CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on what is regarded as bad language and its gamut, diverse categories of bad language and their definitions. It will also discuss the background of the study and looks upon the statement of problem, the main objectives of the study as well as the significance of the study. Bad language has always been condemned and criticized by the society. However, this condemnation from society will not prevent individuals from swearing and using bad language, even in societies like the Malaysian society, where politeness is highly appreciated and demanded. Individuals may use bad language at least occasionally for a variety of reasons in order to fulfill their needs when communicating their various emotions such as anger, frustration, pain, joy and surprise.

1.1 Definition of Bad Language

The concept of good and bad language has been described by various researchers including Trudgill (1974), Andersson and Trudgill (1990), and formerly Cameron (1995). More generally, Trudgill (1974) describes good language as the language which we "should" and bad language as the language which we "should not" speak (p. 28). In particular, bad language is being defined as the use of any word or phrase which is likely to cause offence especially in a polite context (McEnery, 2006, p.1). Furthermore, Montagu (1967) by a ground-breaking investigation in the history of swearing, defines "bad words as all the words possessing or capable of being given an emotional weight"; he further acknowledged that "practically all words may serve the swearer as makeweight" (p.100). Most people may get stunned or dismayed by hearing bad language. These words are usually forbidden to be used publicly and disliked by most grown-ups due to the fact that they are blasphemous, offensive,

insulting, obscene, and rude or even most of the times just unnecessary to be used (Andersson & Trudgill, 1990). A form of linguistic expression which frequently denotes bad language is swearing. All the swearwords and bad words are regarded as taboo; on the other hand, not all taboo words are considered as swearwords or bad language (Karjalainen, 2002, p.18). Indeed, for a majority of individuals, bad words are typically associated with something bad and taboo, which is defined by the culture in which they were brought up. However, what is regarded as taboo will be discussed later in the present chapter. This is the underlying reason why most people prefer not to use them in their conversations. Nonetheless, some individuals use bad language in their conversations for expressing their feelings. The definition of bad language and its subdivisions, besides the clear explanation of each subdivision are fully provided in the following section.

1.1.1 Bad Language Gamut:

Jay (1992), in *Cursing in America*, suggests a classification system of bad language. He claims that as a feature of language used to express strong emotions, bad language can be presented in various ways, which can be classified into: 1) cursing, 2) taboo (swearing), 3) profanity, 4) obscenity, 5) blasphemy, 6) vulgar, 7) insults and slurs, 8) epithets, 9) scatology and 10) slang. All these varieties of bad language vary in their degree of offensiveness and in their reference; on the other hand, all of them can be used in different contexts to fulfill the speaker's flow of emotions and mainly when verbalizing bad language cannot be replaced by any physical activity for expressing strong emotions (Jay, 1992).

Correspondingly, bad language has a long and still non-exhaustive list of titles and descriptors namely swear words, cuss words, curse words, four-letter words, dirty words, foul and rude language, expletives, epithets, as well as taboo language which can reveal the existence of broad-ranging labels as well as the language and the kinds of words associated

with these labels (Fagersten, 2012, p.3). Some researchers like Kaye and Sapolsky (2009) have used these titles interchangeably in order to avoid repetition of one title while others consider different features and characteristics for each category. In the present study, however, bad language is used by the researcher as a term which can represent cursing, taboo (swearing), profanity, obscenity, blasphemy, vulgarity, insults and slurs, epithets, scatology and slang (Jay, 1992), whatever its purpose is. Hence, the primary reason for employing bad language in the present study is the presence of various descriptors. By using bad language as a general label, all the different descriptors can be presented. Still, another reason for using bad language in the present study is category membership's variation. Category membership's variations are another problem and obstacle rather than interchangeability in the variety of descriptors. To illustrate, while words such as *piss, cunt, shit* and *fuck* are assumed and believed by people to be swear words, words namely: *cow, gorilla, boob* may not be accepted by people as swear words which are part of bad language whereas in certain situations and in certain contexts, these words are as offensive, inappropriate, and insulting as other swear words like *fuck, cunt, shit,* etc. (Fagersten, 2012). To illustrate when terms such as *cow* and *gorilla* are used for labelling and calling a person who belongs to high authority, naming outgroup members with such terms and using such words as personal insults, these words are regarded as offensive, inappropriate, and insulting as other swear words. Therefore, they can be regarded as bad language as well.

1.2 Background of the Study

Using bad language is a part of human interaction. Pinker (2007) believes that language opens the window to human emotions, and whether we like it or not, swearing is a feature of language that is used through which people reveal their internal and strong emotions such as anger, frustration or surprise. These emotions are expressed through such strong words which

are considered as bad language because they are generally used in verbal abuse and sex talk. However, individuals also use bad words when they joke (Jay, 2000).

Jay (2000) asserts that one of the most effective ways to get rid of anger and exasperation in tough situations is using bad language (p.2). Wierzbicka (1991), in her work "*Australian b-words*", declares that due to the strength of some emotions felt by the speakers, sometimes the speakers are unwilling to articulate them. Thus, rather than vocalizing and expressing their feelings, some individuals prefer to express the strength of their emotions by explicitly uttering a set of words such as *bloody, bastard, bullshit, bitch* and *bugger* or phrases comprising of these words such as *what the fuck/heck/hell*. Wierzbicka (1991) states that these terms and expressions are termed by most people as "bad language", and they are used as an agent to express and transfer the emotion felt by the speaker (p.219). In her analysis, Wierzbicka (1991) also reflects that swearing and the use of bad words originated from our emotions; thus, it is our emotions that stimulate its use (Wierzbicka, 1991, p. 219). Wierzbicka (1991) also adds that by strengthening human emotion, bad language is preserved in human interactions, especially in their emotional communications. Thelwall's (2008) recommendation and model is applied in this study for a more comprehensive understanding of bad language used by Malaysian netizens (Network citizens). Thelwall (2008) suggests a variety of factors to be considered including referent, linguistic types, word formation, purpose, strength, spelling, implicit words, which should be considered for studying bad language.

Studying bad language is also important since bad words are among the primary words learned by L2 speakers and bilinguals despite the fact that bad words are not being taught and discussed in the classroom context (Dewaele, 2004). Such words are acquired through the process of socialization and gain their power through stigmatization process (Jay, 2009).

Providing that L2 speakers and bilinguals can use bad language appropriately, it can permit them to boast in friendly parties as well as cocktail-parties by indicating that the L2 speaker or the bilingual person possesses complete socio-pragmatic competence in the target language (Dewaele, 2004). However, not being able to use bad language appropriately with native speakers in their interactions can be a source of embarrassment (Dewaele, 2004).

One of the contexts in which the use of bad language takes place is social media network sites like Facebook, which is becoming a part of our everyday lives. Facebook, like other popular places on the internet, is mainly used by individuals for interaction, sharing ideas, news, having debates, and so forth. Correspondingly, it may reveal a new context in which bad language is used, possessing specific and unique characteristics which are different from the characteristics of oral and written bad language. Thelwall (2008) maintains that though the language of networking sites such as Facebook is in the written form, it tends to be casual and the style is close to oral speech where short forms, slang and clichés are used. This phenomenon is an issue worthy of more social and linguistic investigation since it has the potential to affect both first and second language use, whether orally or used in written form.

Facebook is a famous social media site which is easily accessible for everyone who has access to an internet connection. In addition, bad language, language with taboo reference and consisting of cursing, blasphemy, profanity, slurs, obscenity, vulgarity, insult, epithets, slang and scatology, may be used more than any other contexts especially contexts that have polite and formal contexts for various reasons. Moreover, the use of bad language in Facebook has special features and characteristics. Malaysian Netizens as a part of this big community in Facebook may use bad language for several reasons and may choose various types of bad language in different contexts in Facebook to express their distinct emotions.

Therefore, it is significant to investigate the types of bad language used by Malaysian users of English language.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Studying how bad language as an indispensable part of language is being used by a group of people in a country and in their social interactions is sociolinguistics. The sociolinguistic study of bad language among Malaysian netizens will be conducted in the present study.

Using bad language appropriately with native speakers is highly vital and essential; on the other hand, not being able to use bad language in English appropriately with native speakers can be a source of embarrassment among non-native speakers (Dewaele, 2004). Individuals will develop their own judgment of appropriateness in the process of socialization, which is regarded as a part of socialization in a novel culture or new language, but their ability to judge appropriateness does not mean that they will always perform appropriately (Dewaele, 2004). Dewaele (2008) also added that the individuals may interpret behaviors differently, resulting from the fact that the concept of appropriateness is slippery. Therefore, language users should know "what to say to whom in what circumstance and how to say it" (Hymes, 1972, p.277). Following this fact, Jay (1992) argues that L2 speakers and bilinguals should have the knowledge of bad language. This does not mean that they should learn how to curse and how to use profanity or blasphemy, which are diverse and dissimilar categories of bad language, but it means that they should have the knowledge of appropriateness in using bad language. However, Jay (2009) claims that the folk knowledge of taboo and consequently bad language which individuals learn from parents and peers can be imperfect and flawed; otherwise, a pedagogical knowledge would be provided (Jay, 2009). Jay (1992) declares that the frequent use of bad words will make them look less vicious and less loathsome. If the use of bad language becomes more frequent in a multilingual society, i.e. Malaysia, and people

pick and use bad language in English frequently compared to other languages. English bad language becomes less offensive and less loathsome among the individuals especially among youngsters. It can also cause language deterioration. Therefore, this would be a treat to the polite society of Malaysia if the knowledge of appropriateness and pedagogical knowledge are not provided for the individuals. The finding of the present study will shed light on the status of English bad language among Malaysian netizens.

The classroom treatment of bad language is also emphasized by other researchers. Adam (2002) states that the study of 'bad' English such as the study of profanity, obscenity, sexual and underworld slangs, curse words and pejorative terms, as different classifications of bad language, should be included in the curricular study of English. Therefore, the classroom treatment of bad language is required. This requirement is supported for a number of reasons: firstly, it is logically and rationally irresponsible to teach merely part of a language for being polite while ignoring the bad part of a language (Adams, 2002, p.353). Secondly, bad English requires classroom treatment both for intellectual and social reasons owing to the fact that it is frequently and thoughtlessly used. Another supporting reason for the necessity of classroom treatment of bad language is that many individuals respond to 'bad' words in a similarly thoughtless way and for the wrong reasons try to obstruct their use incorrectly (Adams, 2002, p. 353). In addition, NPS (neuro-psycho-social theory of swearing) has anticipated that there are noticeable dissimilarities between native and non-native English speakers regarding their awareness of bad language use and swearing etiquette in the English language (Jay, 2009; p. 159). Compared to non-natives, native speakers are found to be more sensitive to how dissimilarities in speaker status as well as differences in choice of taboo terms affect general offensiveness of taboo expressions (Jay, 2009; 1992). This is another crucial motive for Malaysian language teachers to be aware of how to deliver information

regarding bad language. Though in this study, the researcher is not looking at the dissimilarities between native speakers of English Language and Malaysians in using English bad language, knowing the discrepancies can reveal the importance of studying English bad language among Malaysian; also, it emphasizes the importance of classroom treatment of bad language among Malaysians.

In addition, the extreme technological development of the internet world has given rise to a new perspective of looking at language. The language being used in the internet world such as in social networking sites shows discrepancy from normal conversation and it is revealed to possess unique and distinctive characteristics, which seem to be absent in formal written language. This discrepancy can be exemplified by unusual spelling and acronyms, clever abbreviations, abbreviated with specific intentions, and other features. They have been inherited from other electronic forms such as instant messaging when the advent of mobile phones individuals started to use the short forms of the words and symbols (Thelwall, 2008). Language used in Facebook, which is regarded as one of the internet's most popular places among individuals for interaction, for sharing ideas, news or having debates, may reveal a new context in which bad language can be used. The use of bad language in Facebook may reveal new ways of using English bad language; besides, bad language used by netizens may have particular and unique characteristics. Hence, understanding how Malaysian netizens (network citizens) communicate on Facebook and share their emotions by using bad language when using English language may result in gaining further knowledge on English language use among Malaysians.

1.4 Objective of the Research

The first aim of this study is to clarify what seems to be typical Malaysian bad language pattern in a social media network, i.e. Facebook by discovering the most commonly used bad words and phrases used by Malaysian netizens. The second aim of this study is to analyze the distinctive characteristics of bad language used by Malaysian users of English on Facebook and also to categorize them appropriately according to Thelwall (2008)'s framework. The third objective is to determine the reasons for which such words and phrases are used by Malaysian netizens in the context of social media platforms like Facebook.

1. 5 Research Questions

The following research questions are derived from the aforementioned objectives:

1. What are the most common words and phrases considered as bad language used by Malaysian netizens on Facebook?

2. What are the distinctive characteristics of these words and phrases considered as bad language used by Malaysian netizens on Facebook?

   a) What are the common themes to which Malaysian netizens refer when using English bad language?

   b) What are the frequent syntactic forms of English bad words and phrases used by Malaysian netizens?

   c) What are the degree of offensiveness of English bad words used by Malaysian netizens?

   d) Do Malaysian netizens use clever language for creating implicit bad words and phrases on Facebook?

3. For what reasons are these words and phrases used by Malaysian netizens on Facebook?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Bad language is an inseparable part of human language, which has been marginalized for moral and not for linguistic reasons. Scholarly examinations of bad language have been mostly avoided since they are related to taboo topics. Hence, being related to morality brings about sufficient reasons for avoiding scholarly examinations especially when studying English bad language in Malaysia where politeness is highly preferred. Studying English bad language in a multilingual country like Malaysia can reveal various facts about the status of English in the society. Using data from networking sites, Malaysian netizens' discourse will be analyzed to bring to the open some of the facts about the typology of English bad language. In the present study, it is hoped that more studies and research will be done in this area in future. In studying different aspects and features of bad language, the researcher has taken a sociolinguistic view as a framework. Sociolinguistics views the use of bad language as a complex social phenomenon and studies the ways individuals practice and use language in all kinds of social interactions (Chaika, 1989). Sociolinguistics also addresses and draws on a wide range of evidences for explaining both the unquestioned power of bad language as well as the processes by means of which inferences can be drawn about the users of such language.

According to Jay (2009), people's ability in swearing and finally using bad language is not an innate ability. Since we are born, we do not have the knowledge of taboo words until we become matured enough and aware of institutional standards. Through socialization of speech practices, we learn about taboos. The oral folk knowledge of swearing etiquette is also created through socialization (p.1). McEnery (2006) highlights that taboo language has gained its power through the development of attitudes and through a process of

stigmatization, leading a society to a point were inferences about the users of such language can be made (p.1). Though bad language is sometimes used by people because they want to insult and be offensive, there is more than that. In certain contexts and in certain respects, what is called as "bad language" may not be offensive and insulting and it may be used for other purposes. Andersson and Trudgill's (1990) theory of swearing types can distinguish the different reasons Malaysian netizens swear and use bad language. Therefore, the kind of bad language and the types of words used in a society can tell us more about the beliefs and values of the users of such language (Jay, 1992, p.14).

The findings of this study will provide more insight into the nature and use of bad language employed by Malaysian users of English in different contexts especially in a context of social media networks. Therefore, the findings of the study can help linguists who study the language of network sites with its peculiar and distinctive characteristics and which are different from formal written language and our oral daily speech. It will also reveal how Malaysians use English bad language words and swearing utterances to relate to emotions in online communities, which may have some implications for psychologists. The study may also be significant for individuals interested in cultural studies. In other words, studying English bad language among Malaysian netizens may reveal some cultural issues in using English bad language. Furthermore, in the sociolinguistic view on the use of bad language in English among Malaysian netizens, the characteristic of bad language can be investigated and the typology of bad language used may also be discovered. The study may also reveal the bad language used in net speak among Malaysian netizens, an area which has not been delved so far.

