

SWEAR WORDS IN FRENCH : ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL CLASS AND GENDER

MAKIAN DALAM BAHASA PRANCIS: ANALISIS KELAS SOSIAL DAN GENDER

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Abstract

French swear words are used to express emotions and serve various functions, both private and social. Swear words represent social groups and genders. This study of swear words used a descriptive-qualitative method with data from two French novels of different social-class settings. The results of this study indicate that swear words found among the French upper class are different from those used by the lower class. The upper class uses swear words with references to situations, character traits, professions, ethnicities, and animals. The lower class uses swear words that refer to situations, animals, professions, and body parts. Through swear words, the upper class preserves their social status from generation to generation. From a gender perspective, men tend to use swear words with references to professions and body parts, while women tend to use swear words that refer to body parts, character traits, and situations.

Keywords: *French swear words, social class, gender.*

Abstrak

Ujaran makian bahasa Prancis digunakan sebagai sarana untuk mengungkapkan emosi yang memiliki berbagai fungsi, baik personal maupun sosial. Makian merepresentasikan kelompok sosial dan jender. Penelitian makian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif-interpretatif dengan data dua novel Prancis berlatar kelas sosial berbeda. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pada kelompok sosial atas ungkapan makian disampaikan secara tidak langsung sedangkan pada kelompok sosial bawah ungkapan makian disampaikan secara langsung kepada pihak yang dimaki. Kedua kelompok sosial menggunakan profesi sebagai makian tetapi kelompok sosial atas juga menggunakan etnis sebagai makian. Melalui makian, kelompok sosial atas melestarikan status sosial mereka dari generasi ke generasi. Dari perspektif jender, laki-laki dan perempuan menggunakan makian yang mengacu pada nama alat kelamin. Laki-laki memiliki lebih banyak variasi penggunaan makian.

Kata kunci: makian bahasa Prancis, kelas sosial, gender

Introduction

Swear word or invective is an emotional utterance in the form of rude words or innuendos, which usually function as expressions of anger or hatred directed at someone (Wijana & Rohmadi, 2006: 109). Invective is a language feature manipulated by the speaker to achieve a pragmatic function. In other words, swear words uttered by a speaker contains an implicit intention that influences their action and that of the interlocutor. Such utterance aims to express anger, frustration, annoyance, etc., which goes beyond the literal meaning. In usage, invective can be seen as a tool to express emotions that serve various functions, such as personal and social (Kurniawan, 2009). This study of invective belongs to the field of sociolinguistics. In simple terms, sociolinguistics is the study of the correlations between language and society. Janet Holmes (1995: 43) states in her book "... they are interested in explaining why we speak differently in different social contexts. They are concerned with identifying the social functions of language and how it is used to convey social meaning".

Many researchers have conducted studies on swear words. The following are some researches on swear words and their translations: (i) Fasya and Suhendar (2013) "Variabel Sosial Sebagai Penentu Penggunaan Makian dalam Bahasa Indonesia" (Social Variables as Determinants of the Use of Swear Words in Indonesian" in the journal *Linguistik Indonesia*; (ii) Karsana (2015) "Referensi dan Fungsi Makian dalam Bahasa Kaili" (Reference and Function of Swear Words in Kaili Language" in the journal *Metalingua*; (iii) Anggraini and Himmawati (2017) in the journal *Language Horizon* with her article "Translation Equivalence of Swear words in *The Walking Dead* Comic"; (iv) Vitasari (2013) in the journal *Lantern* with her article "Analysis On The Translation of Swear Words Produced by Two Main Characters in *A Very Harold And Kumar Christmas* Movie"; (v) Ameri and Ghazizadeh (2014) in the journal *IJR-ELT* with the article "A Norm-Based Analysis of Swearing Rendition in Professional Dubbing and Non-Professional Subtitling from English into Persian". The above researches examine swear words in terms of meaning, reference, and translation. This article analyzes swear words from the perspectives of social class and gender.

