the identity of the linguistic unit according to the referred referent.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Forms of Swearing in Ternate Malay

The form of swearing in Ternate Malay is distinguished by words, phrases, and clauses.

a) Swearing in the form of words

Swearing in the form of words consist of **base word** such as, *fuma* 'stupid', *fofoki* 'eggplant', *meki* 'spirit with an ugly face', *yakis* 'monkey', *suanggi* 'a kind of spirit or human being, usually an older woman who has black magic and likes to prey on small children', *golojo* 'greedy', *pulia* 'sissy', *nao-nao* 'stupid'; **words with affixes** such as, *bakudis* 'scabies', *panako* 'cowardly', and *pangkonto* 'likes to fart', **compound words** such as, *nenek moyang* 'ancestor', *putarbale* 'likes to lie', *cuka minya* 'damn', and *otak gonofu* 'brain filled with coconut coir (stupid)'. In addition to the swearing above, in Ternate Malay there are also swearing in the form of **borrowing words**, such as, from telenovela *karlota* which means 'people who like to gossip', *kaskado* (Portuguese) 'scabies' and swearing in the form of **exclamations** (interjections) such as, *woe* , and *ceu*.

Several forms of swearing have the similar meaning, such as *fuma*, *nao-nao*, and *otak gonofu* which means 'stupid'. The words *fuma* and *nao-nao* share the same meaning, in which they both mean 'stupid', but the word *nao-nao* is specifically addressed to the interlocutor who is considered a stupid and taciturnity. While the word *fuma* which means stupid is generally used to express anger, even though the adressed person is not literally stupid. The word *otak gonofu* also has the meaning of 'stupid' which means does not have any idea, that is usually used in class by teachers to students. These three forms of swearing are usually spoken by older people to younger ones.

The use of swearing can be seen in the example of sentences below:

- 1) **Otak gonofu**, *pertanyaan gampang tapi tidak bisa jawab.*
makian, *Konf+tanya mudah tetapi tidak bisa jawab.*

Stupid, easy question but unable to answer it.

- 2) **Karlota**, *gara-gara ngana orang sobakalae sana.*
makian, *gara-gara kamu orang sudah Pref+kelahi di sana.*

People who like to gossip, because of you people there are fighting

- 3) **Fuma**, *kita so bilang ngana jang biking bagitu.*
makian, *saya sudah katakan kamu jangan berbuat begitu.*

Stupid, I told you not to do that.

- 4) **Cuka minya**, *niana satu ni, kita bageka sana kong rasa.*

makian, ini anak saya ini, saya bagi ke sana lalu rasa

Damn, this kid, I will hit till you know the pain.

In addition, swearing in the Ternate Malay can also be formed by adding an interjection *e*, for instance in the form *e alifuru* 'e uncivilized', *e binatang* 'e animal', *e capruni* 'e dirty', *e pamadai* 'e flirtatious for men who like to seduce women', *e sawang* 'e careless' and *bolong kaapa e?* 'not possible e?'. The use of the interjection form *e* in these swearing can be placed before and after the swearing form.

5). **E, pamadai**, ngana paling tar bisa lia orang peanaparampuang.

Intrj, **makian**, kamu paling tidak bisa lihat orang punya anak perempuan.

E, flirtatious, you cannot stand to see someone's daughters.

b) Swearing in the form of phrases

Swearing in the form of phrases in Ternate Malay always take the form *nganape* 'your own' which is placed in front of the swearing form, for example, the phrase *nganapenenemoyang* 'your ancestors' *ngaapefofoki* 'your eggplant', *nganapetaitu* 'your dirt', and *nganapefumatu* 'your fool'. Here are the examples of sentence using swearing in the form of a phrase:

6) **Nganapenene moyang tu**, ngana kira ini ngana punya?

Makian, kamu kira ini kamu punya?

Your ancestors, do you think this is yours?

7) **Nganape tai tu**, tadi kita so kase kong.

makian, tadi saya sudah kasih kok.

Your dirt, I have just given it to you.

c). Swearing in the form of clauses

Swearing in the form of clauses in Ternate Malay, for example, *nganape biji mata taro di mana* 'where do you put your eyeballs?', *kalo ngana tar sanang bilang* 'if you don't like it, just say it', and *nganape otak tara sanangkaapa* 'your brain might not work properly or maybe you are crazy' as in the example of sentence;

8) **Ngana pe biji mata taro di mana**, kong tar lia orang pe kaki

Makian, lalu tidak lihat orang punya kaki

Where do you put your eyeballs which makes you even cannot see people's feet?

9) **Nganape otak tar sanangkaapa**, saya bilang kase maso cepat kong

ngana baru kumpul skarang?

makian, saya bilang kasih masuk cepat lalu kamu baru kumpul sekarang?

Maybe you're crazy, I have said to quickly submit (KRS) yet you have just submitted it?