In summary, the study hopes to answer the question: what is the typical English bad language pattern among Malaysian netizens on social media sites, i.e. Facebook?

1.7 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study solely looks at computer-mediated communication and the use of bad language in Facebook as an internet social media platform, and it does not cover other contexts. Doing research mainly on Facebook may be biased and prejudiced toward individuals who have access to internet and have a Facebook account. It should be mentioned that conducting a discourse analysis, however, cannot answer all the questions about Malaysian use of bad language and swearing behavior such as users' intentions since the researcher misses their tone at the time of using such expressions.

Another limiting feature of the study is that the researcher does not have access to the social class, age and gender of Malaysians who use English language on Facebook.

1.8. Definition of Terms:

Besides defining bad language which was used as a general term in the present study, defining all the forms and classifications of bad language such as 1) cursing, 2) taboo (swearing), 3) profanity, 4) blasphemy , 5) obscenity , 6) vulgar, 7) insults and slurs, 8) epithets, 9) scatology and 10) slang will benefit the study. By defining these terms, different aspects of bad language will be illustrated and a more vivid description of it will be presented. Moreover, the definitions of other key terms used in the present study are provided in this section.

Cursing

Cursing is a form of bad language. The firm and traditional definition of cursing is to wish a supernatural power to impose harm or evil on a specific person (Hughes, 2006, p. 114) though the meaning of *curse* and *cursing* has undergone some changes in the course of history. Nowadays, cursing is frequently used as a synonym and alternative expression for swearing

(Jay, 2009). Cursing phrases are described as conventionalized expressions of hostility and anger" (Jay, 1992, p.2). Jay (1992) also added that cursing can be both religious and non-religious (Jay, 1992). Clearly religious cursing is exemplified by "To hell will you", (*hell* as opposed to *heaven*) and "Goddamn you"; on the other hand, non-religious cursing is exemplified by "Eat shit and die" and a lengthy sentence like *You should rot in jail for that crime* (Jay, 1992,p.2).

Taboo

Taboo is another form of bad language whose definition is briefly presented in this section though the discussion over taboo and its different aspects are exclusively discussed in chapter 2.2. Taboo is defined as a forbidden or prohibited speech, behavior or thoughts which are suppressed or inhibited against supernatural retaliation and for protection of culture or religious groups and preserving social order among individuals within the group (Jay, 1992). What is regarded as taboo and taboo status of words is particular to a culture and language; while some concepts and some words are regarded as taboo in one culture and language, they may not be regarded as taboo in others. However, taboo status of words frequently extends along and they can usually be generalized in all cultures and languages. Clearly, words and phrases related to death and dying, body parts, body excrements or filth are regarded as taboo (Hughes, 1991). The taboo status of words can be shed as time passes; conversely, words can attain taboo status because of new practices (Hughes, 1991, p.3). In essence, words which are considered taboo in one place and at specific times may not be recognized as taboo in other places and times.

Swearing

In addition to defining taboo, describing swearing as a very common form of bad language can benefit the more comprehensive understanding of bad language and its practices. Swearing is defined as a category of language which contains expressions pertaining to taboo objects or related to something which has been stigmatized in the culture (Andersson et al., 1990). In addition, Jay (2009) defined swearing as a rich emotional, psychological and sociocultural phenomenon (p.153). Swearing expressions have been constantly used by speakers as a way to express forceful emotions and attitudes, and sometimes such expressions can be regarded as habitual expressions used by specific groups of speakers (Andersson & Trudgill, 1990). Andersson and Trudgill (1990) also added that such expressions should not be interpreted and explained literally. In other words, they should be interpreted according to their emotive sense. Different and various scholars presented different definitions for swearing. Some scholars like Limbrick believed that there is no solid and concrete definition for swearing otherwise through subjective terms. Limbrick (1991) argued that "swearing resists concrete definition; exactly what constitutes a swear word is generally determined by social codes" (p.79). Therefore, the definition of swearing can only be given in subjective terms by agreeing on an open-ended category of swear words, though the majority of swear words can be classified as sexual, excretory or scared (Andersson and Trudgill, 1990). Montagu's (1967) broad definition of swearing covers ten diverse types such as asseverative, expletive, execratory, abusive, ejaculatory, adjurative, exclamatory, hortatory, objugatory and interjectional. Montagu's (1967) definition includes seven subcategories, namely profanity, cursing, blasphemy, vulgarity, obscenity and euphemistic swearing.

Profanity

Profane terms are defined as a terms in which they treat sacred objects with irreverence, abuse or contempt; these phrases are mostly based on ignorance of or indifference to God, religion or holy affairs. However, such terms are not based on downgrading and degrading such matters (Jay, 1992, p.3). A term which is quite similar to profanity is blasphemy.

Blasphemy

Blasphemy as another form of bad language is defined as an expression which is regarded as insulting, particularly expressions which indicate contempt or lack of piety or respect for God or lack of reverence toward something relevant to sacred or inviolable entity (Jay, 1992). Jay (1992) claims that their direct assault on religious figures or religious authorities make these expressions mostly offensive to the very adherent believer although they may be humorous for the non-believer. Ljung (2011) added that such expression may seem humorous for the non-believers since figures of religious venerations are being ridiculed or vilified. For instance, if a non-believer in a religious doctrine says *Pope is fool*, he may say it with the intention of ridiculing the pope and in a humorous way but such expressions are regarded as abusive and insulting to the adherent believer. Correspondingly, blasphemous expressions are treated differently depending chiefly on one's view of God and degree of religiousness.

As mentioned earlier, there are some similarities between profanity and blasphemy. The similarity between these two terms hinges mainly on holy names and referents, in that both are associated with "the violation of the taboos against the use of holy names and referents" (Hughes, 2006, p.xvii). Their confusing difference lies basically in the intention. Though profanity is generally associated with habit in using profane expressions and routine ways of speaking and the speaker misuses the religious being's names accidently (Ljung, 2011),

blasphemy is more apparently intentional or purposeful (Hughes, 2006). The profanity is clearly exemplified by "Jesus Christ, this is so sad!", but blasphemy is exemplified by "Shit on what it says in the Bible" or "Fuck the Pope!" (Jay, 1992, p.4).

Obscenity

Another category of bad language is obscenity. Obscene terms and expression are defined by Jay (1992) as terms which are very disgusting to the senses, they are repulsive and abhorrent to morality or virtue; moreover, such expressions are designed to incite lust or depravity (Jay, 1992, p.5). Consequently, such expressions cannot be used freely. Obscene terms and expressions are more concerned with sexuality and sexual terms especially in American English, though the reference to sexual terms is not the necessity of being obscene. Jay (1992) believed that obscene terms are regarded as the most offensive and strong form of bad language. Terms like *cocksucker* and *motherfucker* are regarded as obscene.

Vulgarity

Vulgarity is a term which suggests crudeness of street language; therefore, they are not necessarily taboo or obscene. This kind of bad language is usually used, applied and accepted by common people who are concerned with a deficiency in refinement or who lack proper cultivation (Jay, 1992). Clearly, terms and expressions such as *slut, bloody, kiss my ass* and *crap* are regarded as vulgar (Jay; 1992, p.6).

Insults and slurs

Slurs are defined as treating with insolence, indignity, or contempt as well as making little of (Jay, 1992, p.8). Such terms are typically used by the speaker as a means to hurt and harm others through certain words or phrases. Some insults and slurs are concerned with animal terms like *jackass*, *bitch*, and *dog*; others are hinged on social deviations like *homo*, *fag*, and

bastard. Still, another type of insult and slurs, which is known as "children insults" are typically concerned with abnormal social, physical or psychological characteristics like *fatty*, *liar*, *dumb*, *brain*, and *tattle tale*. Another type of slurs is called ethnic and racial slurs, which are derogatory terms addressing the members of those groups (Jay, 1992:8). Terms such as *nigger*, *grease ball*, *Pollack*, *wet back*, and *dago* are regarded as ethnic and racial (Jay, 1992, p.8).

Epithets

Epithets are characterized as forceful bursts of emotional language which are derogative and abusive and usually accompany or occur in place of the name of a person or thing (Jay, 1992, p.7). Epithets are more powerful and offensive compared to other types of cursing. Such expressions can be regarded as physical aggression and are usually uttered to lessen anger and frustration (Jay, 1992, p.7). Outbursts words and phrases like *son of a bitch*, *damn*, *shit* are considered as epithets (Jay, 1992, p.7).

Scatology

Scatology is another form of bad language which is concerned with excrement and human waste products and processes; consequently, they make reference to feces and elimination (Jay, 1992, p.9). Terms like *poo*, *turd*, *crap*, *shit, shit for brains, fart* are considered as scatological terms (Jay, 1992, p.9).

Slang

This type of bad language is usually associated with an informal nonstandard vocabulary which is usually made up of "coinages, arbitrary changed words, and extravagant, forced, or facetious figures of speech" (Jay, 1992, p.6). This kind of peculiar language is usually associated with particular groups like teenagers, musicians, athletes, soldiers and their

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following sub-groups; moreover, slang terms such as *cupcakes*, *dweeb*, *cherry*, *jelly roll* are typically used between in-group members (Jay, 1992, p.6-7).

Expletives Swearing

This type of swearing is defined as expressions which are used by people to convey their emotion; however, they are not directed and aimed toward others (Andersson, &Trudgill, 1990, p.61).

Abusive Swearing

Despite the expletive type of swearing, abusive type of swearing is expressions which are directed toward others. They are derogatory and usually include name-calling and diverse forms of curses (Andersson, & Trudgill, 1990, p.61)

Auxiliary Swearing

Auxiliary type of swearing are expressions which are directed at others but they are not derogatory like abusive expressions. Having forms of abusive, they serve opposite function and they are playful rather than offensive (Andersson, & Trudgill, 1990, p.61).

Humorous Swearing

Humorous type of swearing is not aimed at a specific situation or person and they are not emphatic most of the time. This type of swearing is often called as "lazy swearing" (Andersson & Trudgill, 1990, p.61).

1.9 Summary

This chapter introduced the subject of the current research, which is the investigation of different and distinctive characteristics of English bad language among Malaysian netizens on Facebook. In this regard, there was a background to the study followed by statement of

the problem, the objectives of the study, research questions, the significance of the study, scope and limitations of the study as well as definition of key terms. The following chapter reviews the studies that are most related to the research questions and the framework of this research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The study of swearing and bad language dates back to 1960s when the first published works such as Sagarin's *The Anatomy of Dirty Words* (1962), and Montagu's *The Anatomy of Swearing* (1968) appeared. A few decades later in 1998, Hughes in *Swearing: A Social History of Foul, Oath, and Profanity* investigated bad language. Works by Jay (2000) and Ljung (1984a, 1984b) also tried to address the question of swearing and cursing but in different ways. The aim of Jay's (2000) and Ljung's (1984a, and 1984b) studies was to establish the universality of swearing. In other words, they tried to demonstrate that the use of bad language exists in all cultures and languages. In this chapter, I will review some of the studies carried out in the UK and the US on swearing, bad language, their categorization and classification, and bad language use in social media networks as well as computer mediated communication. I will also present an overview of the cultural and social attitude of the Malaysians toward swearing and the use of bad language.

2.2 Bad Language

It was mentioned in chapter 1 that bad language covers various categories with underlying taboo references (Jay, 1992). However, bad language resists concrete definition and still there is no clear and tangible definition for it. Andersson and Trudgill (1990) claim that the concept of bad language lacks adequate concreteness. In addition a solid and a clear definition of bad language has not yet been presented. On the other hand, there are various dimensions which relate bad language to different areas. Understanding these areas helps us in disclosing and

understanding of what is considered as bad language. The aesthetic dimension of bad language relates it to the distinction between the ugly and the beautiful. However, its moral aspect relates it to good and evil. There might be a hygienic aspect to bad language which is related to clean versus dirty binary opposition. In addition, there are other dimensions to it which has something to do with high/ low and right/wrong (Andersson, Trudgill, 1990, p. 35). Considering these different dimensions, it can be concluded that bad language is a part of language which is concerned with ugly, evil, dirty, low as well as wrong areas of language. Anthropologists such as Leach (1964) believe that these distinctions are interrelated while they are approximately identified within culture in which we live. While we grow up, we tend to acquire certain cultural patterns. These cultural patterns contribute to the creation of every individual as a social being (Andersson, Trudgill, 1990). The upbringing that individuals receive instill them with the cultural patterns of that society. In this way, people acquire the knowledge of the good and the bad, the acceptable, and the unacceptable behaviors and practices.

The terms 'bad language' and 'bad words' cover a number of diverse usages. Every single usage has a different function or intention (Jay, 1992, p.1). For instance, bad language covers cursing, swearing, profanities, taboos, slurs and so forth which can be used by individuals for various reasons such as humiliating, ridiculing, insulting, and venting anger.

2.3 Studies on Swearing

Swearing, from an evolutionary perspective, is regarded as a unique and distinctive human behavior which is developed for certain particular purposes (Jay, 2009, p.515). For example, Austin (1962) claims that swearing is viewed as the expressive use of language through which the speaker can express and imply his/her feelings. By using swear words, someone may just want to joke or to degrade another person. Expressions like *hippopotamus, Nigga, Paki* are good examples in this regard. Expletives can also be used to lay emphasis on actions and thoughts *fucking tired* or *damn busy days* are expletive instances. Jay (2009) believes that swearing can be regarded as a horn on cars which might be used to signify a number of emotions such as anger, frustration, joy and surprise.

The *Anatomy of Swearing* by Ashley Montagu (1967) is another leading study in the field of swearing. In this work, Montagu (1967), via a historical approach, traces the milestones of swearing back to the ancient civilization. Though swearing is a common practice in different cultures and languages, Montagu (1967) is mainly concerned with the use of swear words in English. He also deals with the psychology of swearing and contributing factors which provoke the use of foul language.

Montagu (1967) discusses the etymology of each swear word in detail through several chapters. However, she fails to discuss some of the fascinating aspects of swearing such as the social and linguistic dimensions of swearing as well as the cultural issues involved in it. *The Anatomy of Swearing* is truly a milestone in the research into the subject of swearing.

Social and linguistic dimensions of swearing are touched upon by the extensive work of McEnery (2006) in his book *Swearing in English*. Unlike Montagu (1967) and Hughes (1998), McEnery (2006) investigates neither the history of altering patterns in the use of swear words nor their variations and the formation of bad words over centuries. In his book,

McEnery (2006) examines the ways demographic variables such as social class, sex, and age can be associated with the use of bad language. The use of bad language, in his opinion, is the marker of class distinction and he concluded that this is usually associated with non-prestige use of language. McEnery (2006) also investigates modern English's attitude toward bad language. He observes that the origin of modern English's attitude toward bad language goes back to the late 17th and early 18th century. He also notes that modern English reflects the historical course during which the stance on bad language and swearing has been formed. After all, it can be said that McEnery's (2006) approach to bad language is not only a social and historical approach in understanding bad language but also an investigation of the linguistic aspect of it. Thus it can be considered as a linguistic phenomenon.

