



ENGLISH TABOO WORDS

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Abstract:

The title of this study is English Taboo Words. Taboo is something that is considered prohibited to be said or done in certain communities or cultures. As taboo is related to culture, then taboo in each country is different as the culture in each country is different too. This study found out that taboo in western countries, for example America, tends to relate with identity and sex while taboo in eastern countries tend to relate with belief/myth. This finding is apparently because America is a country that valuably prefer knowledge to myth and is a developed and free country, so the taboos in this country are almost like swear words. They use taboo words to show which groups are superior and inferior, to degrade other people, and to humiliate them by mentioning their race or sex.

Keywords: *taboo, english, american culture*

INTRODUCTION

When talking about language, it will not be separated from culture. Sometimes the two cannot be separated and even affect each other. That's because culture shapes people's frame of mind, daily activities, how they perceive the world around them, other people, and their environment. Therefore culture can add color or style to the style of language used by them.

The example of the language style mentioned above that is influenced by culture is the word taboo. According to Argasetya (2009) Taboo words are part of the language and products of society or culture. Taboo term could be in language, actions, views, beliefs are used to state that something are considered unfavorable so that they are not accepted in society.

In other words, taboo words are one of the types of words that can be said to be marginal, usually spoken to express one's feelings towards something. This relates to the sensitivity of society to certain things. In all societies, certain actions or behaviors are frowned upon, prohibited, or considered taboo. Words or expressions that refer to these taboo actions are then also avoided or considered "dirty". Language itself must not be obscene; rejection of certain words or linguistic expressions only reflects the culture of a particular society. Thus, it is important to remember that what is considered a taboo

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language is something that is determined by the culture and not by anything inherent in the language itself.

The explanation above tells us that the value in the use of language is largely determined by the culture that exists in a particular society. Culture can indeed influence how a person sees the world and how he thinks about it. Indeed culture determines whether a word is taboo or not, or how taboo or forbidden a word is. In addition, obscene and insulting words that people use reflect how they think about the society around them. This is supported by Liliweri (2005) that states our identity is a strong border to evaluate the present of ourselves with other people.

AMERICAN CULTURE

One of the countries whose mother tongue is English is the United States of America. The culture of the United States is of Western origin and is influenced by a multicultural ethos that includes African, Native American, Asian, Pacific Islander, and Latin American peoples and their cultures. This combination gives America its distinct social and cultural characteristics, such as dialect, music, art, social customs, cuisine, and folklore.

This is supported by the fact that America is an immigrant country with an extraordinary diversity of cultures, people, music, food, and sports. Its fifty states cover most of North America, with Alaska to the northwest and Hawaii extending the country's presence into the Pacific Ocean. From the skyline of New York City and Chicago to the majesty of the Grand Canyon. this is happening against a backdrop of global citizens who have flocked to the US for generations to pursue their dreams. Pop culture is everywhere, sports and news dominate here. this is what makes American culture and traditions so varied by ethnicity, region, and religion.

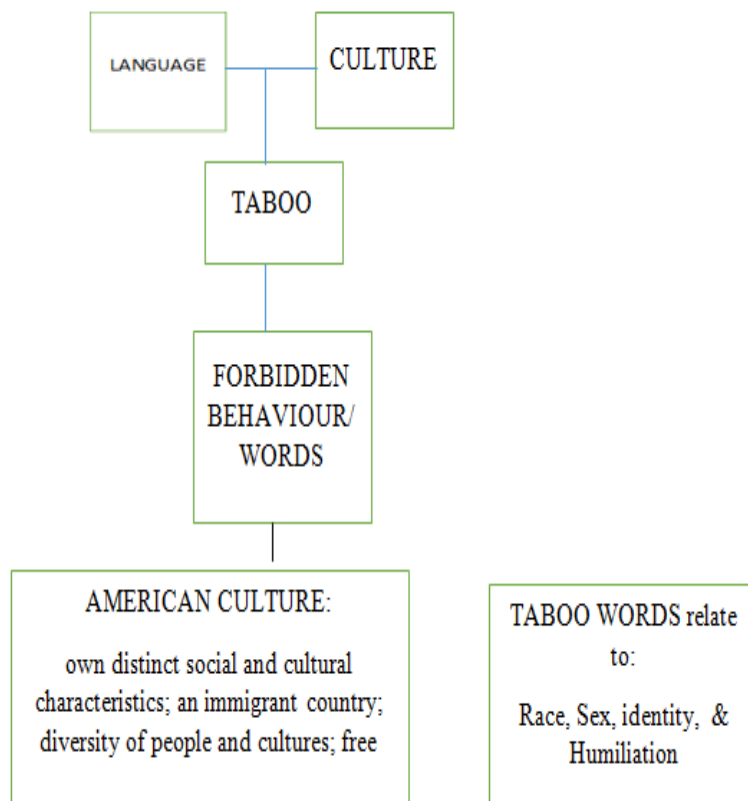
In America the household has traditionally consisted of a mother, father, and two or more children. But today, families are increasingly diverse. Some are married without children, single-parent households, same-sex married couples, and couples who live together without getting married. Furthermore, their children may be given to their grandparents for care, especially if the parents are young and unmarried. In American



culture, they tend to meet at dinner instead because dinner is considered the main meal so even if they are busy they usually meet at dinner.