Language represents concepts, ideas, and the feelings of one person for another. Stuart Hall (2005) sees this representation as the process of producing meaning through language. In other words, representation is the use of language to convey something meaningful to others. Language as a representation is related to society's stereotypes regarding social class and gender. Social class is a group of people with certain similarities, such as occupation, education, economic status, etc. (Sumarsono & Partana, 2002). Language is a social phenomenon whose usage is influenced by various linguistic and non-linguistic factors, including social and situational factors. Social factors here are economic status, gender, social status, age, et cetera. Different social groups use different language variations (Trudgill, 1974: 34). Aside from Trudgill, Labov (1976) has pointed out the correlation between language and social groups as language is closely related to social class. The use of language among the upper class is different from that of the lower social class. Social class refers to the hierarchical differences (or stratification) of people or groups in society or culture. Most communities have social groups, but not all have the same kinds of social class categorization. Based on the characteristics of social stratification, we can find several class divisions or groups in society. According to Bourdieu (1984), a class does not rely on historical thoughts or political economy alone, but also class practices that include tastes in outfits and

various social choices in everyday life. For Bourdieu, social classes, especially the intellectual and upper classes, preserve their social life through generations. Apart from social class, language is also related to gender.

Gender is defined as the inherent traits found in men and women that are shaped by social and cultural factors. Gender differences are seen as loose, impermanent, which make it easier for us to build a picture of the dynamic reality of the relationships between women and men that are more precise and in accordance with the reality in society. It is clear then why gender requires scrutiny. Efforts to identify the differences between how men and women express themselves through language have been made throughout history, even before the existence of scientific research. As stated by Sunderland (2006: 2-3), the phenomenon of gender exists in proverbs from various cultures. For example, there is the Jewish proverb: "Women are nine times more talkative than men". The Chinese say: "Three women together make a theatrical performance", and in Russia, we hear this of women: "The tongue is bubbling but the head knows nothing about it." According to Fasih (2010: 9), anything that is interchangeable in the nature of women and men can change from time to time, from place to place, and from one class to another. A study that connects language and gender was also carried out by Lakoff (1975), who states that there are several reasons why men and women use different forms of language, such as the differences in social status as women are usually placed as subordinates, and that there are functions of speech that denote masculinity. This shows that language construction cannot be separated from discourse as well as social and cultural evolution. In other words, language was not born out of a vacuum but is a form of actualization of thoughts related to political and contextual powers (Udasmoro, 2009: 26). This article analyzes French swear words from the perspectives of social class and gender.

Method

This study presents data from two French novels, namely *Madame Bovary* and *Syngué Sabour - Pierre de Patience*, each representing a different social class in society. The novel form was chosen for this purpose as it is a linguistic communication medium—in that it relates stories using language—and can have different social classes as settings. Communication in a novel refers to the delivery of the story by the narrator to the reader. The novel as a text can be examined as a linguistic action. The linguistic action occurs at two levels, namely (i) the outer level of the novel and (ii) the inner level of the novel. Communication at the novel's outer level refers to the effort to convey a certain message from the author through the novel's content. By contrast, communication at the novel's inner level refers to the delivery of the story by the narrator to the reader (Hoed, 1993: 7-8). The novel *Madame Bovary* represents the upper-class, whereas *Syngué Sabour - Pierre de Patience* represents the lower-class. In addition, two considerations were given for the selection of these two novels as research data. The first is the response of the French public to the novels. Gustave Flaubert wrote *Madame Bovary* in the 19th century. Gustave Flaubert found himself on trial on charges that his novel had violated social norms by narrating sensual events and exposing scandals, and therefore a transgression against moral and religious norms. Moreover, it was deemed too blatant in its depictions, especially of the social class that dominated the capitalist regime: the bourgeoisie. Its revelation of the life of the bourgeoisie shattered the social norms of France at the time. One example is its commentary on the sanctity of marriage, namely through the hypocrisy of the

characters who do not abide by such norms. The author's persistence in defending his arguments in court led to the acquittal of all charges. Due to the furor, the novel sold 15,000 copies within six months. The novel has been considered a literary revolution and admired not only in France but also in Europe, America, and Asia, including Indonesia.