Magnus Ljung first attempt at studying swearing and cursing was in 1984. Ljung later book, *Swearing: A cross-Cultural Linguistic Study* (2011), focuses mainly on the contrastive aspects of swearing and cursing in different languages and cultures. This is a subject which was ignored by Montagu (1967). The nature of swearing, the reasons behind swearing, the grammar of swearing and above all the discrepancy between swearing in different languages and cultures are among some of the general topics which are discussed by Ljung (2011). On the whole, his discussion about bad language and swearing embraces a wide range of languages including Russian, Polish, Serbo-Croatia, Arabic and even Chinese. Furthermore, Ljung offers various examples of swearwords in these languages. Nonetheless, discussions about English and Swedish swearing dominate his book.

Ljung's cross-cultural analysis of expletives, epithets, and insults is an attempt to present a comparative study of swearing in English and 24 other languages with the aim of highlighting the similarities and dissimilarities among different types of swearing. By providing the typology of swearing in different languages, he examines the history of swearing. The

definition presented by Ljung (2011) for swearing is valid and applicable to a number of languages since his definition is based on the linguistic make-up of the speakers and is concerned with both their religion and culture.

2.4 Studies on Taboo Words

Due to the fact that all swearwords and bad words are regarded taboo (Karjalainen, 2002, p.18), it would be significant and essential to define what is meant by taboo and what kind of language is considered taboo (Karjalainen, 2002, p.18). The term taboo originated from Tongan which refers to holy and sacred places reserved for gods, priests, kings and chiefs. At both institutional and personal levels, taboo terms are sanctioned or restricted since it is assumed that if they are mentioned, some harm will befall the speaker, listener, or even the society. However, the precise nature of harm caused by articulating taboo words has never been wholly clear (McEnery, 2006).

Taboo terms are divided into three chief groups by Leach (1964), the British anthropologist, as cited in Andersson and Trudgill (1990, p.15). The first group is 'dirty' words pertaining to excretion and sex such as *shit* and *fuck.* The next group consists of terms related to Christianity like *Jesus* and *Christ.* The third group contains words concerned with 'animal abuse' used for belittling a person by attributing the name of an animal to her/him, such as *cow* and *bitch*.

Eble (1996), however, presents a wider range of taboo references. Eble (1996) claims that despite the existence of hundreds of taboo terms and expressions, the semantic variety of referents which are regarded taboo is limited in scope. In English, taboos are predominantly placed on sexual references (*threesome, fuck, and cunt*) and on those referents that are regarded blasphemous or profane (*God, god damn, Christ*). The extension of taboo may incorporates words with scatological referents and disgusting objects (*crap, shit, douche bag*)

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while reference to some animal names (*pig, bitch*), ethnical, racial and gender related slurs (*faggot*) may also be considered. Insulting and taboo references may also refer to and state perceived physical, psychological or social deviations (like *retard*), vulgar terms which are substandard such as *fat ass*, *fart face*, ancestral allusions like *son of a bitch* and offensive slangs (like *cluster fuck, tit run*) are regarded taboo (Jay, 2000, p.154). However, these taboo terms are not fixed and are placed in different taboo categories with diverse references. Also new taboo terms can appear, particularly in slang. Allan and Burridge (2006) defined taboos as words which make reference to the organs and acts of sex as well as defection. The bodies and their effluvia such as *snot, feces, menstrual fluid*, etc., and terms related to death, killing, and food leftovers are classified as taboo. Additionally, naming, addressing, touching and viewing people as scared beings, objects and places are defined taboo by Allan. & Burridge (Allan. & Burridge; 2006, p.1).

According to Karjalainen (2002, p.18) terms which are related to taboos are counted as swearwords, hence bad language. On the other hand, not all taboo terms are regarded as swearwords. Because when they retain their literal meaning, such words are not regarded as swearwords. This is in line with Ljung's (2011) statement on taboo words. Ljung (2011) claims that in swearing, taboo words do not maintain their literal meaning. Similarly, those taboo words which retain their literal meaning cannot be considered as swearing (p. 12). For instance, *fuck* in a phrase *I fucked her* is not regarded as a swearword since *fuck* here means having sex with someone and it keeps its literal meaning. But in a phrase like *fuck you!* It is regarded a swearword because it does not maintain its literal meaning. However, other scholars make no distinction between literal and non-literal meaning of taboo words, McEnery (2006) and Pinker (2007) are among such scholars. Consequently, both taboo words which retain their literal meaning and those do not retain their literal meaning are

considered as swear words. Swearing utterances and bad language words like *We fucked* (McEnery, 2006, p.32) and *Lets fuck!* (Pinker, 2007, p.351) are both regarded as swearing.

By using taboo words, a wide range of both personal and interpersonal consequences can be produced which might be positive, negative or even trivial or inconsequential. The impact of using swear words might not be as harmful as some claim it to be (See Jay, 2000; McEnery, 2006; Montagu, 1967).

Taboo words are used within specific categories. Some can be categorized as swearing (Ljung, 2011; Jay, 1992, 2000; McEnery, 2006; Montagu, 1967). Negative social outcomes of using taboo words are realized when swearing is utilized for emotional connotation although using taboo words also illustrates its denotative or literal practices.

Epithets indicating speakers' anger, frustration or surprise and insults include name calling and using terms to humiliate, insult or wish harm to another person. In general, epithets are primarily used in swearing as they convey the emotional connotations desired by the speaker (Jay, 2009; p.155). Other categories which help us to define taboo words include the use of blasphemy, verbal abuse, sexual harassment, obscene phone calls, hate speech and discrimination (Jay, 2009; p.155). Interestingly, taboo words can also be used in storytelling, social commentary, in-group slang, jokes and humor, and self-deprecation or sarcasm to endorse social harmony or cohesion. These can be considered as the positive outcomes of using taboo words (Jay, 2009, p .155).

The inconsequential outcome of taboo words happens when such words are used in casual talks such as conversational habits where they may not carry offensive meaning (jay, 2009, p. 515). Although the use of taboo words as conversational habits may not be considered offensive by those involved in the conversation, they can be impolite and shocking to the

bystanders (Jay, 2009, p.515). A group of teenagers may simply call each other *fucker* or *stupid*, and use taboo words like *fucking*, and *damn* to show their surprise or anger, or to indicate that they are cool, or even to consolidate their friendship. Yet, outsiders may feel offended if they hear such words. Obviously, taboo words persist in our communications for the simple reason that non-taboo words cannot be as effective in intensifying emotional charge of words as taboo words (Jay & Janschewitz, 2007; Potts, 2007). To illustrate this point, consider the situation in which a person is very angry because his car has suddenly broken down on the road. By saying *fucking car* or *damn this car*, he can imply to others how angry he is with the current situation. Or in another situation, if a person is very angry with someone because he has been mistreated by them, he/she can indicate the intensity of his/her emotion by saying *fucking idiot*, *motherfucker* or *damn you!*

Based on Eble's (1996), and Allan and Burridge's (2006) study of taboo, and considering the fact that taboo words are used within specific categories which are subsumed under the rubric of swearing (Ljung, 2011; Jay, 1992, 2000; McEnery, 2006; Montagu, 1967) and since swearing is regarded as bad language, it appears that providing a definition for swearing is helpful in understanding what bad language is.

2.5   Studies on the Frequency Bad Words

Frequency occurrence of bad words is proportional to their offensiveness. The combination of these two factors result in the bad language paradox (Fagersten K.B, 2012). In other words, the frequency occurrence of bad words contributes to the degree of their offensiveness. A speaker's gender and age are two of the influential factors in the frequency and choice of bad language words (McEnery, 2006; Thelwall, 2008).

Previous studies like McEnery (2006), Jay (2000), Fagersten (2012),and Ljung (2011) which were conducted on taboo words mostly focused on a small set of taboo words such as *fuck,*

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shit, damn, motherfucker, fucking and so on since they believed that public taboo words mostly rely on a small set of words which are frequently repeated (Jay, 1992, 2000; Jay & Janschewitz, 2008). Therefore, they failed to investigate the new and innovative swear and curse words. Although the number of taboo words recorded were more than 70, only 10 out of over these 70 taboo words are frequently used as bad language namely, *oh my god, goddamn, fuck, shit, damn, hell, Jesus Christ, sucks, bitch* and *ass* (Jay, 2009, p.156). The present study, however, does not only rely on the small set of taboo referents and bad language words. It will also include all categories of bad words which have taboo referents like swearing, cursing, profanities, blasphemies, slurs, insults, taboos, obscenities, scatology, epithets to illustrate bad language patterns which are used by Malaysian citizens, and members of the Internet social networks.

2.6 Studies on Categorization of Bad Language

Bad language is a moot question in English (McEnery, 2006). As a result, there are different opinions about the categorization of bad words. Some linguists like McEnery (2006) have categorized bad words or swear words according to their strength and their degree of offensiveness. Some did the categorization according to the words linguistic forms and the roles they play in a sentence. A group also focused on morphosyntax of the words. Some scholars also followed the categorization scheme and classification which is based on the bad words referents and the taboo subject to which these words refer. A good example in this respect is the classification presented by Jay (1992), Eble (1996),and Allan & Burridge (2006). Tony McEnery (2006) in his book *Swearing in English: Bad Language, Purity and Power from 1586 to the Present* argues that in English, "Bad Language Words", the term used by McEnery (2006) (henceforward BLWS), are the marker and symbol of distinction between people and groups. Bad language is here considered as part of a non-prestige form

of language. BLWs interact with a series of sociolinguistic variables in a way which make them occasionally foreseeable. McEnery investigates the use of BLWs uttered in everyday language to illustrate the distinction associated with them.

He takes a socio-historical approach into discourse about bad language in English and after analyzing various corpora such as British National Corpus (BNC) and Lancaster Corpus of Abuse, he presents his argument. McEnery (2006) believes that description and exploration should go together because they make a very powerful combination in linguistics; whereas the separation of one from the other is very harmful. In other words, understanding and exploring bad language should be accompanied by explanation and description. Description gives credibility to the abstract explanation, and explanation contributes to the understanding of description (McEnery, 2006).

Based on the Lancaster Corpus of Abuse derived from the spoken section of BNC (The British National Corpus), McEnery (2006) offers a general categorization of the BLWs. He also provides the categorization of the BLWs according to their types, linguistic forms as well as their degree of offence ranging from very mild to very strong. His decision on what type of bad words should be included in the corpus is informed by various resources. Thus, some of the bad words were chosen based on the literature he had pored over and some others were decided based on his institution. Approximately, other swear words in the corpus were rated by the accidental occurrence of the words. In other words, in the process of analyzing the corpus by manual exploration of the spoken section of BNC, he encountered words and phrases which fitted the classification scheme. This process helped him to develop a classification scheme. Since the classification scheme proposed by the McEnery (2006) was manually applied to the corpus, the spoken section of the British National Corpus, this method proved to be a very strong and robust one in analyzing and categorizing bad language.

Moreover, it provided a reliable and trustworthy foundation for the categorization and differentiation of the uses of BLWs (Bad Language Words).

McEnery's (2006) broad categorization of bad language words can be investigated under six chief headings which are clearly illustrated in Table 2.1. These categories include: Swear Words and some other term of abuse with referent to Animal terms, Sexist terms, Intellect-based terms, Racist terms as well as the Homophobic terms. Here, in the following table, the researcher slightly paraphrased these broad categories and added some more example to some of them.

Table 2.1: Broad Categorization of BLWs

No.	Category Type	Examples
1	Swear words	Fuck, Shit, Damn
2	Animal Term of Abuse	Pig, Cow, Bitch
3	Sexist Term of Abuse	Slut, Whore , Bitch,
4	Intellect-based Term of Abuse	Imbecile, Idiot, Stupid
5	Racist Term of Abuse	Greaser , Paki, Nigger, Jap, Indon
6	Homophobic Terms	Fag, Faggot, Queer

Swear words in McEnery's categorization include words such as *shit* and *fuck.* The other five categories in McEnery's (2006) classification make reference to themes such as animal themes and names of animals used with the aim of degrading; sexist theme like *slut,* and *bitch*; themes which relates to people's intellect include *stupid* and *idiot*; racist terms of abuse and using people's nationality in an improper way, like *Paki*. Homophobic terms are close to sexist terms of abuse but the difference is that in homophobic terms the person is accused

of having sex with the same sex. Homophobic terms can both refer to Lesbian and to Gay people. There are so many other colorful words and phrases in this group. For instance, for lesbians, we can use *Rug Doctor, Muffin Bumpers, Carpet Muncher, Muff- driver, Queeropatra* as well as *Cunt Queen of the Nile*. These are some of the examples of homophobic terms which were shared by different netizens (http://www.queerattitude.com). For male homosexuals, *Fudge Packer, Fairy Fucker, Brokeback, Sodomite, and Sexual Pervert* are some descriptive terms referring to gay people (http://www.queerattitude.com).

McEnery (2006) claims that there is an interaction between these comprehensive categories. Some of the bad words may belong to more than one category. For instance, take the animal term of abuse which can also be used as a sexist abuse word (e.g. *Bitch*). McEnery believes that the introduction of classification schemes has gone through a variety of changes, particularly those related to metaphoric practices. Nonetheless, by applying this method manually on the corpus of BNC, he found out that the classification scheme is well-founded and therefore it is effective enough to be used as a conventional and acceptable basis for the categorization.

McEnery (2006) developed a classification scheme in order to classify the bad language words according to their linguistic forms. This kind of classification scheme is closely related to the morphosyntax. He classified words due to their part of speech and partially in relation to their functional terms. In this study, bad word used by Malaysian netizens will be classified using this classification scheme.

The following Table is the categorization of bad language (McEnery, 2006, p.27).

Table 2.2: Linguistic categorization of bad language words

Code	Description
PredNeg	Predicative Negative adjective: " the film is shit"
AdvB	Adverbial Booster: " Fucking Marvelous" " Fucking awful"
Curse	Cursing expletives "Fuck You! Me! Him! It!
Dest	Destinational Usage: "Fuck off!" " He fucked off"
EmphAdv	Emphatic adv/ adj: "He fucking did it" "In the fucking car."
Figurtv	Figurative Extension of literal meaning: " to fuck about"
Gen	General Expletive: "Oh Fuck!"
Idiom	Idiomatic " set phrase" : " Fuck all" " Give a fuck"
Literal	Literal Usage Denoting Taboo Referent : " we fucked"
Image	Imaginary Based on Literal Meaning: " kick shit out of"
PremNeg	Premodifying Intensifying Negative Adj: " the fucking idiot"
Pron	Pronimonal Form with undefined referent: "got shit to do."
Personal	Personal Insult referring to Defined Entity: "You fuck!"
Reclaimed	Reclaimed Usage- no negative intent: e.g. Niggors/ Niggaz as used by African Ameican rappers.
Oath	Religious Oath used for emphasis : " by God"
Unc.	Unclassifiable due to insufficient context

McEnery (2006) found that there is an obvious connection between the morphosyntax and the classification scheme presented in the above table. Though words are analogous and are similar morphosyntactically, their distribution across the bad language categories varies. By

considering the two common bad words, like *shit* and *fuck*, this category membership variation will become clearer. Though these two words are morphosyntactically similar, their response to diverse categories is totally different. *Fuck* has much more varied functions than *shit. Shit* can merely be used in categories of PredNeg, AdvB, Figuratv, Gen, Literal, Image, PremNeg, Prom and Personal; on the other hand, *fuck* comes about in a larger number of categories. Another interesting distinction is that there are some categories in which *fuck* can be placed which do not apply to *shit* and vice versa. He also found that the examples' distribution across the categories is not the same.

McEnery (2006) asserts that though BLWs share similar part of speech, they do not act in the same way. They may express different range of classifications. These different categories of BLWs differ radically in their affinities in quantitative terms, even when the two words belong to the same category. In other words, BLWs which belong to the same category may differ in their affinities in quantitative terms. The discriminating power of BLWs is depicted through their categorization (p.28).

