

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. **Background of study**

According to Hyland (2004:1) language is seen as central way in which we construct our live. Language is also used to show our expression, ideas, opinion and feeling. Moreover Brown (1994: 5) stated that a consolidation of the definition of language yields the following composite definition, they are: (1). Language is systematic and generative; (2). Language is a set of arbitrary symbol; (3). The symbols are primarily vocal but may also be visual; (4). The symbol has conventionalized meanings to which they refer; (5) Language is used for communication; (6). Language operates in a speech community or culture; (7) Language is essential human, although possibly not limited for human; (8). Language is acquired by all people in much the same way - language and language learning both have universal characteristic.

The phenomenon of language has brought up many ways in expressing the language itself. There are bad language and good language that usually used by people to express their feeling, idea, and emotions. According to Chaika (1982: 2) people use language to reveal or conceal personal identity, character, and background without realizing that they are actually doing so. Therefore, every person has their own way to choose the language variation which can confirm one's identity. Some people may prefer to use language that has a strong connotation to express certain feeling, for example sad or angry. To achieve this, they sometimes use certain kind of words that are considered as bad or inappropriate to use such as taboo language. People use taboo language to swear because it is the strongest way to express their condition or feeling. Moreover as Jay (1999: 84) stated, that people, as a kind of emotional animal have a desire to express their feelings, relieve their negative stress, and establish their identities and status through their speech. The use of taboo language can help them to achieve these purposes effectively. Taboo words may functions means to express

or social humor, catharsis, or showing the power. According to Wardaugh (2006:239), taboo words are disregarded in particular occasion because they have several functions such as to draw attention to oneself, to show contempt, to be provocative and to mock authority.

Another reason for using taboo by Hayahawa (1990:48) is to express anger, the uttering of forbidden words may provide a relatively harmless verbal substitute for going berserk and smashing furniture; they may act as a kind of safety valve in our moments of crisis. However, it seems that nowadays the attitude towards the function of taboo words has already changed. The changes happened because the legal sanctions were disappearing and there were tendency that now people are getting more relaxed to accept taboo words. As a result, taboo language is now commonly found when someone expresses the emotive feeling.

Nowadays, we can find taboo language easily. We can hear from conversation on television, real life, books, song, etc. The phenomenon of taboo language also can be easily found in internet meme. Internet has made some people overshoots in using language to communicate. For example internet meme become phenomenon because it increases rapidly in cyber world. Meme is well known as a means of communication to express our feelings to others. Internet memes give the chance to many people to be more creative, and people show their memes through social media such as facebook, twitter, instagram, tumblr, pinterest, etc. Brunelo (2012:56) stated that Internet-memes are, for certain, no examples of high-arts, and neither of scientific innovation. They involve, nevertheless, a more 'mundane' and 'ordinary' kind of creativity, one that is often referred to as 'everyday-creativity'.

Meme becomes something that is very familiar in the world, most of people know about meme because of the rapid movement of the internet. Memes provide a powerful new way to combine few things such as, creativity, art, message, and humor in the internet culture. For Leight (1996:51), memes are "actively contagious ideas" memes as information patterns infecting human minds. One of the few cultural anthropologists to actively consider memes as units of culture describes them as "self-replicating [cultural] representations".

According to Jezza (2011:3) internet memes is most commonly used to describe certain kinds of information disseminated among the Internet users by themselves. This information may include pictures, films (usually short), and video clips, graphics, texts, quotes, animations, as well as their various combinations (e.g. captioned pictures). Diaz (2011:83) stated that meme has gone beyond the academic definition; this due to the expansion of the computer usage and the exponential growth of the Internet, particularly forums, chats, blogs and social networks; the concept was coined to a new form of internet communication.

The writer is interested in analyzing taboo language used in internet meme. A lot of captions in internet meme are full of taboo language. Problem may happen through the use of taboo language in internet meme when they are used to insult others. The following are some examples of meme which include taboo language:



The use of taboo language by EFL learners can be caused by many factors such as economy, social background, norm, and the environment where they live. The researcher wants to know the types of taboo language in internet meme. This study takes students of English and teacher of English as the subjects of this research, the title of this research is *“EFL Learners’ Comprehension of English Taboo Words in Internet Meme”*.

The writer thinks that it is essential to analyze the taboo words because it will help people to understand taboo words used in internet meme. Although there have been many researchers examining taboo words most of them focused on taboo words in certain culture and this research is focus on students’ comprehension of taboo language.

### **B. Limitation of the Study**

The scope of Pragmatics Analysis is very broad, so this study is limited on EFL learners’ comprehension of taboo language in internet meme. This is due to the fact that the study of EFL learners’ comprehension of English taboo words in internet meme has not been researched yet.

### **C. Problem Statement**

Based on the previous background of study, the researcher aims to analyzing the problems, as follow:

1. What types of taboo words used in internet meme?
2. How is the EFL learners’ comprehension about English taboo words in internet meme?

### **D. Objectives of the Study**

Based on the problem above, the objective of this study is to answer the problem as follows:

1. To describe and identify the types of taboo words in internet meme.

2. To describe the comprehension of EFL learners towards English taboo words in internet meme.

### **E. Significance of the Study**

The researcher expects that this research give the benefits theoretically and practically, as follows:

#### 1. Theoretical Benefits

This study can give description about taboo language. The EFL learners are able to understand the type of taboo words and the research finding will give additional information to the other linguistic researcher.

#### 2. Practical Benefit

Through this research, the reader will have new knowledge about taboo words especially about the types of taboo language. Moreover, the readers will be able to understand that taboo words are bad forms of language that cannot be spoken in any situation.

### **F. Research Paper Organization**

This research is divided into five chapters structurally.

Chapter 1: Introduction, This is consisting of the background of the study, limitation of the study, problem statement, objective of the study, the benefits of the study, and the organization of the paper.

Chapter II: is dealing with the literature review and theoretical review. It consists of the notion of sociolinguistic, pragmatic, sociopragmatics, pragmalinguistics, interlanguage pragmatics, taboo words, concept of taboo words, meme and internet meme.

Chapter III contains the research method that consists of the research type, the research object, the data validity, the technique of collecting data, and the technique of analyzing data.

Chapter IV: research result, In this part, the writer presents the data analysis, the discussion of research findings.

Chapter V is conclusion, and Suggestion.