CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Human as a social creature cannot live alone. People need each other to live their life successfully. In building relations with others, people need something that call communication. This is in line with what has been mentioned by Gamble and Gamble (1984) that the relationship can be built with others through communication. By using communication, people are able to share information in life. To communicate, people need a language. Through language, people can reach a successful communication since they can put their feelings or their thinking about something on the language. In linguistics field, when language has relation with society where people lived, it is called sociolinguistics.

Sociolinguistics is the study of language that has connection with society, it is related to the identification of the relationship between society and language. According to Wardhaugh (2006) sociolinguistics deals with the process of analyzing the relationship between language and society in order to result better understanding of language structure and function of language of communication. Without a proper comprehension of language itself, the meaningful and successful communication in society will not be happened. Not only does it analyze the language, sociolinguistics also concern with society. Society is known as a group or community of people who are connected to each other for certain purpose (Hornby, 2000). To reach that certain purpose, society needs language as tool of communication. Also, through language people can deliver their expression or their emotive feeling. Furthermore, sociolinguistics is also tied to social psychology, particularly with regards to how attitudes and perceptions are

expressed and how in-group and out-group are identified (Yule, 2006).

As it mentioned previously, society uses language to express their attitudes and perception toward something. People in society may show their anger, hatred, annoyance, astonishment, etc. Usually, people in such condition will deliver words, gestures, expression or others usage that are considered as expression of rude, vulgar, or insult. In linguistics, the term to call this condition is called a taboo words.

Yule (2006) defines taboo as words and phrases which are avoided by people for reasons relate to religion, politeness, and prohibited behaviour. This means that taboo words are not usually used by people since it is opposing those three aspects. However, when people are in such condition, taboo words will appear. This statement is supported by Allan and Burridge (2006) which say that taboo words are commonly connected with improper language and it cannot be utilized in daily conversation.

Nowadays, taboo words are not considered as a rude or insults expression for certain society. In America, taboo words today such as fuck seems to be a daily expression of its society. The attitude towards the function of taboo words has already changed (Sofyan, et al: 2019). John Mayer, a famous singer of United States has ever mentioned taboo words when he was in Ellen DeGeneres's show. He said that people can call him with this statement, *"John Mayer playing guitar is a motherfucker."* Afterwards, he added that the word *motherfucker* is not mentioned as taboo words or aims to curse him, it is more likely a word of complement for John Mayer because he has a great skill in playing guitar. This shows that taboo words are no longer become tools for people to express rude or vulgar, but it changes into a complement expression.

Although in certain society taboo words are no longer prohibited to be delivered in public, in Indonesia taboo words still not allowed to be uttered in public places or even private place such as home and family area. The reason why it is still prohibited because Indonesian culture always deals politeness. Moreover, Indonesia is famous for being polite. Some words are counted as taboo words is something defined by culture, not by anything inherent in language (Akmajian, et al: 2001). People in Indonesia, particularly young generation are not given chances to say that words. However, they still use taboo words in their own environment, especially taboo words in English such as *damn* and *shit*. This kind of taboo words are usually in movies and today's young generation cannot be separated by movies, especially Hollywood movies.

English movie is not only for entertainment, but also a medium for young generation to learn English. According to Mirvan (2013) movies can keep students' interest in learning English. He found that the used of English movies in EFL classroom was a pleasant experience for the students. Moreover, Kalean (2013) stated that English movie can improve students speaking skill. Students can watch the movie first and then practice or talk about it afterwards. While learning, the taboo words seem to be the easiest words to remember. It can

be seen from their daily conversation which always involved the words: *damn!, shit!, or fuck!..* Many taboo words are also found in *Bird of Prey* Movie as an English movie. *Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)* is a 2020 American superhero film based on the DC Comics team Birds of Prey. It is the eighth installment in the DC Extended Universe and a follow-up to *Suicide Squad* (2016). According to IMDb.com, this movie has nominated into three categories in Cities of Love Awards (COLA), the nominations are Location Manager of The Year, Location Team if The Year, and Location Assistant of The Year. Molly Freeman from Screen Rant mention that with a wicked sense of humor and exhilarating action, Birds of Prey is fierce, fun and a total blast - and an empowering girl power superhero romp. Not only that, Matt Maytum from Total Film also said that Birds of Prey is a bold, entertaining riot that captures the manic energy of its lead character and ushers in a gang which many people, especially women want to join. It was directed by Cathy Yan and written by Christina Hodson, and it stars Margot Robbie, Mary Elizabeth Winstead, Jurnee Smollett-Bell, Rosie Perez, Chris Messina, Ella Jay Basco, Ali