Furthermore, American culture is shaped by Western European culture and is influenced by the multicultural ethos of American Culture which includes African, Native American, Asian, Polynesian, and Latin American peoples and their cultures. The United States has a unique lifestyle that draws on a nationalist ethos that adheres to the principles of freedom and pursuit of happiness. American culture promotes homogeneity in its diversity.

MAPPING



METHODS

This research focuses on semantic and sociolinguistic studies. The method used is qualitative research. Qualitative research that intends to understand phenomena of what is experienced. Furthermore, Croker (2009) explains that qualitative researchers use interpretive analysis. Interpretation in qualitative research is a symbolic interaction



between researchers and human experiences, objects, people, situations and events (Bungin, 2007: 42). The study explained the forms of English taboo words, the semantic features (literal meaning), and the classification of English taboo words by looking up the meaning. This research studied 15 English taboo words as sample to indentify whether taboo words relate to race, sex, identity or humiliation.

Finding and Discussion

The 15 English taboo words were analysed one by one. The semantic meaning was taken by looking up dictionary. The meaning in taboo was displayed in the following table taken from the context where the words used in society. Therefore, the researchers also put the examples of sentences where the taboo words used.

From the 15 data, it can be seen that the taboo words relate to race, sex, and humiliation. The race was interpreted by the use of ‘boongs’, ‘chinks’, and ‘nigger’. The sex was interpreted by the use of ‘jugs’, ‘bint’, ‘knob’, ‘bone’, ‘bang’, and, ‘dick’ ‘bitch’. The humiliation was interpreted by ‘bastard’, ‘bag’, ‘biddy’, ‘pig’, and ‘pillock’.

The following table to show some samples of taboo words in English:

NO.	TABOO WORDS	LITERAL TRANSLATION	MEANING IN TABOO
1.	Bastard e.g. “You won? You are lucky bastard!”	An illegitimate child	I don’t think you deserve it
2.	Jugs e.g. “Waw! You got big jugs”	a cylindrical container with a handle and is used for holding and pouring liquids	Breast
3.	Knob e.g. “Dude, zip your pants back up, your knob is hanging up”.	A cupboard	Penis
4.	Bint e.g. “ I hate you bloody bint”	A woman	Referring to a woman who the speaker doesn’t like



5.	Boongs e.g. "I'm not going there, too many boongs"	A native of New Guinea	Racial slurs
6.	Chinks e.g. "Can you ask those chinks to sleep"	Chinese person	Racial slurs
7.	Bag e.g. "Hi, silly of bag!"	A kind of soft container	Insulting word
8.	Bone e.g. "I want to bone that bitch"	A rigid tissue that constitutes part of the vertebrate skeleton in animals	Sexual intercourse
9.	Biddy e.g. "Get out of the way, you old biddy"	Hen	Silly or unpleasant
10	Bang e.g. "won't you bang with me?"	A fringe of hair cut straight across the forehead.	To have sex
11.	Pig "all the pigs are coming"	An omnivorous domesticated hoofed mammal with sparse bristly hair and a flat snout for rooting in the soil, kept for its meat.	Police officer
12.	Pillock e.g. "You pillock, look what you've	A stupid person	Degrading person



	done!”		
13.	Nigger e.g. “I’m very sorry to cut your line nigger!”	People of specific racial or ethnic background of a black people	Racial slurs
14.	Bitch e.g. “You are such a beautiful bictth”	Female dog	An unkind or unpleasant woman
15.	Dick e.g. “Don’t be such a dick”	Informal words for the sexual organs; penis	A stupid man

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it is known that there are 3 taboo words used to relate to race, 7 taboo words to relate to sex, and 5 taboo words to relate to humiliation. In other words, the forms of English taboo words found in the finding are mostly about sex, humiliation, and race. According to context or sentences used the purpose is to humiliate other people or to show that the individuals, certain groups, or race are superior.

This concluded that taboo might be different if we see in different country. Taboo in western countries tend to relate with sex, humiliation, and race while taboo in eastern countries tend to relate with belief / myth. America is a country that values knowledge instead of myth and is a developed and free country, so the taboos in this country are almost like swear words. They use taboo words to show which groups are superior and inferior, to degrade other people, and to humiliate them by mentioning their race or sex.



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