McEnery (2006) also categorized BLWs based on their degree of offensiveness. His classification of bad words ranged from very mild to very strong which is slightly paraphrased in Table 2.3 (p.30).

Table 2.3: Categorization of BLWs Based on Their Offence Scale

Categorization	Words in the Category
Very mild	Hell, god, damn, bird, crap, bloody, idiot, hussy, pig, tart, sod, pillock, son-of-a-bitch
Mild	Bitch, balls, arse, cow, Christ, bugger, jesus, dickhead, moron, git, pissed off, slag, shit, screw, sod, tits, tit,tosser, jew, slut .
Moderate	Arsehole, gay, nigger, bastard, paki, shag, wanker, whore, poofter, bollocks, piss, prick, spastic, twat.
Strong	Fuck
Very strong	Motherfucker, cunt

Through this categorization, McEnery (2006) revealed some useful information about males' and females' preference for bad words with regard to their degree of offensiveness. In addition, he identified the words targeted by men at women and vice versa in terms of the degree of offensiveness. However, these three different classifications of bad words, based on their themes, linguistic types and degree of offensiveness proposed by McEnery (2006) may not be sufficient for analyzing and describing bad language words and swearing utterances. Other scholars, however, have offered different classification schemes for studying, explaining and describing bad language. Thelwall (2008) categorized bad language words used by the netizens in one of the famous network sites i.e. Myspace. He benefited from the categorization of BLWs linguistic types derived from McEnery's (2006) model. *FK Yea I Swear: Cursing and Gender in a Corpus of MySpace* is the study conducted by Thelwall

in 2008. He is a pioneer and leading researcher in the use of corpus-based methods in online context. Thelwall (2008) states that for more comprehensive definition and understanding of swearing and bad language, a number of factors and categories should be considered. Hence, mere classification is not enough in the study of swearing and the use of bad language.

Thelwall (2008) selected a corpus of MySpace member home page as his sample. He analyzed and compared swearing in the U.S and the U.K in terms of the nationality, gender and the age of respondents.

The result illustrated that strong swearing has been witnessed in the MySpace and there was a significantly negative relationship between swearing and the age of the respondents: as the age goes up, swearing declines remarkably. In the U.K., there was no significant dissimilarity between the two genders especially among the young users. On the other hand, in the U.S male users of MySpace used curse words at the higher rate than female users. The equality between the genders in the U.K. in using strong and heavy curse words is "one of the first large-scale evidence of equality in any informal English language use context" which might be related to "cultural shift" and to the recent rise in "Ladette Culture" (Thelwall, 2008, p.17). The results also indicated that swearing is common in both humorous way and unusual spelling while the use of expletive is rare.

This classification and categorization of bad language offered by Thelwall (2008) will be very useful for understanding the nature of bad language in computer mediated communications like Facebook. Using this classification system in this study, will improve our understanding of characteristics of bad language used by Malaysian netizens. The researcher benefits from the classification scheme proposed by Thelwall (2008) which is the primary framework to analyze the characteristics of bad language used by Malaysian netizens.

The majority of studies on cursing and swearing focused on the use of curse words and swearing among native speakers. Jay (2009) and McEnery (2006) examined BNC speaking section, and Ljung (2011) studied how native speakers of 25 distinct languages swear and use bad language. However, the use of curse words among L2 users and bilingual users of English language and the degree of their creativity in generating novel bad words have been ignored so far. The present study benefits from both this classification and Thelwall's (2008) in order to categorize bad words among Malaysians netizens in terms of their vulgarity. Later, bad words are categorized based on their degree of offensiveness among Malaysians.

Swearing utterances and bad language words can also be categorized based on their typology. Pinker's (2007) classification of swearing utterances can be regarded among the recent works on the typology of swearing. In his book, *The Stuff of Thought,* Pinker categorized swearing utterances in five different categories (2007, p .350):

- Descriptive swearing: is a type of swearing in which the speaker describes something and in which the taboo words may bear their literal meaning or not such as *Lets fuck!*

- Abusive swearing: in which the speaker abuses someone by using expressions such as *Motherfucker!*

- Emphatic swearing: in this type of swearing the speaker puts emphasis on something in sentences like *I am fucking tired!*

- Cathartic swearing: in this type of swearing, the speaker is engaged in catharsis like *Fuck!*

- Idiomatic swearing: this type of swearing is different from the other four types. In this type of swearing an idiomatic expression which is mainly a combination of two

words whose meanings cannot be inferred from the meanings of individual words. In this case the literal meaning is lost like *fucked up!* which means something is destroyed (Ljung, 2011, p.26)

The problem with Pinker's (2007) classifications is that they overlap with one another: one swearing utterance can belong to more than one category. For instance *fuck you*! not only can be regarded as abusive but at the same time as idiomatic and cathartic. Another problem with this first category of swearing is that the taboo word can be replaced by any other word which is synonymous with the swear word. For example, *Lets fuck* can be replaced by *Let's make love!* (Pinker, 2007, p.351).

2.7 Studies on Swearing in Social Media

One of the contexts in which swearing and the use of bad language can take place is social media network sites. Jammes William Hammon (2012) analyzed the use of bad language in an online community. He chose an online community called DTS, (Disarm the Settlers) which is a popular discussion board for the fans of a rock music band, to survey and examine the usages and functions of swearing among the leaders and members.

Hammon (2012) found out that the group as a whole is comfortable with the taboo subjects while their leaders use swear words at strikingly different rates. In the first place were figurative extensions and literal usages. In the second place was the use of personal insults, which were used ironically and jokingly. Last but not least was the use of religious oaths.

Another study which looked into the human behavior in computer mediated communication was "Flaming *on YouTube*" which was conducted by Moor, P.J., Heuvelman, A., and Verleur, R. (2010). These researchers were of the opinion that Computer-mediated-communication (CMC) looked to be more argumentative, unfriendly and offensive in

comparison to face-to-face communications. The term "flaming" refers to the hostility of internet which allows the use of insults, swearing as well as offensive language. They investigated YouTube which is a very popular and renowned video-sharing website for the simple reason that the use of swearing and the occurrence of flaming happens frequently on it. The researcher concluded that the reason why flaming and swearing is so widespread on such a scale is because CMC communications lack the social constraints which are found in the face-to-face communications.

Being in a group makes people feel more comfortable and less inhibited. It also predisposes people to behave more shockingly (Festinger et al., 1952 as cited in Moor et al., 2010). Furthermore, CMC scholars believe that in online communications people tend to behave less consciously and this might account for the use of swear words and flaming in online activities. On the other hand, flaming is considered more normal than abnormal among group members of online communications. Also, another reason for the occurrence of flaming is related to the de-individualization which refers to the anonymity of YouTube users.

The research by Moor et al. (2010) was conducted by distributing three types of questionnaires among the YouTube users. In total, 225 receivers and 353 senders were picked to be sent the questionnaire via YouTube's messaging system. In the end, 368 comments were selected. For some participants, flaming was a fun way of interacting which is an inevitable result of vivid debate and freedom of speech. Some other participants tended to have mixed feelings about flaming. However, the majority of YouTube users expressed their hatred and considered it as a negative phenomenon.

The second view about flaming was presented by Lange (2007a, 2007b). From her research interviews, she realizes that for some flaming offers the freedom to have open and direct discussions about subjects that are unlikely to happen in real life.

The results demonstrate that flaming is a very ordinary and common phenomenon on YouTube. Several possible factors may result in flaming on computer–mediated communications. Yet two main underlying reasons for flaming are the reduction in other's awareness which means the speaker is less aware of other people's feeling and the absence of regular social norms. In addition to these findings, the result of the study proves that some people express their disagreement harshly while others resort to flaming just for the sheer fun of it. Nonetheless, miscommunication sometimes will result in the flaming

2. 8   Studies on Swearing Types

Swearing is generally used to express different emotions such as anger, joy, enthusiasm, emphasis, etc. It is also used in various situations and contexts in the presence of stranger or among friends. Andersson and Trudgill (1990) offer two broad classifications for swearing based on their differing functions: major and secondary types. Andersson and Trudgill (1990) proposed a classification which supports different types and reasons/motives for using bad language. In the present study, the types of bad language utterances used by Malaysian netizens will be classified based on the Andersson and Trudgill's (1990) model which is:

1. Expletive
2. Abusive

In addition to these two major types, the secondary types are:

1. Humorous
2. Auxiliary

More detailed definition of each type is provided in the following sections. (See section 2.8.1 to 2.8.4). Understanding the characteristics of each type of swearing will help the researcher in recognizing and classifying different types of bad words.

2.8.1 Expletive

Expletives, as a kind of bad language, are not directed and aimed at others. Examples of Expletives are *damn it! Shit*!. Expletives can be found in exclamations of surprise, pain, or irritation and are regarded as one of the most typical exponent of bad language and swearing (Ljung, 2011). This type of swearing is quite akin to exclamatory and ejaculatory swearing. However, Expletive type of swearing may be discriminated from them by the fact that these terms may be used as "filler" in an expression (Montagu, 1967, p.106). Ljung (2011) also asserts that expletives are slot fillers like the words *bloody*, *fucking* and *damn* in *I can't stand that bloody neighbor! Fucking stupid guy! Damn impressive!* Expletives can also be used to emphasize an exclamation such as w*hy the fuck! I don't want the bloody bag, I want my cellphone!* (Fagersten, 2012).

Expletives are also used when an anticipated activity is frustrated; accordingly, a feeling of aggression instantly rises in individuals which make them use expletive or even a series of them (Montagu, 1967). Since expletives are quite similar to exclamatory utterances, they can be determined through such linguistic components found in the following structures (Ljung, 2011, p.75). Understanding these components will help the researcher easily determine the type of bad language utterances used by Malaysians.

1. A single adjective

2. A declarative clause

3. The name of a religious being

4. Different types of questions

5. Noun phrase

6. A member of the world class interjection

7. A declarative clause

Bad language consists of these exclamatory utterances. They are the expletives that will be dealt with in this study.

To determine words and expressions which are regarded as expletives and to describe the characteristics of expletive provided earlier, the researcher benefits from Gehweiler's (2008) classification of the expletive interjections which Ljung (2011, p.80) describes in a tree diagram.

Figure 2.1: Classification of Expletive Interjections

Expletive Interjections

Primary   Secondary

(- homonyms)   (+ homonyms)

Moderate Expletives   Euphemistic Expletives   Taboo Expletives
Gee! Gosh! Darned!   *Heck! Goodness!*   *Shit! God! Christ!*
Fuck!
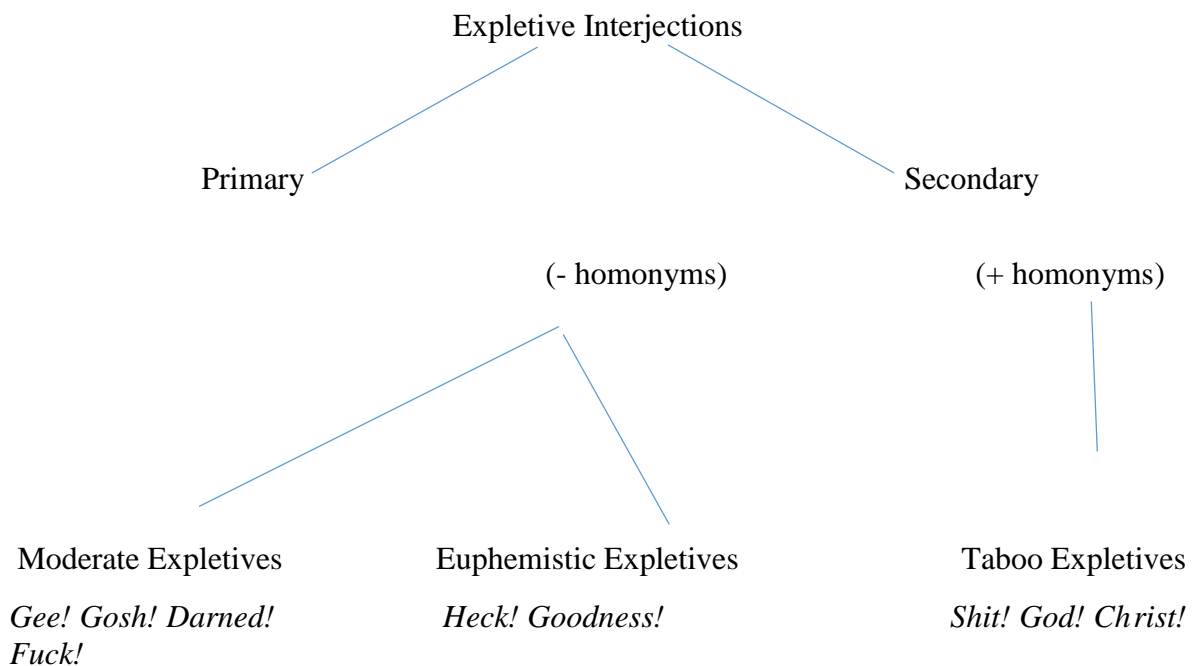
Expletive interjections are mainly divided into primary and secondary expletives. Primary types of expletives can be moderate or euphemistic. Although they do not include strongly bad words, a trace of bad connotations exists in them. The secondary type of expletives

consists of taboo expletives which make reference to taboo themes discussed earlier in this chapter.

2.8.2 Abusive Terms

The second type of swearing and bad language utterances is regarded as the abusive type of swearing. These expressions are also called terms of abuse or terms of insult. These terms of abuse are directed toward others with the intention of insulting and degrading them. They are derogatory and usually include name-calling and diverse forms of curses (Andersson, and Trudgill, 1990).

Abusive type of bad language may have different forms and appear in different formulaic phrases and sentences. Describing the characteristics of each type of abusive swearing will help us to decide whether a bad language can be considered as abusive type or not. Allan and Burridge enumerate several types of abusive expressions, such as comparing and referring people to animals, name-calling insults, *(pig, bitch)*, insults derived from bodily effluvia (*shit*) or bodily organs (*asshole*) and sexual behaviour (*cock blocker, fucker)*, pointing out and remarking people's physical characteristics and abnormalities (fatty*, four-eye*), insults invoking subnormality or derangement (*retard, idiot*) and racist insults (speaking of *Arabs as Towel heads*) (2006, p.79-83). In the following sections (2.8.2.1 – 2.8.2.5), different forms of abusive expressions are clearly defined to become more familiar with the abusive type of swearing. Insults such as name-calling (*Pig, Idiot*) and unfriendly suggestions (*Get lost!)* are generally regarded as abusive. The same is true for ritual insults and sarcastic expressions.

2.8.2.1 Insults, Name-calling and Unfriendly Suggestions

Abusive type of swearing can take on different forms and appear in different formulaic expressions. These three types of bad language namely ritual insults, unfriendly suggestions and name-calling can be regarded as abusive type of swearing because they direct negative

feelings of the swearer at another person who is frequently the addressee. Ljung (2011) considers them under the category of insults. They have an abusive function while the intention of insult is to abuse someone. These three types of bad language differ from curses in that the latter suggests other-worldly power. Unfriendly suggestions might also include such references: *Go to hell!* or *Die !*(Ljung, 2011). On the other hand, ritual insults, name-calling, and unfriendly suggestions generally point to earthly and mundane themes such as animal and disease theme, sexuality and masturbation theme as well as mother theme (Ljung, 2011, p.114).

There are some discrepancies between ritual insults, name-calling and unfriendly suggestions in the ways they verbalize negative emotions of the swearer. Therefore, the separate treatment of each term would be useful in analyzing the data of the present study.