The noun phrase *syngué sabour* in *Syngué Sabour - Pierre de Patience* is derived from the Persian words "singué", which means stone, and "sabour", which means patience. In Persian mythology, *syngué sabour* is a mystical black stone that one would keep so that they could whisper to it anything that they dared not reveal to anyone else, such as their misfortune, suffering, distress, and anger. The rock would one day explode, and at the same time the whisperer would be free. Oppression seems to be a recurring theme for women in any part of the world. The novel presents and emphasizes the dark side of being a woman. The story begins with the description of a simple room. On one of the walls is a *khanjar* (a traditional Middle-Eastern dagger) and the portrait of a man whose "face is square and framed by two well-groomed sideburns." Under those decorations, the same man was lying down in a miserable condition: stiff as a corpse, thoroughly emaciated with bones jutting out under his skin. A woman was holding the man's chest that was beating so slowly, a mere indication of the life that clung to his body. From day to day, the woman became increasingly hopeless about her husband. In her desperation, she rattled off the secrets that had been suppressing her soul. She disclosed his faults without holding anything back. Each day, the woman became increasingly enthused in telling him about the pain, burden, misery, and suffering she had had to endure simply because she had been born a woman. To the wife, the man was her stone of patience. The literary work was published by P.O.L. and won the most prestigious literary award in France, Prix Goncourt, in 2008. It became adapted into a film of the same title in 2013 (Rahimi, 2013).

This study applied a descriptive-qualitative approach. According to Creswell (2011), in qualitative research, a researcher widely explores information from objects/participants by posing general questions and collects data through a subjective elaboration of the text. Moleong (2007) states that through a qualitative approach, a researcher aims to comprehend a phenomenon experienced or observed by research subjects holistically and describe it in a natural and specific context (p. 6). The next step after data classification is a descriptive analysis using a descriptive method. Here, swear words based on social class and gender as data get their descriptions with the help of a French dictionary. This descriptive-qualitative approach has proven effective in this study that sought to observe and interpret the different meanings of French swear words from the perspectives of social class and gender.

The data for this research are the swear words identified in the two French novels, *Madame Bovary* (abv. MB) (Flaubert, 1972, 1990) and *Syngué Sabour - Pierre de Patience* (abv. PP) (Rahimi, 2008, 2012). The stages of data collection stages comprise: (i) reading the two French novels; (ii) identifying and recording the swear words in the novels as data; (iii) identifying the data of swear words in terms of social class and gender; and (iv) interpreting the data of swear words in terms of social class and gender.

Results

Swear words Based on Social Class

Internal differences in society are reflected through language. Different social groups use different variations of the language. Such is the case in the use of swear words. Swear words used among the upper class are different from those used by the lower class of society.

Table1. Table of Swear words Based on Social Class

No.	Social Class	Reference	Examples in Data
1.	Upper	Condition	<p>(1). <i>Je le crois très bête. Elle en est fatiguée sans doute. Il porte des ongles sales et une barbe de trois jours. Tandis qu'il trotte à ses malades, elle reste à ravauder des chaussettes. Et comme s'ennuie ! on voudrait habiter la ville, danser la polka tous les soirs ! pauvre petite femme ! ... (MB:181)</i></p> <p><i>I'd say he's very stupid. I'd bet she's tired of him. He's got dirty fingernails and a three days' beard. While he toddles off to see his patients, she stays home and darns socks. And everything's so boring! How we'd love to live in the city and dance polkas every night! Poor little thing!</i></p>
		Characteristic	<p>(2). <i>Le mollah ne viendra pas aujourd'hui », dit-elle avec un certain soulagement. « il a peur des balles perdues. Il est aussi lâche que tes frères. » Elle se lève et fait quelques pas. « Vous, les hommes, vous êtes tous de lâches ! » (PP:28)</i></p> <p><i>"The mullah won't come today," she says with some relief. "He's scared of stray bullets. He's as much of a coward as your brothers." She stands up and moves a few steps away. "You men, you're all cowards!"</i></p>
		Profession	<p>(3). <i>La fille au père de Rouault, une demoiselle de ville! Allons donc! leur grand-père était berger, et ils ont un cousin qui a failli passer par les assises pour un mauvais coup, dans une dispute. Ce n'est pas la peine de faire tant de fla-fla, ni de se montrer le dimanche à l'église avec une robe de soie, comme une comtesse. Pauvre bonhomme, d'ailleurs, qui sans les colzas de l'an passé, eût été bien embarrassé de payer ses arrérages! (MB:42)</i></p>