B. Swearing References in Ternate Malay

Based on the availability/unavailability of the references, swearing in Ternate Malay can be distinguished into referential swearing and non-referential swearing. Referential swearing is swearing that has a reference, for example, *meki* refers to a certain spirit with an ugly face, *poro bibi* refers to a bulging belly, and *yakis* refers to a certain ugly animal (monkey). Meanwhile, non-referential swearing is swearing that does not have a reference, for instance, *woe*, *bangsat*, *biadab* and *ceu*. Swearing that has a reference can be grouped in various categories, such as, animals, body parts, body defects, spirits, fruit names, kinships, professions, and circumstances.

a) References of swearing in the category of spirits

The forms of swearing in the Ternate Malay which refer to the name of spirits are usually appraised as something that does not have feelings within Ternate society. These forms of swearing refer to the characteristics and physical forms of spirits such as scary, creepy, ugly, long hair and messy. The spirits who are the reference in this BMT swearing are as follow,

Swearing in BMT Meaning

Suanggi	'an occult old geezer who preys on kids'.
Meki	'ugly face devil'

Example in sentences:

- 10) E, **suanggi**, pi cuci muka sana.
Intrj, **makian**, pergi cuci muka di sana.

E, Messy-haired human-eating old geezer, go wash your face first

- 11) **Meki**, dari tadi cari nganametaradatu
makian, dari tadi cari kamu tetapi tidak ada.

ugly face devil, I've been looking for you but you were not there.

The word *suanggi* in the first sentence above means a spirit or an occult old geezer who is usually believed by the villagers to be someone who can prey on kids/babies. This old geezer has a physical form of long hair and is somewhat messy. At first glance, it looks scary. This swearing is conveyed by someone who is unhappy or angry seeing kids or the person that has just woken up from sleep and looks still messy both his face and hair and does not immediately wash the face or straighten the hair but is still in a maseed up state and already end up at the

dining table or on the front of the house terrace. The condition of this person looks like a *suanggi* spirit.

The word *meki* means a spirit with an ugly face that is invisible but does indeed exist. Only certain people can see it. This swearing, in the second sentence above, is conveyed by someone who was angry and upset because he was tired of seeking and has just encountered what he was looking for. His anger and irritation are expressed in the form of swearing. Metaphorically, the person that has been looking for is addressed as *meki* because of his hard-to-see existence.

b) References of swearing in the category of animals

The form of swearing that refers to animals is usually for certain animals with their characteristics. For example,

Swearing in BMT	Meaning
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Yakis	'monkey'
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goropa	'a type of fish that is always at the bottom of the sea'
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gai	'maggots'.
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Example in sentences:

12) **E, gai, cokodidi sampee orang**

Intrj, **makian**, badan bergerak sampai orang

larang me tara dengar tu.

larang pun tidak dengar itu

E, maggots, your body keeps moving to the point where you just ignore our warnings.

The word *gai* in the sentence above means maggots. Maggots are animals which tend to move like jumping here and there. In this sentence *gai* is an intended swearing to the people who cannot keep staying still but keep moving like maggots. Even though has been told to stay still, but prefer to move around.

c) References of swearing in the category of fruit names

The form of swearing that refers to the name of the fruit is *fofoki* 'eggplant'. This form of swearing is conveyed by someone who is angry, especially aimed to male people. This swearing is intended to refer to a part of the male body that is considered taboo, but it refers to an eggplant.

13) **E, fofoki, banakal sampeso tara atorang.**

Intrj, **makian** nakal sampai sudah tidak aturan

E, eggplant, your naughtiness is way beyond compromise.

d) References of swearing in the category of body defects

Forms of swearing that refer to body defects include:

Swearing in BMT Meaning

Ponoso	'pug nose'
Pulia	'sissy'
Kaskado	'scabies'
Pongo	'deaf'

Example in a sentence:

14) **E, Pongo**, kita pangge dari tadi kong tar mau stertu.
Intrj, **makian**, saya panggil dari tadi lalu tidak mau peduli itu

E, deaf, I keep calling but you simply did not care.

The word *pongo* in sentence (12) above means deaf, it is intended for someone who has been called but doesn't want to respond to the call. The speaker is annoyed because he has called several times but was not heeded. Finally with a shout, using the word *pongo*. The word *pongo* refers to a person who can't hear or is literally deaf.

The forms of swearing categorized as body defects above are seemingly seen as greeting forms, but these forms are not actual greetings but swearing since they are conveyed with a highly emotional state with a high tone and hard pressure.

e) References of Swearing in the category of profession.

Forms of swearing that refer to the profession include:

Swearing in BMT	Meaning
Rente	'moneylender'
Papancuri	'thief'
Bajingang	'bastard'
Lonte	'bitch'

Here is the example of sentence using the form of swearing:

15) **Lonte**, so tara ada karjalaengkongbaganggu orang pe laki.
Makian, sudah tidak ada kerja lain lalu Pref+ganggu orang punya suami

Bitch, you don't have anything to do other than seducing someone's husband.