2.8.2.2 Ritual Insults

Beside name-calling insults, ritual insults are also regarded abusive. They are regarded as a type of "stereotypical" derogatory comment which calls upon the addressee's female relatives, usually mothers. In this sense, ritual insults are commonly used in different cultures (Ljung, 2011, p.114). Ljung calls ritual insults as a kind of "verbal dueling" (2011, p.114).

2.8.2.3 Name-calling

The next type of insult is name-calling which is regarded as an abusive type of swearing. In this kind of insult disparaging epithets are aimed at the addressee. It is regarded as a category of verbal abuse. Epithets are taken from a number of semantic categories. Although there are some similarities between languages and cultures with respect to the nature of terms and lexicons, there are still some distinct dissimilarities among them (Ljung, 2011).

Name-calling varies from insulting names in their underlying semantic references. Name-callings are mostly based on physical differences (e.g. *fatty*) and concrete referents (e.g. *super bowl and fat ass*) whereas insulting names relying more on the social awareness (e.g. *Mafia*) (Jay, 2000). Knowing the underlying semantic references of offensive name-calling provides more information on the attitude of the Malaysian netizens about the others and the disreputable out- group members (Jay, 2000).

Name-calling insults may also make reference to animal terms. Some of the bad words with animal referent are *bitch, dog* and *pig* (Jay, 2000; Mabry, 1974). Attributing animal names to individuals is a notably intriguing class of metaphors. The animal kingdom has a peculiarly huge domain which contains a rich and wide range of metaphorical vocabulary (Haslam, N, et al. 2011). Individuals are linked to animals through infinite verbal expressions; accordingly, animals are usually conceived and explained in anthropomorphic ways (Epley, waytz & cacioppo, 2007). In other words, animals become ideal tool for describing people by means of different factors such as their diversity, cultural importance, and tempting-humanness of animals. These various factors have even made animals as the first symbols (Berger, 1980).

A very common ways of employing animal metaphors is to imply hostility toward individuals or groups (Haslam, N, et al. 2011). In various cultures, animal terms can be used to abuse individuals when they breach and disregard social rules or norms or when they behave in undesirably wild ways (Van Oudenhoven et al., 2008).

It is important to understand why animal terms are offensive and accordingly considered as a bad language. The animal terms directed at individuals may involve disgusting animals for ascribing negative qualities to people, or they may be used to dehumanize and degrade them.

Using some animal terms imply that some individuals are more similar to animals than humans (Haslam, N, et al. 2011).

Name- calling, inappropriate naming and addressing is the focus of attention in censorship. Since individuals make use of dysphemism and bad language to insult others or wound them by using name-calling, and any other forms of derogatory and offensive comments (Allan, K and Burridge, k. 2006, p.125). Besides, the use of taboo terms can help in-group solidarity particularly when out-groupers are targeted (Allan, K and Burridge, k. 2006). Accordingly, it can build solidarity among members of the same group and friends (Mechling, 1984).

2.8.2.4 Unfriendly Suggestion

Ljung (2011) categorized unfriendly suggestions as another type of insult consequently as abusive type. Unfriendly suggestions should be interpreted in terms of their negative literal meaning which is their secondary meaning (strohwollin, 2008). Expressions such as *go to hell!* and *Go home, you are drunk!* are examples of bad language practices.

2.8.2.5 Sarcastic Expressions

Beside name-calling insults and unfriendly suggestions, sarcastic expressions can be taken as an abusive type of swearing (Pexman and Olineck, 2002). Sarcastic comments can be looked upon as abusive because these expressions are regarded as verbal ironies which are used in communications to articulate negative emotion and critical attitudes toward individuals or events (Kreuz and Glucksberg, 1989). Compared to direct insults, sarcastic insults are more mocking that is why they are perceived less offensive (Pexman and Olineck, 2002).

2.8.3 Humorous

Humorous types of swearing is regarded as the secondary type of swearing by Andresson and Trudgill (1990). Bad language is regarded as humorous when other functions are restrained and suppressed playfulness of the tone (Tysdahl, 2008). Though they look like abusive swearing, such expressions are not aimed at others. Also, they do not serve pejorative and derogative purposes (Andersson and Trudgill, 1990). For instance, *get your ass in gear!* has a humorous function rather than abusive.

2.8.4 Auxiliary

The other type of swearing is auxiliary. An auxiliary type of swearing is also referred to as "social swearing" and "lazy swearing" as well as "a way of speaking". It is also considered as the secondary type of swearing by Andresson and Trudgill (1990). This type of swearing is typically used not only to suggest identification with a group but also to consolidate such identification (Tysdahl, 2008, p.69). This type of bad language is often not emphatic. Furthermore, it is not directed at an individual or a situation (Tysdahl, 2008). For instance, *by God* or even *god knows* are considered as auxiliary swearing. When bad words are used as predicative negative adjective/adverb, adverbial boosters, they are considered as auxiliary type of swearing. Examples of this type of swearing can be seen in expressions such as *Bloody movie!*and *Fucking marvelous!*

Diverse types of swearing as a bad language and the reasons predisposing people to swear were investigated in the movie *From Paris with Love* by Wulandari, R.A. in 2012. Since the movie is the representation of the real life, its script writers and its directors did not refrain from using swearwords and bad language in the dialogues. Various reasons stimulate characters to swear while uttering swearwords totally depends on the situational context (Wulandari, 2012).

The study asserts that swearing is a way of revealing and expressing strong emotions. In various situations in the movie, swearing and bad language were used by the characters to express their anger, frustration, insult, shock, amusement, surprise as well as friendship. Moreover, swearing allows individuals to symbolically display their emotions at a distance which can be replaced physical violence (Jay, 1992). It can be concluded that the use of swearing and bad language in Facebook corresponds to Jay's argument. Where there is no other way of expressing emotions, the use of bad language can be the best alternative.

The study of *From Paris with Love* reveals that abusive type of swearing is not the only type of swearing used by the characters in the movie. Other types of swearing such as expletives, auxiliary and humorous types are also favored by the characters. However, the predominant type of swearing is the abusive type constituting 50.5% of the data with 53 utterances. The next most frequent type of swearing is the expletive type, embracing 23.8% of bad languages uttered. The third common type of bad language is auxiliary swearing with 15.2 %. Insulting someone in the humorous way by the use of swearwords and using bad language was also noticeable among the characters.

The frequent use of bad language and swearwords in this movie reveals that from among the six specified reasons for swearing, expressing anger and frustration are the most dominant ones. The next reason is insulting followed by swearing as an expression of shock and surprise. The other reasons for swearing are related to the assertion of identity in a group.

Understanding each type of bad language and its subcategories will help the researcher to establish bad language in the corpus. Euphemistic expressions are also defined in depth in the present study since they belong to dysphemistic expressions and they carry negative and taboo emotional charges. Moreover, there is a trace of bad language use in such expressions. In the following section the characteristics of such expressions are discussed.

2.8.5 Euphemism

Euphemistic expressions belong to dysphemistic expressions. Although they do not use words with taboo themes, they still carry taboo or negative emotional force. Euphemistic swearing belongs to one of the categories of swearing. It is therefore necessary to define euphemistic expressions. Euphemism helps us to discover taboo words as they are substitutes for taboo words. Euphemistic expressions indicate the existence of problematic terms such as taboo references to sexuality, illness, death, body products and so on in a conversation (Allan &Burridge, 1991).

Euphemism along with dysphemism and orthophemism belongs to a category of words in a three-tiered model of language usage developed by Allan and Burridge (1991, 2006). According to this model dysphemism refers to offensive words and expressions which carry taboo or negative emotional force. The dysphemistic quality of terms derives from the underlying taboo referents such as excrement, different body products, sexuality, sex organs and death. Orthophemism is concerned with the ostensibly neutral and correct terms which denote something. This can be medical terminologies. In order to avoid both dysphemism and orthophemism, euphemism is developed by the users. For example, the dysphemistic term *cunt* can be avoided by the use of euphemistic term *pussy* (Hammons, 2012).

Ljung (2011) characterized euphemism as the use of milder words and phrases in order to replace swearing and strong bad words. In other words, these euphemistic expressions do not replace the word themselves. They are rather interjectional expressions and utterances.

Euphemistic alternatives may take various forms. The two kinds of these euphemistic replacements called 'minced oath' were recognized by McArthur (1992) are:

1. To create a nonsense alternate of a swear word, for instance replacing *Gosh* with *God* or *Gee* with *Jesus* and *fish* with *fuck* in an expression like *what the fis*h!

 2.To substitute a swear word with an everyday expression which have a similar sound and length for example *ruddy* for *bloody* or *flip* for *fuck* (P.661).

2.9 Studies on Bad Words' Offensiveness

The present study also intends to find the level of offensiveness and strength of bad words both individually and contextually. It is difficult to clearly and precisely define what the offensive or harmful speech is. The reason is that there is a lack of universal standards for offensiveness which is related to the contextual variability (Jay. 2009, p.154). Therefore, the present study will determine the offensiveness of bad words through the findings of literature, considering the context as well as investigating the offensiveness of bad words from the participants in the study both individually and within the context.

One factor which determines the offensiveness of bad words is contextual variables. Contextual variables are considered the main factors which determine the word's offensiveness or appropriateness (Jay and Janschewits, 2008; Marbry, 1974). Numerous studies, including those conducted by Jay and Janschewits (2008) and Marbry (1974), have confirmed the importance of the context. The findings of Fagersten's (2012) study also revealed that contextual variables and in particular the variation in speaker and addressee determines the ultimate degree of offensiveness of bad words (p.90). To clarify the relationship between offensiveness and context, Fagersten (2012) asserts that bad words used in in-group interactions are regarded less offensive than those in out-group interactions. However, there was variation among the participants in terms of the offensiveness of some words associated with sexual themes like *Motherfucker!*, *Fuck* and *Bitch!* Yet, a word's ultimate offensiveness and its strength is entirely dependent on pragmatic variables such as

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the relationship between the speaker and listener, social and physical settings, and the terms used and tone of voice in which words are uttered (Jay & Janschewits, 2007; Locher & Watts, 2005).

Jay (1992) claims that the level of offence and the force of a bad word will decline with its usage, the more a bad word used, the less offensive and more acceptable it will be among the individuals, albeit, the word *fuck* can be viewed as a possible exception. No matter what, the force of a bad word is highly dependent on its particular usage.

Knowing the degree of offensiveness of various English bad words will establish the status of English bad language among Malaysian netizens.

2.10 Malaysian Culture and Swearing

Culture is a vital element in exploring linguistic behaviors because according to Hymes in 1960s and 1970s, a linguistic theory should not only try to explain a speaker/hearer's knowledge of grammaticality. Linguistic theory should study the communication behavior in the context of culture and study language at a pragmatic level. Culture can be best defined as a blurry set of attitudes, beliefs, behavioral principles, and basic assumptions and values which are shared by a group of people which has great impact on everyone's behavior (Spencer- Oatey, 2008).

The Culture of a specific society refers to the shared system of beliefs, standards as well as behaviors. Consequently, it can be said that a specific behavior or even social behaviors are controlled and directed by various social conditions, various norms, and ethics which underlie all cultures. Our actions become significant and meaningful in light of norms which can also help to predict and understand our deeds. Culture like a game is governed by a set of rules. Just like a game, if an observer is not familiar with the rules of a specific culture he

or she cannot make sense out of the participants' actions as a result they seem absurd and meaningless to the observer (Downes, 1984, p.233f as cited in Karjalainen, 2002).

Looking at this issue from a different perspective, Karjalainen (2002) believes that human beings are all unique. Both nature and nurture play roles in forming our identity. Our personality is shaped by our outlooks, our beliefs and values as well as our experiences. Viewing this issue from a macro perspective, a variety of patterns become clear. Similar experiences, values and outlooks are shared by the same individuals who live in the same area. By analyzing and examining the experience, outlooks, ethics and values which go into the making of people, we are in fact studying culture.

Familiarity with the culture of the people, whose linguistic behavior is being analyzed, can be a great help in understanding a specific behaviors. In a study conducted among Malaysians by Morni,A., Jahari, A, et al (2009), they found that for Malaysian society, politeness is of great importance and Malaysians seldom pronounce taboo words. It was claimed that this is because in the Malaysian context, social relations and exchanges are of importance and speakers want to save face and be considered as the part of acceptable norms of behavior. Though the study revealed that Malaysians seldom use taboo words in their native language, it does not assert that they avoid swearing in other languages like English. Jamaliah (2000) witnessed that Malaysians, in their exchanges and communications with others follow a system of propriety which embodies particular verbal and non-verbal behaviors. Malaysians use linguistic taboo and bad words in some contexts with specific interlocutors. Sociolinguist studies have shown that variables such as gender, age, the relationship between the participants and the context in which they communicate may influence communication and speech styles. Robinson (2008), who investigated the use of swear words among 5 Hindu undergraduates, found that male Hindus, used bad language for building solidarity among

themselves. It was also found that male Hindus did not consider the use of this kind of language offensive although in normal circumstances the same swear words would sound offensive.

In their study, Morn, A, Jahari, A, et al. (2009) studied the linguistic perception of taboos of two ethnic groups namely Malay and Ibans. The two ethnic groups belong to the Malaysian community. Belonging to one community results in outstanding similarities in their treatment of linguistic taboo with regard to domain, participants, and context. These similarities stem from their Malaysian cultural background, which can be a contributing factor. For example, they do not use taboo words in the presence of their family members or the elderly. Nonetheless, there are still some differences in how these two small communities treat linguistic taboos. For example, compared to Malays, Ibans use taboo words more freely.

Morni,A., Johari, A, et al.,(2009) made an attempt to determine the Malay's and Iban's notion of linguistic taboo in conformity with the domain and their cultural background. The findings of the study revealed that half of the Malaysian community (Malay's and Iban ethnicities) agrees on the general acceptability of taboo words. Besides, they concurred on the fact that the use of taboo words facilitates the transfer of meanings. Nonetheless, the majority of them agreed that taboo words must not publicly be used. Both Ibans and Malays consider those who use offensive language, especially in public, bad-mannered and foul-mouthed. They also believe that such people are indifferent to the honor and dignity of others. However, linguistic taboo still exists in the culture and language of Malay and Ibans particularly in relation with sex, body parts, bodily function as well as death and dying (Morni, et al., 2009). Furthermore, the findings of the study demonstrated that the acceptance of taboo words is predicated upon the context and the situation.

Another study was conducted by Robinson (2008) among 5 male Indian undergraduate students who were studying at UTM. The focus of the study was on the use of swearing in ordinary daily conversations. The use of swear words among them seems to serve as a friendly gesture demonstrating solidarity. Despite the fact that these male Indians were familiar with dirty words in their native language, they did not use them until they got into university. Being in group gives them more confidence in using swear words and bad language without being restricted by their parents and elders and without being considered rude and immoral. Robinson (2008) claims that from generation to generation, from a century to century even from one setting to another setting, language style varies. Though youngsters use the language which adults disapprove, their disapproval does not make this kind of language as bad language (p.87). He believes that language does not grow by banning some parts of it since "bad language is a conscious knowledge of everyone's language" (Robinson, 2008, p.87). The study revealed that the use of bad language and swear words is not considered offensive because it consolidates solidarity. No code switching occurred in the course of swearing in their daily conversations. The main purpose of swearing was demonstrating solidarity, strengthening group ties and having a sense of belonging and security.