*'Old Rouault's girl, a town-bred young lady! Oh, come on! **Their grandfather was a shepherd**, and they've a cousin who nearly got taken to court for some dirty trick he got up to, in an argument. There's no point in her putting on such fancy airs, or showing herself in church on Sunday all done up like a countess in a silk dress. Besides, the old boy's badly off, he'd have been hard put to it to pay his back rent if it hadn't been for last year's rape crop!'*

Ethnicity (4). *Les petits Homais, malgré leur indépendance, ne pouvaient remuer sans un surveillant derrière eux; au moindre rhume, leur père les bourrait de pectoraux, et jusqu'à plus de quatre ans ils portaient tous, impitoyablement, des bourrelets matelassés. C'était, il est vrai, une manie de Mme Homais; son époux en était intérieurement affligé, redoutant pour les organes de l'intellect les résultats possibles d'une pareille compression, et il s'échappait jusqu'à lui dire:*

Tu prétends donc en faire des Caraïbes ou des Botocudos? (MB: 164)

The Homais young, despite their independence, could not stir from the house without someone to watch them; at the slightest sign of a cold, their father stuffed them with cough syrup, and until well past their fourth birthdays, they were all relentlessly made to wear padded caps. In actual fact this was an obsession of Madame Homais; her husband was secretly unhappy about it, fearing the consequences of such pressure on the organs of the intellect, and sometimes he would go so far as to say to her:

'Are you trying to make them look like little Caribs or Botocudos?' (104).

Animal (5). *T'es un **pitbull** qui mord quand on lui demande!* (MB: 223)

			<i>You're just a pitbull who bites on demand!</i>
2.	Lower	Condition	(6). Sot! disait-il, petit sot , vraiment! sot en trois lettres ! grand-chose (PP: 179) <i>'Idiot!' he was saying. 'You're a downright idiot!' No other word for it! ..."</i> (7). <i>Il faudra pourtant garder son sang-froid, raisonner, se montrer homme, ou bien passer pour un imbécile!</i> (PP: 179) <i>"... you'll have to keep your head, and produce reasoned arguments, prove you're a real man, not a halfwit!"</i>
		Animal	(8). <i>après tout, qu'un e phlébotomie ! et un gaillard qui n'a peur de rien ! une espèce d'écureuil, tel que vous le voyez, qui monte locher des noix à des hauteurs vertigineuses.</i> (MB: 179) <i>All because of a simple phlebotomy! And you a fine fellow who's not afraid of anything! Just like a squirrel, he is, he'll climb up as high as you like after nuts.</i>
		Profession	(9). <i>Et, pointant son arme vers la femme, il braille : « Je te tue, salope ! » Le canon se pose sur son ventre. « Sale pute! Satan ! »</i> (PP: 98) <i>Pointing his gun at the woman, he bawls, "I'm going to kill you, whore!" The barrel sits on her belly. "... Dirty whore! Devil!"</i> (10). <i>J'aimerais bien la voir, sa queue, quand il va apprendre la nouvelle</i> (MB:334). <i>'I wish I could see that crook's face when they told him the news'.</i>
		Body Parts	(11). <i>Je vais exploser ta chatte pourrie!</i> (PP: 98) <i>"I'm going to explode your filthy cunt! ..."</i> (12). <i>L'un d'eux allume une torche, la pointe vers l'homme paralytique, en aboyant : « Reste où tu es, sinon je te défonce le cul! »</i> (PP: 53)

