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PSYCHOLINGUISTIC STUDY OF SWEARING AND FREEDOM OF SPEECH

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ABSTRACT

We cannot denied that every language has Swear word in it. Language as communication and the accumulation of knowledge is a cognitive system, so it connected to many psychological aspects and to various areas of human brain. Swearing can be active in the left hemisphere, which regulates language as well as the right hemisphere because it provokes emotions. However, connection between brain and swearing is deeply embedded in human brain, we can see in in post-stroke aphasia patients and in corprolalia condition of people with Tourette's syndrome who cannot control swearing due to damage to the limbic system and basal galia. Swearing in certain social situations can be positive and increase pain tolerance. Swearing has an important function in human biopsychosocial Behavior. Indeed, there are many negative things about swearing, but prohibiting them with the threat of criminal punishment is not the best solution.

INTRODUCTION

On August 29 2020, the National Commission for Child Protection issued a Press Release Stop Using the Term "Anjay". The reason Komnas PA issued the Press Release was because Anjay's words contained elements of degrading, maiming people and causing hatred. (Dzulfaroh, 2020). The use of the word Anjay itself is a modification of the word "Anjing" which changes the phoneme (Kurniadi, n.d., p. 42). The issue of freedom of expression and opinion in Indonesia is not new, nor is the attempt to restrict the public's space for movement for the first time in this country. Under the Jokowi administration, the indicator for civil liberties fell from 34 in 2018 to 32 in 2019. Meanwhile, the index for freedom of expression fell from 12 from 2015 to 11 in 2019(Hamid, 2019).

The risk of initiating a ban on the use of certain words could set a bad precedent for democracy in Indonesia. The use of the word "Anjay" in certain situations has even been declared a potential for punishment by law (CNN, 2020). An approach like this opens the room for the prohibition of other words to occur again and brings us back to the new order totalitarian style of government. The author would like to remind you that the hallmark of totalitarianism is the suppression of free speech. The first priority for all totalitarian regimes is to impose restrictions on free speech. In 1917, Russian Bolsheviks moved to restrict free speech just the day after the October coup. They adopted the "Press Decree," which shut down all newspapers that "spread the dispute with slanderous distortions of fact." Lenin wrote that "to tolerate the existence of this newspaper is to stop being socialist." Similarly, just months after coming to power in 1933, the German National Socialists began burning books, and the Propaganda Ministry introduced strict censorship.

Countries that rely on totalitarian methods of government need to create powerful propaganda machines designed to replace reliable information, policy analysis and free exchange of views. Disruptive government propaganda is capable of creating images of external or internal enemies, drastically changing the real picture of the world and the course of current events, evoking feelings of xenophobia and racial or national exclusivity, and manipulating people's minds (Podrabinek, 24 C.E.).

One example of a country with a modern totalitarian government is China. A study conducted by Harvard in 2002 found that the Chinese government censored almost all media and content consumed by the public. News about independence movements in Taiwan and Tibet, protest groups such as Falun Gong, political parties in opposition to the government, and democratic sites. For most Chinese web users, these controversial topic-specific sites are not part of their daily internet routine, which focuses mostly on sports, entertainment and gaming sites. (*Communism: Censorship and Freedom of Speech*, n.d.). Critical studies are conducted (Hama, 2016) on the novel by George Orwell entitled "1984" provides an extreme picture of the dangers of controlling the use of structured language by a totalitarian government. totalitarian government manipulates language to dominate society, and language is not a social practice but has a political dimension and is considered a threat to government if people can use it freely.

Safeguarding the freedom of opinion of citizens is not only important from a human rights aspect but also has positive psychological benefits. Based on the author's observations, multidisciplinary discussions on this theme are still rare. Seeing this condition, the author is interested in discussing it even though only from the side of the person who said it. Specifically in this case, there are many claims using a psychological point of view regarding the impact of using the word "anjay" on the psychology of people who use it or hear it, especially children. Despite all these opinions, the author feels obliged to provide alternative thoughts based on research in the fields of Biopsychosocial and Psycholinguistics as a form of Academic Advocacy in campaigning the

importance of mental health through fulfilling the right to free to speak publicly.