The word *lonte* refers to a woman who has tried to seduce someone's husband. This woman has seduced the speaker's husband and the speaker thus refers to the woman as bitch, which is a woman who likes to stick herself to a masher.

f) References of swearing in the category of kinships

The forms of swearing that refer to kinships are the *nene moyang* 'your ancestor' and *nganapemai* 'your mother'.

Example in sentence:

- 16) **Nganapemai**, *kita bageka sana kongtau rasa ni.*
Makian, saya bagi ke sana lalu tahu rasa ini

Your mother, I'll hit you till you know the pain.

g) Reference of swearing in the category of Objects

The form of swearing that has a reference in the form of objects is *talor* 'eggs', *tai* 'dirt', *tai kucing* 'cat dirt', *otak udang* 'stupid', *cuka minya* 'vinegar and oil'.

For example:

- 17) E, **talor**, jaga tu ngana pe ade sana,
Intrj, **makian**, jaga itu kamu punya adik di sana,

Jang talalo bajalang lagi.
jangan Pref+laluPref+jalan lagi

E, eggs, take care of your sister, don't keep going out for a walk.

h) References of swearing in the category of circumstances

The references to this form of swearing are, *fuma* 'stupid', *bodo* 'stupid', *gila* 'crazy', *sinting* 'crazy', *capruni* 'dirty', *sawang* 'rushing which ends up harming others or making things worse', *furiki* 'is a kind of rope made from palm skin which is made by twisting and turning to form a rope'. This swearing is intended for people who like to talk but not in accordance with reality. The word *furiki* refers to the process of making a rope which means twisting or turning from telling the truth. This form of swearing refers to a person's mental state.

For example:

- 18) E, **furiki**, ngana cari gara-gara deng kita?
Intrj, **makian**, kamu cari gara-gara dengan saya?

E, turn around, are you looking for a fight with me?

C. The function of swearing in Ternate Malay

It has been stated previously that swearing is used to express one's displeasure, hatred, joy, confusion, and dissatisfaction to another person. Thus the forms of

swearing serve to implement the emotive function of a language. In Ternate Malay, the form of swearing is used to express displeasure, anger, or irritation such as, *jahanam* 'hell' *fuma* 'stupid', *alifuru* 'uncivilized', and *setang* 'devil'.

For example in the sentence:

- 19) **Jahanam**, *ngana yang biking kong ngana bilang kita?*
Makian, kamu yang bikin lalu kamu bilang saya?

Hell, you did it, but you blame me.

Swearing is also used to insult or mock the interlocutor, such as *budo* 'albino', *karempeng* 'skinny' and *ngisi* 'laughing with gums'.

For example in sentence:

- 20) **Karempeng**, *tar makang-makang kaapa kong badang*
Makian, tidak Red-makan mungkin lalu badan

So sama deng lidi.
sudah sama dengan lidi

Skinny, you might not eat for such a long time since the body looks like a stick.

Sometimes swearing is also used to refer to admiration for someone such as, *bajingan* 'bastard' *goropa* 'name of a type of fish' and *setang* 'devil'. These forms of swearing are used as a greeting when the speaker and the interlocutor have not met for a long time. As for the example in a sentence:

- 21) **Bajingan**, *nganaso hebat skarang, e?*
Makian, kamu sudah hebat sekarang Intrj?

Bajingan, kamu sudah hebat sekarang ya?

Swearing forms are also used to express feelings of disappointment, such as *parsetang* 'an expression to state that you simply do not care' and *kas tinggal kasana* 'let it go'. As for example in a sentence:

- 22) **Parsetang**, *ngana mo baeka, tar baeka*
Makian, kamu mau baik+Suf, tidak baik+Suf

kita so tar faduli.
saya sudah tidak peduli

Parsetang, whether you want to be good or not, I don't care anymore.

From the quotation that applies in the case of this study, namely the source implies that swearing in communication is a form of communication oriented reflects the values of the speech community. There are also some scholars who studying sociolinguistics. Common sense understanding is what can happen the fact of the formation of speech communities that use swear words in their language communication that regards swearing as the norm.

Swearing is included in emotive or expressive functions because in swearing the speaker pours out his heart. These feelings include anger, annoyance, regret, and joy. An oath is a derivative form of the verb form 'oath', which is to express vile (dirty, rude, etc.) words (utterances) as an outlet for anger or resentment. Swearing itself is a noun which means vile words uttered out of anger and so on.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

It can be concluded that there are three forms of swearing, which are swearing in the form of words, phrases and clauses identified in Ternate Malay. Some of these forms of swearing do have references and some do not. The forms of swearing that have references are grouped into forms of swearing which refer to animals, names of fruits, body defects, circumstances, objects, kinships, and professions. Some forms of swearing seem like greetings, especially those that refer to body defects, but in their utterance, they are conveyed in an angry state with a high tone and such hard pressure which makes them categorized as swearing. The use of these forms of swearing is to express anger, irritation, disappointment, admiration, and to insult or mock the interlocutor.

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