*'One of them switches on a torch and points it at the motionless man, barking, "Stay where you are, or **I'll smash your head in!**"*

Source: author's data primer, 2020

In the above examples, the swear words used by the upper class are as follow: (1) *très bête* or "very stupid", which refers to condition; (2) *vous tes tous de lâches* or "you're all cowards", which refers to character; (3) *leur grand-père était berger* or 'their grandfather was a shepherd', which refers to a profession; (4) *Tu prétends donc en faire des Caraïbes ou des Botocudos* or "Are you trying to make them look like little Caribs or Botocudos?" which contains ethnicity reference; and (5) *T'es un pitbull* or "You're just a dog", which has an animal reference. On the other hand, the swear words used by the lower class are as follow: (6) *Sot! disait-il, petit sot, vraiment! sot en trois lettres* or "'Idiot!' he was saying. 'You're a downright idiot! No other word for it! ...'" and (7) *ou bien passer pour un imbécile!* that gets translated as "not a halfwit!", both of which refer to conditions; (8) *une espèce d'écureuil* or "just like a squirrel", which contains an animal reference; (9) *sale pute* or "dirty whore" and (10) *sa gueule* or "that crook", which has reference to profession; (11) *je vais exploser ta chatte pourrie* or "I'm going to explode your filthy cunt!" and (12) *je te défonce le cul* or "I'll smash your head in!", both of which refer to body parts.

Swear words based on gender

The table below presents data of swear words based on gender, namely, women, men, and gender-neutral. Gender means the characteristics or traits associated with a particular sex, either in habit, culture, or psychological behavior.

Table 2. Table of swear words based on gender

No.	Gender	Reference	Examples in Data
1	Female	Body Part	(13). <i>En effet, je n'étais qu'un morceau de viande où tu enfonçais ta sale bite.</i> (PP: 130) <i>I was a piece of meat, into which you could stuff your dirty dick.</i>
		Characteristic	(14). <i>Ceux-là, ça fait une heure qu'ils sont là pour choisir une boîte de thon. Ce sont des vicelards</i> (MB:79). <i>One over there. Two over there. They spent an hour for a can of corn. Those perverts."</i>
		Condition	(15). « ... que je la voie », revient, « il faut ... », va, « elle t'emmerde ... et moi aussi ! ». on l'entend partir avec ses deux enfants. (PP:

		25)
		<i>'must see him/her," going back, "must," forward, "... the hell with you... aunt said! and I also don't care!" He/she was heard leaving with her children."</i>
Male	Profession	(16). <i>Et, pointant son arme vers la femme, il braille : « Je te tue, salope ! » Le canon se pose sur son ventre. « Je vais exploser ta chatte pourrie ! Sale pute ! » (PP: 98)</i>
		<i>Pointing his gun at the woman, he bawls, "I'm going to kill you, whore!" The barrel sits on her belly. "I'm going to explode your filthy cunt! Dirty whore!"</i>
		(17). <i>J'en ai marre de ces gosses qui ne respectent plus rien, bordel! » (PP: 233)</i>
		<i>I'm sick of those kids who no longer respect anything. Whorehouse!"</i>
	Body Part	(18). <i>Ton honneur n'est plus qu'un morceau de viande ! Toi-même tu employais ce mot ; pour me demander de me couvrir, tu criais : Cache ta viande ! » (PP: 130)</i>
		<i>Your honor is nothing more than a piece of meat now! You used to use that word yourself. When you wanted me to cover up, you'd shout, Hide your meat!</i>
Neutral	Condition	(19). <i>« Voilà où t'a amené ton âme ! Un cadavre vivant ! » Elle s'approche de la cachette : « C'est ta maudite âme qui te cloue à terre, ma syngue saboor ! » reprend son souffle, « et ce n'est pas ton âme â la con qui, aujourd'hui me protéger. Ce n'est pas elle qui nourrit les enfants. » (PP: 129)</i>
		<i>"And look where your soul has got you! You're a living corpse!" She moves closer to the hiding place: "It's your blasted soul that's pinning you to the ground, my sang-e saboor!" She takes a deep breath:</i>