DISCUSSION

Brain and Swearing

Language and speech take up a large part of the human brain. Language is one of the cognitive systems that humans have and is useful for conveying an unlimited number of words and sentences based on the variation limitations that are used as a means of communication and the accumulation of knowledge. In the development of research on the brain, we have identified that the part of the brain that regulates language resides in the left hemisphere (Simanjuntak, 2009, p. 192). However, there are interesting findings when conducting an assessment of the words "swear" from the side of neurobiology. Although the speech and language areas are in the left hemisphere of the brain, several studies have shown different results where swearing or swearing can occupy various other parts of the brain, for example using the right hemisphere of the brain. (Van Lancker & Cummings, 1999). When swearing is used deliberately in the context of someone's speech, the left and right hemispheres of the brain can be active simultaneously (Jay, 2009). The results of the author's study of post-stroke aphasia sufferers found many associations between damage to certain parts of the brain and language skills (Dachrud, 2015). Post-stroke Broca aphasia sufferers experience deviation of representative, directive, expressive, commissive, and declarative speech acts. (Suryani & Suantoko, 2019). In some patients with Tourette's disease who exhibit uncontrolled swearing, a condition called coprolalia is caused by brain damage to the limbic system and basal ganglia. (Van Lancker & Cummings, 1999). Speech is not only active in the part of the brain that controls speech and language, but is also closely related to emotions. Our brains construct swear words on a broader level than the parts of the brain that control speech and language functions.

From the author's observations, all cultures in the world have swear words in their language. Even if no specific word is used, there must be words that are modified in their usage according to the conditions to be used as a form of swearing. If curse is a "negative" impact on both listeners and users, the question is why does every culture develop swear words in its language vocabulary?. To answer this, Vingerhoets in his research on cursing from a biopsychosocial perspective suspects that because of its strong expressive power, swearing can provide a sense of relief and can function as a substitute behavior for physical aggression. He found some evidence that swearing can provide a higher pain tolerance for those who swear (Vingerhoets et al., 2013). This conjecture is supported by experiment (Stephens et al., 2009) which tests whether swearing affects a person's experience of pain. The experiment was carried out by making the participants put their hands into water with a temperature of 50C. The first group was asked to say neutral words and the other group was asked to swear. They then compared the duration of how long the participants could hold their hands in the cold water. This experiment showed that there were significant differences in pain duration and tolerance between the two groups. Swearing increases the tolerance to pain due to

temperature and reduces the perception of pain significantly compared to neutral words. Swearing is also considered one of the things that distinguishes humans from animals, Steven Pinker in his book *The Stuff of Thought* explains that the swearing instinct is activated when the anger sensor in the mammalian brain is activated (Pinker, 2007), however, swearing cannot be considered a simple shout of anger because there are complex social signals that are connected to a person's culture and emotional state (Byrne, 2017).

Adjusting speech to social conditions

There are many social conditions that underlie human swearing, the type of swearing that is done to adapt to social conditions is called Propositional Swearing (Pinker, 2007). Pinker explains that the types of propositional swearing are divided into dysphemistic, euphemistic, abusive, idiomatic, and emphatic swearing. In essence, the use of curse like this is done when someone consciously uses and has a purpose why he is saying swearing.

The term dysphemistic is used when someone chooses the taboo words "cursed child" over neutral terms such as naughty child. Euphemisms (euphemisms) are used to replace words which, if used directly, cause discomfort, such as replacing fat with "filled". Abusive Swearing is a curse used to intimidate or embarrass other people, usually in the form of a metaphor. In addition, there are also idiomatic words that are used to look macho, catharsis words that are used to relieve tension, and affirmative speeches to emphasize or intensify an explanation of something.

In practice, refraining from expressing emotions using cursing requires the activeness of both hemispheres, with collaboration between the two humans can exercise control to be able to adjust their speech to social situations that do not support this behavior. This inappropriate curse prevention function works especially on the inferior frontal gyri. When the inferior frontal gyri is active, the right hemisphere, which can produce swelling, can be inhibited (Finkelstein, 2018). Finkelstein's hypothesis illustrates the complexity of swearing. There are many considerations a person must make when using these words. Especially for children who use the word "anjay" in the context of swearing, we can review it from the side of the child's emotional development.