Wong, and Ewan McGregor. Many young people are falling in love with Harley Quinn and Joker because of their weird relationship. This movie tells about Harley Quinn's feeling after broke up with Joker, his ex-boyfriend in previous movie, Suicide Squad. Harley Quinn tries to get recovers from her relationship by cutting her hair, adopting a spotted hyena and taking up roller derby. In the process of getting better after a broken relationship, many people who have ever destroyed by Harley Quinn are trying to make revenge. In that situation, Harley Quinn and her friends uses many taboo words because they have many problem in their life. They try to express their feeling using the taboo words. When people are in condition full of emotion, they cannot control words uttered by. As a result, their utterances insults other characters or people. This is a reason why taboo words should not be used in public. It can be seen from this example:

> *Cain: Please Cassandra Cain.*
> *Rene: Oh, fuck!*

The conversation above happened when Cassandra Cain called Rene and asking for help because Cain was chasing by her boss, and it was a bad situation. The meaning *fuck* is bad, however, Rene has to say this word because she cannot control her powerful emotion and she said the word spontaneously. The word *fuck* refers to sexual activity and it contains as a strong taboo words. From the conversation above, it is interesting to analyze taboo words used by the main five characters in Birds of Prey movie. Moreover, this movie is different from other

movies because most of them come from upper class and educated environment, however, they always use taboo words in that movie. Generally, taboo words are uttered by lower class and educated people, but in Birds of Prey taboo word used by Harley Quinn, a woman who has PhD degree and Rene, a detective. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the types and function of taboo words used by five main characters in Birds of Prey Movies. Furthermore. peoples of different countries do not agree totally on what taboos are. Acts of human excretion and sexual intercourse are to be avoided in polite conversation. Age and salary should be avoided in English conversation. If they must be mentioned, they should be in a euphemistic way. In China, acts of human excretion and sexual intercourse are also taboo, but Chinese are more tolerant in talking about age and salary, which are often openly said even in serious public talk or conversation. Therefore it is important for a foreign language learner to acquaint himself with such knowledge (Gao, 2013). That is why taboo words in this movie are important to be analyzed since it is only used to express feeling in daily conversation and will not insult others, not to deliver rude or vulgar language as what taboo defined as sociolinguistics' part.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background above, the research questions of the study are presented below:

1. What are the the types of taboo words uttered by the characters of *Birds of Prey* movie?

2. What are the functions of taboo words uttered by the characters in *Birds of Prey* movie?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of the research are

1. To identify and describes the types of taboo words uttered by the characters of Birds of Prey movie.

2. To identify and describe the functions of taboo words uttered by the characters in Birds of Prey movie.

1.4 Scope of the Research

To be well focused, the scope of the research needs to be clarified especially the specific aspects discussed as the focus of this research. This research focuses on the types and functions of taboo words uttered by the main characters of Birds of Prey movie.

1.5 Research Benefit

The result of this research is expected to give contributions to the related study both theoretically and practically.

1. Theoretically

   The result of this research is expected can be a contribution for sociolinguistics study especially on taboo words. .

2. Practically

   The result of this research is expected can be a practical contribution. For the students, this research helps the students to know and understand about taboo words as a sociolinguistics study. For the teachers, the result of this research is expected to be the additional material for linguistics course. Besides that, hopefully this research can be useful for others writers as a reference for further research.

1.6 Definition of Term

a. Sociolinguistics: A branch of linguistics that studies about the relation between language and society (Yule, 2006). Language should be used based on the society situation, what is prohibited in a society, will not delivered there.

b. Taboo words: a set of words which is forbidden to be uttered in public (Wardaugh, 2006). People may get offense when this kind of words are uttered directly.