2.11 Social Media

Many people use Facebook to interact with others and it could be used more than five times a day (Itsnaeny, 2012, p.1-2). Facebook is a social media platform which Basel (2010) refers to it as a technology of self where people do things with words. Basel (2010) explain that Facebook enable users to express and communicate not just mere information but also to express strong feelings of disgust, anger, frustration as well as pain. The findings of a survey which was conducted and administrated by American Demographic Magazine 25 (10) can

support this fact since it revealed that 72% of individuals enjoyed swearing in public (Grimm, 2004 cited in Fagersten, 2005, p.4). The phenomenon indicates that Facebook as a social media can demonstrate users' bad language use including swearing behavior. Facebook can also reveal other aspects of human behavior i.e. the frequency of indulging in bad language. Another study conducted by Reppler, a famous management firm, can support the fact that swearing and using bad language is very evident in Facebook. The findings of the study indicate that some forms of profanity, also mentioned as bad language, exist in 47% of Facebook walls. The most frequently used bad word is found to be one of the many derivatives of *fuck*, while *shit* and its derivations taking the second place, and *bitch* and its derivations subjected to the third position (2011).

2.11.1 Facebook Status in Malaysia

Facebook is one of the contexts in which the use of bad language is very common. As a social networking service, Facebook was launched in February 2004. It is owned and run by Facebook Inc. and is widely used around the world. Based on a census, in June 2012, it was estimated that there are more than 955 million active users of Facebook. Over 50% of these users use Facebook on their mobile devices (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facebook). After registering in the site, individuals can create personal profiles and make friends by adding people. Moreover, they can join common-interest user groups and follow news (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facebook).

Facebook pages consist of personal and group profiles. Group profiles are free organizational profile pages belonging to brands, products, businesses, performers, public figures as well as non-profit organizations. Individuals who may simply identify themselves as so-called "fans" may post comments, participate in discussions or they may even share photos and videos (Sokoloff, 2009).

The term "fans" has changed to "people like this" by Facebook in April 2010 (RizaAyu A.R &Abrizah, A., 2011). In this study, the page called "Only in Malaysia" will be studied with 332,054 fans, or 332,054 people who like this page.

According to a recent census conducted in May 2013, the number of Facebook users, in Malaysia, was around 13.3 million which constitutes 45.5% of total population in this country. This result places Malaysia on the 8th place in the Asia and on 21st in the world ranking of Facebook user countries. The most number of users belong to ages 18 to 24, which are 34.5 per cent of the population. They are followed by those aged 25 to 34, and 13 to 17 who constitute 29.5 and 16.3 per cent of the population, respectively (from NorniMahadireporters@theborneopost.com, 2013).

The findings reveal that modern and present-day's teenagers are frequently exposed to Facebook. As a result their manner and their way of communication besides their lifestyle have been directly influenced by the use of such social media (from NorniMahadireporters@theborneopost.com, 2013).

Malaysian Facebook users frequently choose to use English. Various factors are involved in their choice of English. The first is the fact that English is assumed to be the language of Facebook. Moreover, English is considered the second widely spoken language in Malaysia (Shafie, L., Surina, N., and Nazira, O., 2012). The study which was conducted among university students revealed that Malaysian students preferred to speak in English. The study conducted among university students in Malaysia demonstrated that most users prefer to use English in their profiles (Shafie, L., et al., 2012).

2.11.2 Malaysian Online Activities

According to Tan et al. (2010) using Internet is not only a natural phenomenon but also a very vital and indispensable part of everybody's life. Teenagers usually constitute a large number of loyal Netizens (Tan et al., 2010). The adolescents' considerable presence in network sites as well as their literacy in cyber space can be a very interesting field of study for many researchers and scholars. One study in this regard is KokEng Tan, Melissa L.Y. Ng, and Kim Guan Saw (2010) who explored "Online Activities and Writing Practice of urban Malaysian Adolescents".

Malaysian teenagers enjoy engaging in a variety of online activities especially for recreational reasons and social networking purposes. Tan et al. (2010) conducted their study among secondary school students of five different schools in Penang. All in all 535 students, 333 male and 202 female students, participated in the study. One of the astonishing results of their study is that though English is being taught as the second language, adolescents tend to use English on the Internet at a higher rate than their mother tongues and national language. As the pie chart shows, English comprised 77.06% of all the languages used by Malaysian adolescents on the Internet while Chinese and Bahasa Malaysia constituted only 14.72% and 8.16%, respectively.

The Percentage of Languages Used by Malaysian Adolescents on Internet.
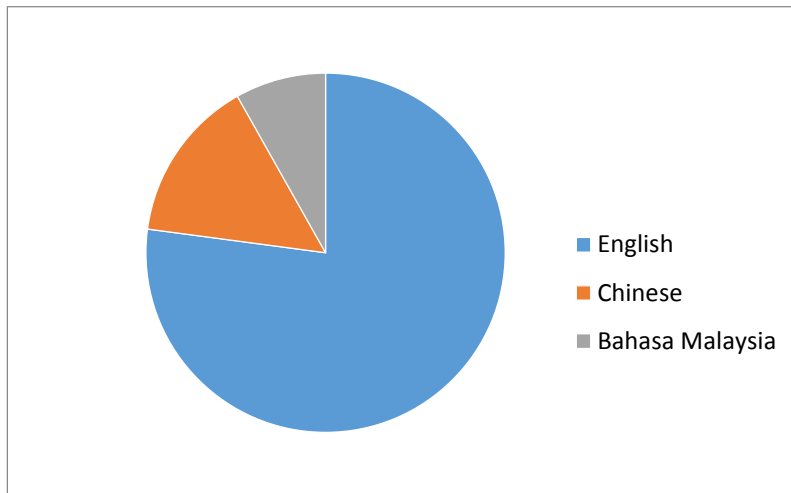
Another study, carried out in Malaysia, focused on Malaysian teenagers' online literacy performance. Tan, et al. (2010) looked into adolescents' online literacy performance from both the macro and micro level while comparing it with the identity makeup, language learning and other concepts. At the micro level, teenagers' contribution both as the reviewer and the writer of online post in computer-generated groups was explored by these researchers whilst at the macro level the popularity of some websites among them and activities associated with social networks was scrutinised.

These adolescent have access to the Internet in various settings. A place like home proved to be the number one setting. These teenagers visit a variety of other web sites to refresh their knowledge about movies, music and celebrity news. For the adolescents of secondary school expressing their opinions about Malaysian problems is less important compared to other issues.

The study also emphasized the fact that in the social network site and in the computer mediated communication, the written form of the language is a mere reflection of what is usually being spoken in the informal situations. In this study adolescents utilized ordinary

language in sharing their notions about different issues. It can be said that the finding of the present study can reveal patterns of bad language use in informal situations among Malaysians as well.

This study demonstrated that the Malaysian teenagers as the participants of this study are mostly involved in receptive reading and listening skills. They demonstrated less productivity and creativity in writing skills.

A number of considerable studies have been conducted among L1 speakers of English on bad language and its distinguishing characteristics and varieties in different contexts. These studies look at bad language from different angles including historical, psychological, social, and linguistic. However, there is still a gap in the study of bad language use and its nature among Malaysians and in social network sites such as Facebook which is a very popular site.

2.12 Summary

Bad language has no clear and solid definition. Yet, bad language can be known better if its various dimensions are studied. These include aesthetic, moral, high/low and right/wrong dimensions of language which are concerned with ugly, evil, dirty, low and wrong areas of language. Becoming familiar with different classifications of bad language such as cursing, taboo, swearing, profanities, blasphemies, epithets, insult, slurs, and slangs which have been discussed by Jay (1992) can enhance our understanding of bad language usage.

Bad language was studied by various scholars from different points of view, some of them like Montagu (1967), Hughes (2006) and Fagersten (2012) only studied one or two of the categories of bad language in detail such as swearing or cursing. They focused on different social, historical, contextual dimensions. Others use these terms interchangeably with the same meaning in order to avoid repetition in different contexts. Some of them like Jay (1992)

studied different categories of bad language from different angles. Another example is McEnery (2006) who concentrated on different social contexts.

Research on bad language words and their taboo referents in electronic media such as Facebook is influential in child rearing. From the sociolinguistic point of view, this study would be significant for sociolinguists, since it will shed light on the bad language's system of etiquette. In the following chapter the research methodology will be discussed in terms of the theoretical framework, primary and secondary model used for the analysis of the data, instrument, data collection procedure, rationale of primary data, participants, data analysis, questionnaire and interview.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the procedures and methodology utilized in the course of this research, namely the pilot study, the research design, participants, sampling method, data collection methods, research instruments and data analysis procedures.

The language of network sites are different from formal written language and from the language used in our daily conversations. The research aims to investigate the characteristics and features of English bad language used by Malaysian netizens in social network sites, i.e. Facebook. The following properties and characteristics of bad language used by netizens were delved into in the present study.

1. Refer to a taboo theme

2. Use bad words with a specific part of speech and special syntactic forms in a sentence for some special effects

3. Use bad words with different degrees of offensiveness

4. Try to use clever language for creating implicit bad language

Use different types of bad language which have different functions in order to satisfy their various intentions.

3.2 Pilot Study

In order to determine the possibility of conducting this research, a pilot study was conducted in August 2013 where a preliminary study was developed in order to determine if Malaysians use bad language in English. The preliminary study was also meant to determine if Facebook could be one of the sources of research. The pilot study focused on a small portion of the main data, one picture, shared by the admin of the page, was purposively chosen from "Only in Malaysia" page on Facebook. The reason for adopting purposive sampling was that not all the pictures shared by the admin triggered and stimulated netizens' emotions. There were 67 comments which were left by the netizens on the picture, and out of 67 comments, there were 20 comments which include bad language, both in the form of single words and in combination with other words as well as in the form of phrases. Bad language used by netizens was investigated using Thelwall's (2008) model (See section 3.4). Thelwall's (2008) model can best describe different aspects, features and characteristics of bad language used by Malaysian netizens, and it can also differentiate between the diverse themes to which bad language refer. Thelwall's (2008) model also looks at the linguistic forms or their syntactic forms of bad language' as well as the strength of most commonly used bad words. Another advantage concerning Thelwall's (2008) model is that his model can distinguish which language is regarded implicit and therefore creative.

To conduct a preliminary study on the data, one stimulus (a picture) which provoked and stimulated both the anger and surprise among the Malaysian netizens was purposively selected from the page called "Only in Malaysia" because not all the pictures shared by the admin were able to stimulate the netizens' emotions. The picture was about an accident that occurred in Pudu, Malaysia on 2 June. There were 20 out of 67 netizens who used bad language while commenting on this picture. This preliminary study was thus used as a gauge

to evaluate the suitability and usefulness of the framework, and the model as well as the procedure for conducting the present study.

The result of the pilot study indicated that one approach cannot cover the range of bad language found in the data. Thus, it would be more relevant to use a combination of approaches encompassing McEnery (2006) and Anderson (cited in Karjaleinin, 2002)'s categorization of bad words according to their referents for the present study. Though the two categorization systems proposed by McEnery (2006) and Anderson (cited in Karjaleinin, 2002) have some similar categories, there were some forms in both classification systems which cannot be found in the other. In addition, the researcher found that the combination of the two models will offer a more accurate and detailed analysis of richer data. Therefore, in the present study, the categorization of bad words according to their referents will be based on the combination of McEnery (2006) and Anderson (2002)'s categorization.

These categories include: 1) sexual organs, 2) sexual relations, 3) religion, 4) excrement, 5) intellect-based terms of abuse (mentally disabled), 6) physically disabled,7) narcotics and crime, 8) racist terms, 9) animal terms, 10) death, 11) homophobic, and 12) prostitution.

In addition, the preliminary study indicated that in order to confront the issue of reliability and avoid the issue of subjectivity, questionnaire and interview should accompany the discourse analysis.

3.3Theoretical Framework

Two distinct models were employed in this study in order to delve into the characteristics of bad language and eventually discover the typology of English bad language used among Malaysian netizens. The primary model is based mainly on Thelwall's (2008) dissections of bad language while integrating McEnery (2006) and Anderson's (cited in Karjaleinin, 2002)

categorization of bad language. However, the second model is based on Trudgill and Andersson's (1990) theory of swearing types.

3.4 The Primary Model for Discourse Analysis

The first model in this research is principally based on Thelwall's (2008) dissection and definition of swearing as a form of bad language. Thelwall's (2008) dissection of bad language is summarized in the following table:

Table 3.1: Classification System of BL (Bad Language)

(Adapted from Thelwall, 2008, p.3-5)

No	Dissection Label
1	**Referent**: over time, bad words and their phrases have been altered; however, at present swearing as the most commonly used form of bad language is likely to make reference to any subjects/theme such as: religion; sex acts; sexuality; genitals and sexual attributes; excretion; race, ethnic group or nationality; political affiliation (e.g., *commie*); any other denigrated or oppressed group (e.g., disabled, unemployed, old, young); stupidity; undesirable behaviour (e.g., *bitch, cow*); disease (e.g., *pox*) (Thelwall,2008:3).
2	**Linguistic types**: McEnery(2006:32) introduced 15 diverse linguistic types based on the analysis of BNC's spoken section (see table 2.2 in section 2.5)
3	**Word Formation**: bad words can be used simply on their own or even they can be made through portmanteau or mid-word interjection likes *Motherfucker* and *abso-bloody-lutly* (Hughes, 1991:24)
4	**Purpose**: variety of purposes may lies behind the use of bad language, such as emotional release, identity expression, brain damage and individual's normal pattern.
5	**Strength**: the bad words vary from being very mild to very strong
6	**Spelling**: the written bad words usually have standard and known spelling. However, people may use different signs such as (#, *, ! ,$) to make bleeped words like ****, or *Sh!t*, in addition to this, Netizens may misspell the bad words or even they spell them in a cool and fashionable way.
7	**Implicit Words**: Thelwall (2008) believes that when clever language is involved in swearing and the use of bad language, we are using implicit words. For example, the substitution of *Sugar* for *Shit*.

Therefore, dissecting and analyzing the English bad language used by Malaysian netizens will be done according to their referents, linguistic types or syntactic forms, strength and investigating the implicit words among the bad words. However, studying the formation of

bad words, their spelling and the purpose of uttering them is not the purpose of the present study.   Each classification in Thelwall's (2008) model encompasses several subcategories, which are clearly demonstrated in Figure 3.1 to 3.3.

Individuals usually choose a bad language from a "pool of emotive utterances" (Ljung, 2011, p.1). Thelwall (2008) also distinguished bad words based on their referents, which is the theme they refer to. But in the present study, bad language's referents used by Malaysian netizens will be distinguished and analyzed based on the combination of McEnery's (2006) and Anderson's (cited in Karjaleinin, 2002) categorization (Fig.1). The combination of McEnery's (2006) and Anderson's (cited in Karjaleinin, 2002) model will provide more detailed analysis, resulting in the comprehensive study of the themes to which bad language can refer to or from which bad language can be derived. Figure 3.1 illustrates the different categories of the referents based on the combination of McEnery's (2006) and Anderson's (cited in Karjaleinin, 2002) model.