*“And it’s not **your stupid soul** that’s protecting me now, that’s for sure. It’s not your soul that’s feeding the kids.”*

(20). *Je le crois **très bête**. Elle en est fatiguée sans doute. Il porte des ongles sales et une barbe de trois jours.* (MD: 181)

*‘I’d say he’s **very stupid**. I’d bet she’s tired of him. He’s got dirty fingernails and a three days’ beard.*

Source: author’s data primer, 2020

In the examples, the swear words uttered by women are: (13) *ta sale bite* or “your dirty dick”, which refers to the male genitalia; and (14) *ce sont des vicelards* or “those perverts”, which has a characteristic reference. The swear words uttered by men are: (15) *elle t’emmerde* or “the hell with you”, which refers to a condition; (16) *sale pute* or “dirty whore” and (17) *bordel* or “whorehouse”, both of which refer to a profession; (18) *ton honneur n’est plus qu’un morceau de viande* or “your honor is nothing more than a piece of meat now”, which refers to a body part. Data (19) and (20) are gender-neutral swear words that can be uttered by either a man or a woman, and they are: (19) *un cadavre vivant* or “a living corpse”; and (20) *très bête* or “very stupid”, both of which refer to condition.

Discussion

The internal differences of society manifest in the language used. Different social groups employ different variations of their language. The use of swear words is no exception. The swear words used among the upper class are different from the ones used by the lower class. To point out some apparent differences, the upper class tends to employ swear words that refer to bad traits and ethnic groups, while the lower class would use swear words with reference to body parts. The upper class likes to highlight their established and successful characteristics, often shown through their fashion style, manner of speaking, economic status, and success (Budiasa, 2016). Due to these characteristics, they would resort to swear words that refer to bad traits that are deemed characteristic of the lower class. For the same reason, the upper class also makes references to ethnic groups, such as the Caribs and Botocudos, as found in the examples. The Caribs are an ethnic group living in the Caribbean islands, while the Botocudos are an ethnic group in Brazil. Both groups opposed the European invasion and therefore considered backward and inferior, characteristics that can easily turn into swear words. The lower class uses swear words that refer to body parts. Some have been adopted into swear words as they are considered filthy. In the examples, we find *chatte* translated into “cunt”, a body part that lets out urine, and *le cul* or “ass”, of which feces comes out.

There are some similarities in the references of swear words used by the upper and lower classes, such as conditions, animals, and professions. However, should one look more closely, certain differences are apparent, especially for swear words that

refer to conditions, namely *très bête* or “very stupid” and *imbécile*, translated as “halfwit”. Upon closer inspection, more differences become visible. Among the upper class, swear words are conveyed indirectly, namely to a third party. In contrast, the lower class conveys swear words directly to a second person. Both the upper and lower classes use swear words that refer to animals, such as *pitbull*, which is a breed of dog, and *une espèce d'écureuil*, translated as “a squirrel”. Swear words with reference to animals are among the rudest insults as they equate humans with animals. Although both are classified as animals, the pitbull is somewhat expensive, while the squirrel can be considered worthless. The same pattern appears in swear words with reference to different professions. One invective used by the upper class in the examples is *leur grand-père était berger*, translated as “their grandfather was a shepherd”, which contains reference to a job deemed poor and menial. The upper class finds this profession lowly as shepherds usually herd livestock that belongs to someone else. As for examples of swear words uttered by the lower class that refer to professions, we find *sale pute* or “dirty whore” and *sa gueule* or “that crook”, which would count as lowly to any social class.

From the above descriptions, one can purport that the upper class tends to be careful about what they say in front of others to maintain their elevated status in society. In other words, they strive to preserve their status quo from generation to generation (Bourdieu, 1984), including through the use of language. In contrast, the lower class tends to be less careful in using language in public when expressing emotions such as anger.

