

**An analysis of swearing word translation  
in “four brothers” movie**

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**CHAPTER I**

**INTRODUCTION**

**A. Research Background**

People use language to express their feelings, ideas, and intentions, or in other word it is used to communicate to the others. People also often use language to express their emotion, for example using swearing words to express emotive feeling, anger, and other strong emotion.

Basically, swearing words are words regarded as dirty, vulgar, rude and offensive. According to Andersson and Trudgill, swearing word is a bad language, which is used to be taboo to be said. “One of the most obvious forms of ‘bad’ language is, of course, bad language – in other words, swearing.” (Andersson and Trudgill, 1990:14).

Andersson and Trudgill define swearing as “a type of language use in which the expression: (a) refers to something that is taboo and/or stigmatized in the culture; (b) should not be interpreted literally; (c) can be used to express strong emotion and attitudes,” (Andersson and Trudgill, 1990:53).

To explain more about the definition of swearing above, Andersson and Trudgill give an example, that is the word *shit*. The word *shit* literally refers to a tabooed item, namely excrement. However, when it is used as swearing, it cannot be literally defined as excrement, but it is defined as the expression of emotive feeling.

The existence of swearing words can be different in different societies. It depends on the culture, value and social background of the speakers. Time also brings influence for the change of swear words. Several words which are used to be taboo to be said, after some periods, are not taboo anymore. Besides, gender and age also influence the use of swearing words.

A typical swearing in English and most other European languages involves *blasphemic* utterances – that is, words which refer to (Christian) religion in a disrespectful way. The native speakers swear by heaven and hell and their inhabitants. “Other swear-words, such as *piss off*, *cunt* and *sod*, come from two other areas from which many swear-words in many languages are taken- bodily functions and sex.” (Andersson and Trudgill, 1990).

There is another kind of swearing words similar to *blasphemic*, that is *profanity*. Profanity represented a secular indifference to religion or religious figures, while blasphemy was a more offensive attack on religion and religious figures. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Profanity>).

The use and meaning of swearing word is culturally and linguistically specific. For example, many swearing words in Quebec French are a corruption of religious terminology, while many English obscenities tend to reference

sexuality. A term which functions as a profanity in one language may often lack any profane quality when translated into another language. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Profanity>).

Meanwhile, in Indonesia swearing words are taken from something which is dirty, like *'tai'* or faeces, and from animals, like *'anjing'* or dog.

Translators often cannot find the equivalent expressions in the target language. Ideally, the translators must be able to convey the message as naturally as possible and find the equivalent expression to give the same effect as the effects found in the original expressions.

The differences of values, norms, and cultures make translating swearing word more problematic. Usually, if swearing words occur in American films broadcast in Indonesian television, they are not translated, as can be seen in the following example:

Gangster : Yo, what the **hell** y'all want?  
          Y'all ain't no cops. What the **hell** you doing here?  
T : Mau apa kalian? Kalian bukan polisi. Untuk apa kalian kesini?

The example is taken from "Four Brothers" movie dialogue. It is a dialogue between the gangster and Bobby, Angel and Jack. Those swearing words are used by the gangster to express his anger. The gangster was angry because Bobby, Angel and Jack made a chaos when they came to the club and told a lie to everybody that they were cops. As seen, the swearing words *'damn'* and *'hell'* are omitted.

Example 2:

Police : If this woman's such a **goddamn** saint,  
          how did she end up raising four total **fuck-ups**?

T : Jika wanita ini sangat baik kenapa membesarkan 4 penjahat?

The example is also taken from “Four Brothers” movie dialogue. It is a dialogue between the police officers. Swearing word ‘*goddamn*’ is used by one of the police officers to express his confusion and to emphasize characteristic of saint, to show that the woman is like a ‘*saint*’, even more. The officer feels confuse why a woman that is such a saint raised four total ‘*fuck-ups*’. As seen, the swearing word ‘*goddamn*’ is omitted.

The omission of the words ‘*hell*’ and ‘*goddamn*’ on the examples above does not change the message of the text, but the tone or the expression of the source text cannot be felt in the target text.

Even though there are some swearing words which are translated into Indonesian, they are translated with the more polite words or changed with their euphemism in Indonesian. For example swearing word ‘*bastard*’ translated into ‘*anak nakal*’ as found in the example below;

ST : The greatest mother four degenerate *bastards* ever had.

TT : Ibu terbaik yang dimiliki oleh 4 *anak nakal*.

According to Oxford Learner’s Pocket Dictionary, ‘*bastard*’ means “child of unmarried parents”, or it can refer to “very unpleasant person”. But here, the word ‘*bastard*’ is only a rude name-calling. Meanwhile ‘*anak nakal*’ means ‘*naughty kid*’. It is obviously seen that the swearing word ‘*bastard*’ is euphemized into ‘*anak nakal*’. Moreover, the word ‘*degenerate*’ is given as intensifier.

Facing that phenomenon, the researcher is interesting to analyze the translation of swearing words, especially in movie translation. The data source of

this analysis is a movie entitled “Four Brothers”, directed by John Singleton. The movie released in 2005 by Paramount a Viacom Company.

### **B. Research Limitation**

In this research, the researcher analyzed only the translation of the dialogue which contains some swearing words in the “Four Brothers” movie. The research analyzed the translation strategies, the accuracy and the acceptability of the translation.

### **C. Problem Statements**

Based on the research background, the researcher proposes some problem statements as follows:

- 1 What strategies are used to translate the swearing words in the “Four Brothers” movie?
- 2 What are the impacts of the strategies to the quality of the translation especially the accuracy and the acceptability of swearing words translation in the “Four Brothers” movie?

### **D. Research Objectives**

The goals of this research are:

1. to find out the kinds of translation strategies employed in translation of swearing words in the “Four Brothers” movie.
2. to know the impacts of the strategies to the quality of the translation especially the accuracy and the acceptability of swearing words translation in the “Four Brothers” movie

### **E. Research Benefit**

The researcher expects that this research will be beneficial for:

1. Translator

The result of this research can be used as a reference for translator to translate movies containing swearing words.

2. Students

This research will be useful for students as additional reference.

3. Other researchers

This research can be used as an addition reference for the other researchers to conduct further research about translating swearing words.

4. Lecturers

This research can be used as an addition reference for the lecturers in teaching the translation subject.