Figure 3.1: Referents sub-categories
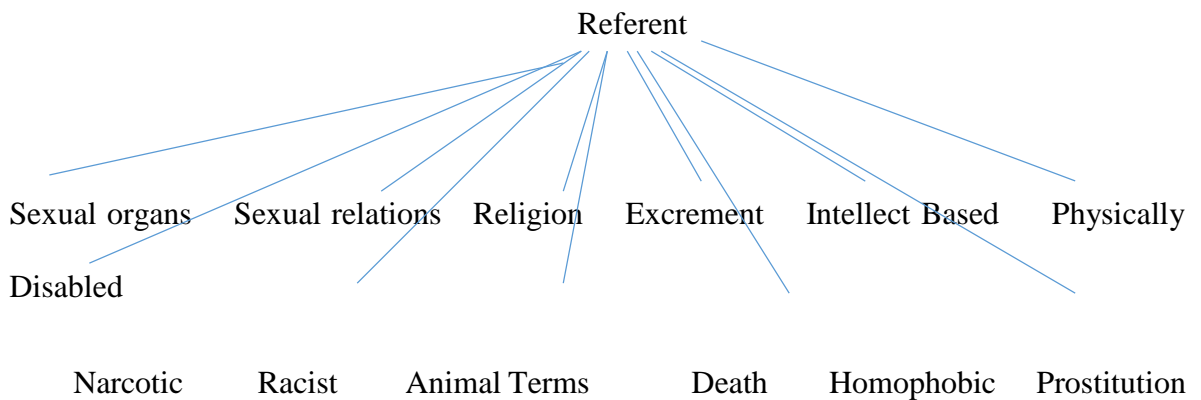
(Adapted from McEnery (2006) and Anderson (2002)

Besides, bad language can be used with different syntactic forms in a sentence. Bad words and phrases can be used as a noun, verb, adjective or adverb or as an exclamation. McEnery

(2006) categorized bad language based on their syntax into 15 distinct categories after he had analyzed BNC's (British National Corpus) spoken section (p.32). However, there were some similarities between some of the syntactic forms specified by McEnery (2006). For instance, adverbial booster and emphatic adverb may have the same effects in a sentence; therefore, these forms can be used interchangeably. For this reason, Thelwall (2008) classified them into 10 categories, considering and classifying some of the forms with similar functions and similar properties as one category.

Hence, Thelwall's (2008) classification will be used in this study. His categorization is briefly summarized in the table below:

Table 3.2: Classification of Bad Language Based on Their Linguistic Type

No	Type	Example
1	Predicative negative adjective	This video is *shit*
2	Cursing expletive	*Fuck* you!
3	Destinational usage	You *fucked off*
4	Emphatic adverb/adjective OR Adverbial booster OR Premodifying intensifying negative adjective	*Fucking* speech
5	General expletive	(Oh) *shit!*
6	Idiomatic set phrase OR Figurative extension of literal meaning	Give *a fuck*!/ what the *fuck*

7	Literal usage denoting taboo referent	I cannot *fab* to this
8	Imagery based on literal meaning	Kick *shit* out of!
9	Pronominal form with undefined referent	Got *shit* to do / start *shit* with them
10	Personal: Personal insult referring to defined entity	You *Idiot*! You *Moron*!

(Adapted from Thelwall's, 2008, p.3-4)

Another feature of bad language which needs a close study is the strength and the offensiveness's degree of bad language used by individuals. Thelwall (2008) used the term "strength" but the researcher will use the "degree of offensiveness" in the course of this study. Bad language used by individuals vary from very mild to very strong. Some of the most frequently used bad words were classified based on their degree of offensiveness by Thelwall (2008) and McEnery (2006) (for complete list of words in each degree of offense see, Appendix E). Figure 3.2 below displays different scales of offence by which bad words can be labeled. Furthermore, the researcher added a scale related to euphemistic expressions since these types of words and expressions can still convey bad language.

Figure 3.2: The Degree and Offensiveness of Bad language

Strength (offensiveness)

Very Strong   Strong   Moderate   Mild   Very Mild   euphemistic
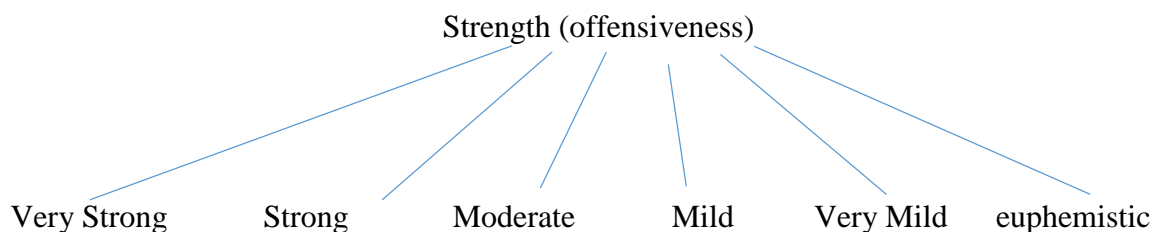
(Adapted from Thelwall, 2008)

In the present study, the offensiveness and strength of bad language used by Malaysian netizens were first specified based on the McEnery's (2006) findings from the result of two different surveys as well as Thelwall's (2008) findings after the analysis of Myspace corpus. Correspondingly, the degree of bad language offensiveness in the present study was first evaluated based on the former studies reviewed in the literature, such as studies conducted by McEnery (2006) and Thelwall (2008) (See Appendix E for the complete list of words and their scale of offence). Additionally, bad language used by Malaysian netizens is studied through a questionnaire based on Fagersten's (2012) model for evaluating the offensiveness of bad words. Her model includes two separate offensive rating tasks for measuring and evaluating the bad language's degree of offensiveness. One is the traditional offensive rating task of individual words and the other is bad language in contextual situations. Correspondingly, studying bad language in the present study was conducted within the context as well as evaluating individual words out of the context. Using these two different rating tasks will best depict and reveal the offensiveness and strength of bad language; moreover, the study will also disclose if the same bad word will be evaluated differently in different contexts of use.

Still another factor to be investigated in the data is to identify the use of implicit bad language, i.e. the use of creative and clever language, by Malaysian netizens. According to Thelwall (2008), swearing is regarded implicit when it is inspired by the use of clever language. The employment of such implicit words can be seen in some of the famous brand name such as *FCUK* and in the use of *Buck Fuddy* instead of *Fuck Buddy* in a T-shirt slogan when the letter in or between words are relocated. Another instance of implicit words can be seen in the abbreviated forms of bad words as in *effing hell.* Moreover, the substitution of bad words or naughty words by quite innocent and inoffensive terms can create implicit words. For

instance, the use of *sugar* instead of *shit* (Thelwall, 2008). The use of homophones, instead of a particular bad word as in *Richard the Third= turd* and using euphemistic sexual humors are other examples of implicit words (Thelwall, 2008).

Pseudo swear words, or in other words, fake swearing, can be regarded implicit since they employ clever language. It is regarded fake since the bad word is substituted by an innocent term which is not offensive and bad itself but it implies and infers the bad word instead of the one used. Consequently, these kinds of swear words are created by using apparently innocent terms. By using pseudo and implicit swear words, masters of fake swearing will be saved from the gruesome soap-to-mouth wash out by their talent in "creative fauxfanity" (Witte, Michelle; 2012, p.7). Fauxfanity is a conflation of the word "faux" defined as "false" and "fanity" which is suffix end of profanity; hence, as can be concluded from this conflation it is a term which innocently imitates and implies the idea and concept of profanity by using a broad grouping of words (www.bluebirdblvd.net). To illustrate using *frik* or *freak* instead of the real curse word *fuck* is using fauxfanity. Consequently, fauxfanity is substituting curse words by terms which resemble profanity but not using the actual profanity (www.urbandictionary.com). Using implicit words or pseudo swear words will save individuals from shame, and other negative consequences. For example, *Gosh*, *heck*, *crap*, *freak*, *sugar* are some of the pillar words upon which individuals usually build pseudo-swearing (Witte; 2012). Witte (2012) considers these words besides other terms such as *fudge*, *shoot*, *dang*, *flip* and *darn* as fake curse words.

3.5 The Secondary Model

Different types of bad language used by interlocutors may reveal their different emotions and their diverse intentions for uttering and using that special kind of bad language. Correspondingly, identifying dissimilar types of bad language based on their functions plays

a significant role in emotional language. The investigation of the types and functions of bad language in the present study is based on the model proposed by Andersson and Trudgill (1990). According to Andersson and Trudgill's (1990) theory of swearing types, swearing as a form of bad language can be used as expletive, abusive, auxiliary and humorous while each type can be used to accomplish different functions (p.61). Choosing each type of bad language helps interlocutors to depict their different emotions. These different types of swearing were generalized to all other forms of bad language such as cursing, profanity, blasphemy and so on; therefore, Andersson and Trudgill's (1990) model was used to determine different types of bad language according to their functions.

In section 2.8 of chapter 2, each of these four distinctive types of bad language as well as their distinguishing points and elements considered by the researcher in analyzing them was expansively described.

3.6 Instrument

The methodology for the present study employed triangulation of three methods; that is, employing more than one approach to investigate the research questions. Using more than one approach also helped the researcher in enhancing confidence in the findings. Moreover, employing two or more independent measurement processes which confirm a proposition may reduce the uncertainty and ambiguity of the interpretation. Hence, the triangulation of three approaches of the discourse analysis, the data of which was taken from Facebook, the questionnaire and online interview helped the researcher to obtain more valid data, resulting in more reliable results. The questionnaire was used not only to support the findings of discourse analysis also to measure and examine the scale of bad language offensiveness by both considering the bad language in the context of use and also measuring their scale of offence solely outside the context. Bad language used in the two parts of the questionnaire

was taken from the corpus of Facebook. The online interview with some of the participants was mainly conducted to find out their intentions and finally to determine the type of bad language used by the participants and to reduce the ambiguity and subjectivity in deciding the type of bad words used by the netizens.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The data for the present study were collected from a Facebook page called "Only in Malaysia". The data were obtained from February 2013 to August 2013 for a period of seven months. Each topic was initiated by the picture uploaded and shared by the admin of the page, who was the person controlling the page and shared everyday topics. The topics concerned about Malaysia. In the present study, a total number of 5425 comments were collected. There were 549 comments among them containing English bad language, resulting in the total use of 774 bad language examples from ten stimuli. This is because some of the Malaysians used more bad language or a string of bad words in their comments. English bad language and its different forms were identified by the description provided earlier in the literature review; however, what is regarded and defined as bad language in this study is clearly depicted through figure 3.3, which was developed by the researcher.

To ensure that the researcher avoided the issue of subjectivity in deciding whether the language used in a comment by a Malaysian netizen was regarded as English bad language or not, apart from following the frameworks and literature, the researcher engaged two friends. Therefore, the researcher asked their opinions when deciding on bad language used by Malaysian netizens.

When counting bad words manually, the researcher found that some of the bad languages were used solely in the form of a single bad word or joined to other bad words in a string of bad words; words such as *fuck, shit, idiot* are in this group. However, bad words were also

used in idiomatic set phrases as one expression such as *what the fuck* or *WTF*, which were counted as one instance of bad language use, while the bad words in a string were counted separately and not as one bad language in whole.

In collecting the primary data, the researcher first joined the page named "Only in Malaysia" where Malaysians can share and express their ideas and emotions about events, news, photos and issues pertaining to Malaysia. By joining this community, the researcher were able to trace news and photos shared by the admin of the page and have access to all the comments shared by the members of "Only in Malaysia" as well as to find more information about the variety of bad words used by these netizens through a large corpus. Secondly, the researcher asked for the permission from the page admin to use the topics shared by him besides to use the members' comments which were related to the present study. However, it was assured that the information regarding the users of bad language would remain confidential. After getting permission from the page administrator, the researcher could lead an ethical data collection. The researcher followed everyday topics, debates, status messages and comments being shared either by the members or administrator. In a period of 7 months, it was found that in 10 stimuli, including topics, videos and pictures (Appendix D), bad language was used more noticeably and at a higher rate compared to other topics. During the period, there were also topics for which the members did not use bad words at all because the topics did not stimulate or trigger the emotions of Malaysian netizens.

In the next phase, for the purpose of this study, bad language was identified among the comments written by the members of "Only in Malaysia" if they possessed the following characteristics:

1. They were considered as swear words, curse words, obscene and vulgar terms, profane, and blasphemous terms, insults and slurs, epithets and slang language (Jay, 1990)

2. Words related to taboo themes, words related to organs and act of sex, defecation, death, killing, bodies and their effluvia as well as food leftovers

3. Expletive swearing including moderate expletive, euphemistic expletive and taboo expletive

4. Abusive swearing related to ritual insults, name-calling, unfriendly suggestions and sarcastic expressions

5. Auxiliary swearing

6. Humoristic swearing.

The researcher, therefore, looked for mild to very strong bad words, as well as euphemistic expressions since in using euphemistic expressions, there is a trace of bad words either weakened or hidden by the users. Euphemistic expressions are also created and used for the sake of relieving the pressure affiliated with using a bad word though such terms eventually become offensive in a consequence of their relation to the taboo and foul terms (Jay, 1992). For instance, the use of euphemistic expression of *what the fish* instead of *what the fuck*. The researcher also took note of the frequency and the pattern of bad language occurrences, while also looking for innovative bad language in the data.

For storing the basic data, the researcher created a database table to store several information collected from each stimulus:

1. Usernames ID for future reference

2. Comments contained bad language including words, phrases and expressions

3. English bad languages were saved within their full comments in order to be analyzed within the context of use

4. Visual features like emoticons or any other images which would be visual cases of bad language use. For example, the use of poop (:poop:) emoticon is in this group.

The comments containing bad language were coded for the following variables, for which generally Thelwall's (2008) and Andersson and Trudgill's (1990) models were applied:

1) Bad language dissection (Thelwall's model (2008))

   a) Referent

   b) Linguistic type (syntactic form)

   c) Degree of offensiveness (strength)

   d) Implicit or not

2) Bad language types (Andersson, and Trudgill, 1990)

   a) Expletive

   b) Abusive

   c) Auxiliary

   d) Humorous

Figure 3.3 below not only illustrates an analytical construct of bad language analysis but also determines what aspects of bad language are going to be investigated in this study. It was developed by the researcher based on the definition of bad language discussed in the literature

review and dissection of bad words based on the model proposed by Thelwall (2008) and identifying different types of bad words according to Andersson and Trudgill's (1990) model of swearing types.