Studies on gender are immeasurable and the topic never loses its appeal. The correlation between gender stereotyping and the language or speech used by novel or movie characters ushers researches into the field of sociolinguistics. The following section analyzes swear words from a gender perspective.

Swear words uttered by men and women have significant differences. In the aforementioned examples, male characters use swear words with reference to professions, while the female characters shy away from such practice and instead employ swear words with reference to traits, which the male characters are absent from using. The male characters use swear words with reference to professions with the intention of being condescending. Such swear words can be categorized as misogynistic. According to Srivastava et al. (2017: 111-13), misogyny is an expression of hatred against women in the form of male privilege, patriarchy, gender discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and sexual objectification. Misogyny has been a tool for cursing and demeaning women, as shown in these examples: (16) *je vais exploser ta chatte pourrie*, translated as “I’m going to kill you, whore” and (17) *bordel*, translated as “whorehouse”. Women use swear words with reference to traits, as in (14) *ce sont des vicelards*, translated as “those perverts”, which is intended for men with foul behavior. The aforementioned invectives with reference to professions are misogynistic and have extremely rude connotations when compared with the swear word that refers to traits, which is more subtle. This proves that when faced with unpleasant situations, women tend to be able to maintain a more polite approach in their speech when compared to men (Fasya & Suhendar, 2013).

The examples also show how both the male and female characters resort to swear words that refer to body parts. An example uttered by a female character goes (13) *ta sale bite*, translated as “your dirty dick”, while the one uttered by a male character

goes: (18) *ton honneur n'est plus qu'un morceau de viande*, translated as “your honor is nothing more than a lump of meat now”. These swear words that refer to male and female body parts have something in common, namely their metaphorical quality. The emphasis in example (13) does not lie in the male genitalia but in the word “dirty”. It refers to the behavior of men who have sexual relations with women outside of wedlock, which is considered obscene because it is against social and religious norms. Moreover, example (18) *un morceau de viande* or “a lump of meat” is a metaphor for the female genitalia. It is used by men to curse women by assuming that their honor lies only in their genitals while ignoring other forms of honor. The expression also emphasizes the misogynistic notion that women are mere tools intended to satisfy men’s lust. This is contradictory to the social honors of humanity, namely knowledge, wealth, and power (Haryanto & Nugroho, 2011). The swear word *merde*, translated as “the hell”, is used by both men and women. However, men tend to use *merde*, the examples of which can be found in numerous films, without following it with other words, while women use it in conjunction with other words. One example found in the data goes: (15) *elle t'emmerde... et moi aussi*, translated as “the hell with you... aunt said”. Gender-neutral swear words, which both men and women use, are usually utterances with reference to situations that can occur to both men and women, such as in examples (19) *un cadavre vivant*, translated as “a living corpse” and (20) *très bête*, or “very stupid”. These two can be used by either men or women.

Conclusion

The swear words used among the upper class are different from the ones used by the lower class. Among the most apparent differences, the upper class tends to employ swear words that refer to bad traits and ethnic groups, while the lower class would use swear words with reference to body parts. The body parts adopted as swear words are ones considered to be dirty. There are some similarities in the references of swear words used by the upper and lower classes, such as conditions, animals, and professions. The aforementioned data of swear words shows that the upper class tends to be careful about what they say in front of other people. They strive to preserve their status quo from dwindling. On the other hand, the lower class tends to be less careful in using language in public when expressing emotions such as anger.

The swear words used by men and women have significant differences. Men tend to use swear words with reference to professions, while women employ swear words with reference to traits. Men’s use of swear words with reference to professions tends to be condescending. However, swear words with reference to male and female body parts have something in common, namely their metaphorical quality. Gender-neutral swear words, which both men and women use, usually refer to conditions that can befall both men and women.

This research of swear words is limited to social class and gender perspectives, which should open opportunities to the application of other perspectives, such as age and types of profession. Hopefully, this article can inspire other researchers to analyze swear words from other perspectives.

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