Adjustment and Self-Control

In the development of emotional maturity, a child automatically learns "swear ethics" because cursing can stimulate negative reactions from others. When this swear ethic develops well in children, they will learn to use cursing and other behaviors more selectively to achieve inter-individual goals in certain contexts. (Jay, 1999).

In general, someone says curses when experiencing strong emotions or uses them specifically to achieve certain goals. This goal can be humorous, responding to pain or giving emotional pain to the person being addressed. Furthermore (Finkelstein, 2018) proposes that cursing can produce an attitude

of solidarity, stimulate group ties or as a form of clarifying group identity and help create relaxed informal situations. Finkelstein warns that the "harsh" nature of swear words can have a negative effect on those who speak them frequently, such as a loss of authority and weakening social support.

Freedom of Speech and Psycholinguistic

Free speech can refer to a wide range of topics. Not only can it be interpreted as the opening of opportunities for individuals or organizations to express themselves freely. This can refer to the right to freely seek information and obtain it freely. In using this concept, rights holders are not active and seeking their rights, but are passive parties and rights recipients. If a particular country's media is tightly controlled - be it formal, material controls or free speech. Then the audience who uses this media does not enjoy wider freedom of speech. The Declaration on Human Rights by the United Nations states the Right to Speech included in its article on freedom of expression: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and disseminate information and ideas through any media. A similar choice of words can be found in the European Convention on Human Rights. This broader understanding free speech includes anything that might hinder the free exchange of information for citizens and civic organizations (Strossen, 2018, p. 7). In Indonesia, freedom of speech is regulated in Undang – Undang Dasar 1945 pasal 28 E ayat (3) where everyone has the right to freedom of association, assembly, and expression. From the definition of the article, it can be seen that freedom of speech and expression is a human right guaranteed by every citizen. According to the author, there are very fundamental things why being free to express, express and discuss is a very essential right.

To be able to think, humans need to be given the freedom to make mistakes when formulating ideas and exploring concepts that are not necessarily productive and biased. Having the freedom to make mistakes when communicating gives us access to observe the reactions of those around us to the effect of each statement we make. In this context, the use of swear words such as "anjay" includes not only the right to freedom of opinion, but also the right to receive moral education by social responses. Carl Jung stated that without freedom there can be no morality (Jung, 1966). Freedom of speech for everyone as much as possible is not limited so that we "can" be wrong, can be biased so that everyone can express their opinion. Let everyone argue and give society freedom to judge it. The fact that swearing is an important part of language and the biopsychosocial aspects of humans, we cannot hope that children will learn its use independently. There are many risks such as broken relationships, bullying or getting caught in dangerous situations (Finn, 2017, p. 24). However, prohibiting and threat it with law as a criminal is also not the right strategy.

It is necessary for the author to emphasize that this paper is not to promote the use of swear words. The author as an academic and educator is well aware of the culture, moral values and cultural courtesy of our country. However, the authors argue that studying the dark and negative sides of humans is also an

important task so that we can gain a deeper understanding of the various psychological aspects of humans that are interrelated and intersect with other disciplines. Study and research in other fields can provide us with deeper knowledge of various aspects of our behavior.

CONCLUSION

Swear words like "Anjay" relate not only to the social psychological aspect but also the neurological aspect. There are several studies that show people who have had a stroke and lost their language function but can still speak curses. The word swear not only comes from the right hemisphere but also comes from a deeper part of the brain which is connected to the limbic system and amygdala and is connected to the unconscious nervous system. Freedom of speech enables humans to communicate and criticize and evaluate ideas. Humans in the communication process continue to broadcast information, influence and shape each other's behavior. Giving people freedom to be free of opinion is like a double-edged sword. On one blade it gives us access to testing ideas but on the other it can be used to attack using hoaxes, hate speech as well as swearing. But beyond all that, freedom is an important factor in the development of science and civilization, so the obligation to play an active role in protecting it is also an important part of an academic.

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