Figure 3.3: An Analytical Construct of "An Analysis of Bad Language in Facebook"

| Cursing | Profanity | Blasphemy | Taboo | Obscenity | Vulgarity | Slang | Epithets |

Insults & Slurs

Bad Language

Types based on their Function

Linguistic characteristics

| Reference | Linguistic type | Strength | Implicit words |

| Expletive | Abusive | Humorous | Auxiliary |
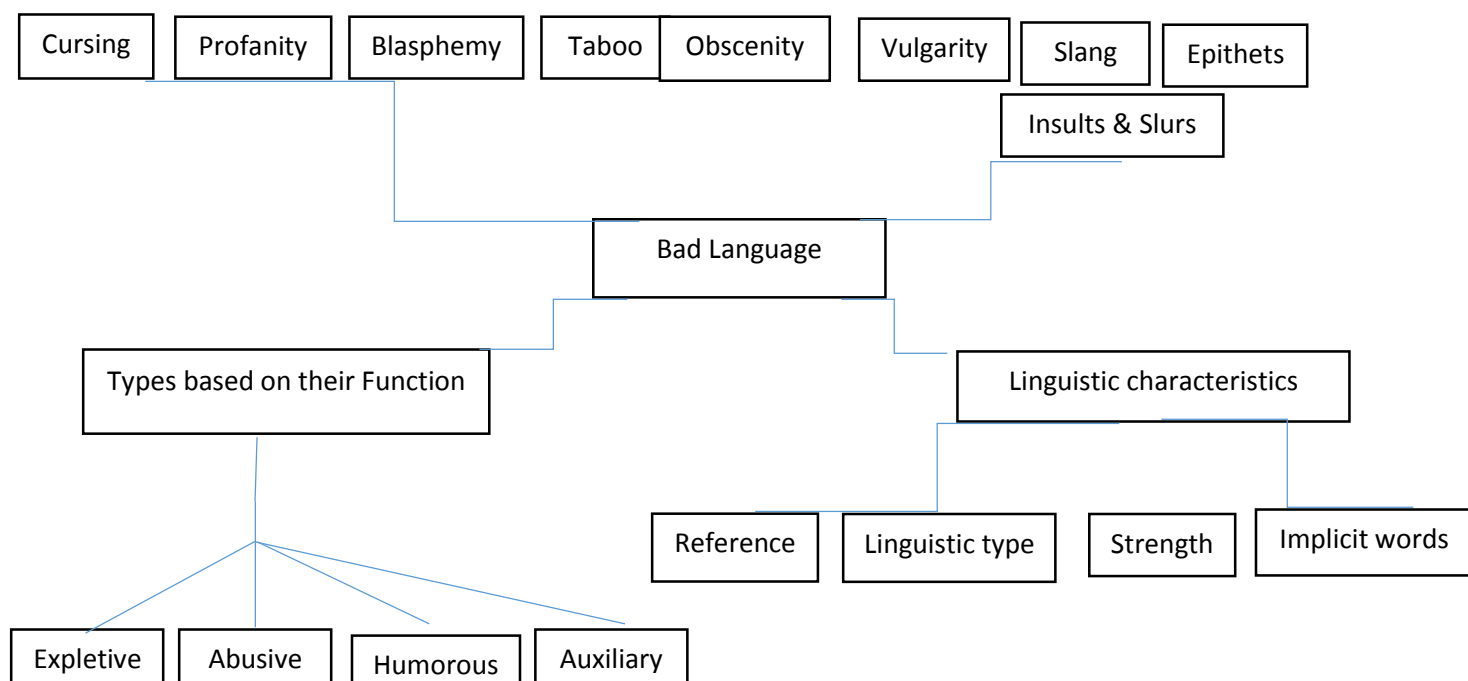
3.8 Primary Data

Facebook's comments were used as the fundamental source for demonstration and confirmation of English bad language among Malaysian netizens. While the analysis of Malaysian netizens discourse allows the researcher to describe and explain bad language behavior among the Malaysian netizens, it provides the ground for exploring Malaysians' creativity in innovating new bad words in computer-mediated communication i.e. Facebook.

Deciding which words the researcher should include as bad language in the corpus was first determined by the literature and in part by the use of dictionaries and some online websites which provide the language used in computer-mediated communications. Furthermore, in deciding whether an utterance encompasses bad language (or is an evident euphemism for a swearing expression), the researcher partly applied Allan and Burridge's (2006) consideration of taboo as discussed earlier in chapter two. Allan and Burridge (2006) asserted that if a word refers to organs or act of sex and defecation, death and killing, bodies and their effluvia as well as food leftovers, it is regarded as taboo. They also asserted that naming, addressing, touching and viewing people with sacred things, sacred objects and places are regarded taboo (p.1). The second technique for determining whether a term or expression fits the criteria was by imposing a choice of one of McEnery's (2006) categories for each term or expression. These categories can be seen in Table 2.1 (p.30). For more clarification, it is to see whether a word is used by the Malaysian netizens and was regarded as bad language can be labelled and categorized as a swear word, animal term of abuse, sexist or racist term of abuse or whether it can be regarded as homophobic term of abuse or intellect-based term of abuse. Finally, another technique which was used to define a word or an expression as bad language was to see if they can be categorized based on the McEnery's (2006) and Anderson's (cited in Karjaleinin,2002) categorization of bad words according to their referents. The underlying taboo referent can result in the dysphemistic quality of a word, which will eventually change the word to bad language.

3. 8.1 Rationale of the Primary Data

Analyzing Malaysian netizens' discourse in the corpus of Facebook as the primary data provided large amounts of naturally occurring bad language used in social network sites, i.e. Facebook. That was a benefit to the present study since social network sites provide a

reasonably large scale of existing linguistic data which are pertinent to bad language. They can also offer language use with unique features.

3.8.2 Participants of Primary Data

A purposive sampling method was used for choosing the participants of primary data. The participants for the primary data were Malaysian Facebook users who had two distinctive characteristics. First, they were members of "Only in Malaysia", a fan page with 322,000 fans and followers. Secondly, they used English bad language to express their emotions.

3.9 Data Analysis

A descriptive approach was used in the present study since it would be more validated and substantial if there is a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches in carrying out the study (Creswell, 2003). Therefore, an exploratory mixed method was used by the researcher for conducting the present study, which is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. By qualitative method, the researcher aims at the in-depth description whereas quantitative method seeks explanatory law (Anderson cited in Karjaleinin, 2002). The data for qualitative study of bad language were obtained through the study of Malaysians' discourse at a Facebook page called "Only in Malaysia" and online interview with a number of participants; however, the data for studying bad language quantitatively were gained through the use of questionnaire. The findings from these three different methods offered more comprehensive sources for studying bad language. After getting permission from the administrator of the page for conducting an ethical research and collecting all the required data, the analysis was conducted by an extensive means of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. After gathering the data and having compiled a list of bad words, first, each bad word was checked for its frequency of occurrence in the data. To analyze the frequency of occurrence of bad words, the total number of bad words was

counted manually in the data. This was divided and multiplied by 100 to work out the percentage of each bad word used by Malaysian netizens in Facebook.

$$\frac{\text{Total number of each specific bad word}}{\text{Total number of all bad words in the data}} \times 100 =$$

Higher percentage indicates more frequent use of a bad word.

Next, each comment was approached and delved into individually in order to have a good comprehension of each bad word in each comment. Each comment was analyzed by having its context. The bad words included in each comment were investigated exhaustively for their characteristics with respect to Thelwall's (2008) model. Correspondingly, each bad word's theme to which it referred, its linguistic type (syntactic form), and its degree of offensiveness were identified and finally the researcher checked the word to find out whether it was creative or it was among common and known bad words based on the combination of Thelwall's (2008) and McEnery's (2006) models.

Finally, based on the model of swearing types proposed by Andersson and Trudgill (1990) and with regard to the setting and the context in which bad words and phrases were used, they were categorized according to their types, namely expletive, abusive, auxiliary and humorous.

During the analysis procedure, each bad word was coded within one of the explored categories. This procedure was very time consuming due to the special characteristics of words found on Facebook, the data were investigated manually.

Additionally, the process of classifying, categorizing and analyzing each individual bad word or expression took too much time and commitment. This is owing to the fact that the process was not simply identifying and classifying different characteristics of individual bad words and expressions according to different categories. Some of the words and expressions were hard to identify since they belonged to different groups. A lot of contemplation and comparisons were needed for pinpointing the characteristics of bad language. Still, there were some terms and expressions which could not be identified within the present categories, therefore, there was a need for the creation of new categories in some instances.

Finally, the researcher went through the coded and analyzed data several times in order to check for the accuracy of analysis and avoid transitory of personal bias and inattentiveness on her side.

3.10 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed by the researcher to find the answer to some of the questions raised after analyzing the corpus; furthermore, it was designed to get the Malaysian perception on the offensiveness of bad words. Consequently, to further support the strength of bad language among Malaysians, 30 Malaysians from three different universities, UM, UPM and UCTI agreed to participate in the present study to answer a three-part questionnaire regarding their attitudes toward the strength and the use of bad language mostly with regard to the frequently used bad words and phrases, both on their own and within the context. The questionnaire was handed to them, and the participants were given 20 minutes to complete it. The questionnaire was both adopted and adapted from Fagersten's (2000) questionnaire;

however, the questions in the questionnaire were also designed based on the literature search and the findings of primary data. The questionnaire consists of three different parts, sample questionnaire is provided in Appendix B. Each part of the questionnaire will be analyzed separately in chapter 4.

3.10.1 Part I

In the first part of the questionnaire, the participants were asked some general questions about their competence in English language, their Facebook ID (appearance) on Facebook pages and regarding bad language use and swearing utterances such as:

What is your competence in the English Language?

How do you appear on FB pages?

Which language do you use in Facebook?

If you choose a, b, and C, where do you learn these words from?

"In what emotional state are you most likely to use swear words?"

As discussed earlier in chapter 2, using bad language is not always associated with negativity and offensiveness; it may have positive outcomes as well. Individuals may simply use bad language as a conversational habit for building solidarity among the members (Hammons, 2012; Jay, 2009). The participants' answers to these questions reveal their intention for using bad language and eventually clarify the type of bad language used among them.

"Do you use signs (e.g. *,#, !, $) in Facebook when you use bad language words" ,

"If Yes, identify your reason, Please choose from the following choices (you can choose More Than One Answers)" It is fun, it is less offensive, it looks more creative or it is easier and faster, other reasons please write here ……

Despite the fact that the language used in the social media networks is written, it may have some special characteristics which make it different from formal written language; hence, bad words and expressions are not exceptions. The participants' answers to these questions

in the questionnaire supplement whether Malaysian netizens would prefer to use signs when using bad language in Facebook and it will shed light on their reasons for using them.

3.10.2 Part II and III

Part II and Part III in the questionnaire seek for some information regarding the offensive rating and the strength of bad words among Malaysian netizens both when they are used alone, out of context and within the context. Traditionally, offensiveness ratings are based on non-contextualized swear words while swearing utterances are contextualized (Jay, 2009), in the present study the offensiveness of bad language is studied both without and within the context. The participants were asked to rate each bad word or expression on the offensiveness scale of 1 to 5 , '1' being 'Very Mild', and '5' being 'Very Strong'. The participants were then asked to provide a label for the list of words. This part of the questionnaire intended to measure the strength of some common and frequent bad words among the Malaysian members in non-contextualized situations. The participants were asked to rate the strength of 11 frequently used bad words exclusively on their own without considering the context. These bad words are *ass, asshole, bastard, bitch, cunt, damn, dick, fuck, shit, hell* and *mother fucker*. The juxtaposition of offensiveness rating of non-contextualized bad language with the contextualized rating of them in the present study will reveal the critical discrepancies; moreover, it will emphasize the significance of studying bad language as socially and contextually bound phenomena.

Part III includes rating the contextualized bad language use. Both the context and the dialogue in which the bad words were used were provided for the participants. The same bad words rated in non-contextualized context were chosen which were used within four different contexts in the corpus and which received the higher frequency of bad language words compared to other contexts. Similar to rating the offensiveness of bad language in part II,

participants were asked to rate the offensiveness of individual bad words or expressions on a scale of '1' (Very Mild) to '5' (Very Strong) and provide a label for them (Appendix B). One of the contexts and questions derived out of that context in the questionnaire is depicted below for the illustration of part III.

Context: "<u>A woman who is the priminister of Suara Wanita 1 Malaysia had a dispute with a student in a public forum, in a forum she stops a student from speaking and said all animals have problem, later after so many criticism in social media she announced in her Facebook page that "I forgive Miss Y".</u> the questions

14.1 Do you think this is a <u>motherf**king</u> game Mrs. X?

14.2 Forgive??? Y didn't ask for forgiveness!! Again she is <u>crapping!</u>

14.3 <u>farts</u>....asking u to apologize... not to forgive.. who ask ur forgiveness... u should be begging for forgiveness

The participants were asked to rate the bad words used according the context of use.

Finally, the participants' answers to part II and III provided information concerning the notion of offensiveness among Malaysian netizens, the result of which were compared to the offensiveness rating of the same bad words and expressions in the previous studies.

3.11 Online Interview

To further affirm and justify the findings and results of bad language types based on Andersson and Trudgill's (1990) theory of swearing types and to avoid subjectivity in deciding the type of some of the problematic as well as difficult bad words and expressions, an online interview was conducted with the participants whose intention in using different types of bad words were not clear in the corpus which required more investigation and clarification.

Correspondingly, an online interview through chatting with the participants was also conducted. The participants of online interview were participants whose bad language type in the corpus was difficult to determine. Face-to-face interview with the respondents were not possible since they came from different parts of Malaysia and most of them were reluctant to meet the researcher for a face-to-face interview. Convenience sampling method was used for conducting interview with the participants. 50 participants were contacted through messages on Facebook to request for having an interview with the researcher. These participants were chosen on the basis of corpus analysis and their specific use of bad language words; however, only 30 of them volunteered to be interviewed. The interviews were conducted through online chatting and the corpus served as a springboard for the interview. The questions in the interview were designed mostly to obtain the users' intention of using bad words in general and a specific bad word in particular. The followings are sample of questions in the online interview; more sample questions are presented in Appendix C.

Does swearing indicate your emotion?

What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

When you wrote comment like "# 28: priceless speech..its only a joke...biggest clown than any comedian out there...everywhere i go,i heard people making a joke to each other with this stuff "listen, 'listen, listen'...well this is malaysian got talent!!!" how were you feeling? (angry, happy, excited, shocked, etc.)

What was your purpose or intention?

Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

Additionally, the interview answers were analyzed for further support of the function and the type of bad language used by Malaysians netizens. The interview questions and transcripts are presented in Appendix C.

3.12 Summary

In order to delve into the characteristics as well as the typology of bad language among Malaysian netizens, the researcher employed a sociolinguistic view using McEnery (2006) and Anderson (as cited in Karjaleinin, 2002) theory of bad language and swearing as well as Thelwall's (2008) model of bad language dissection. Besides, the researcher used Andersson and Trudgill's (1990) theory of swearing types to identify the intention of Malaysian netizens while using English bad language. To examine these theories, the researcher also employed three different approaches, namely corpus questionnaire, and online interview. The findings of each approach complement the findings of the two other approaches, which helped the researcher in better justification of data and their analysis. Finally, by using both qualitative and quantitative approach, the researcher provided both description and explanation of the data and their findings. In the following chapter, the frequency count of some of the frequent bad words and expressions as well as their inflections and derivations are provided. In addition, the chapter discusses the findings from the analysis of corpus, questionnaire and interview.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on the analysis of data by specifically looking at the use of bad language used by Malaysian netizens while posting their comments via "Only in Malaysia" Facebook page. In this chapter, the term bad language will be used as a referent to the bad words used within the comments and also meant to include the various themes and forms of bad language encompassing cursing, profanity, blasphemy, taboo, obscenity, vulgarity, slang, epithets, insult and slurs as implicated by Jay (1992, see chapter 1).

Focusing on the use of language, discourse analysis was engaged as the main approach in this study. The aim was to investigate how language was used by Malaysian netizens in expressing themselves particularly when they are agitated emotionally. It is assumed that bad language comes into the fore when people are pushed to express their extreme emotional outbursts such as anger, surprise, disgust, pain and so on. The different characteristics of the bad language are first highlighted before they are analyzed for their types. For this purpose, the combined model proposed by Thelwall (2008), McEnery (2006) and Andersson (as cited in Karjaleinin, 2002) was used. This chapter begins by looking at the frequency of occurrence of the bad language used, specifically bad language which is commonly used by people around the world. They include *fuck, shit, motherfucking, ass,* and *idiot.* In addition, the use of bad language by Malaysian netizens is also analyzed in terms of their creative forms, namely bad language which has not been identified before by swear word websites like (http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=fucked+up). Thus, they were considered as creative in this context. Besides that, bad language as well as those words and expressions,

which have been described as being implicit by Thelwall (2008), are identified. Implicit bad language includes expressions such as *what the fish* (instead of what the fuck), or compound words such as *starfucks* (instead of Starbucks) and others. Following that, bad language that includes words which are used more frequently are then examined for their different linguistic features and syntactic forms. Eventually, bad language used by Malaysian netizens are classified into their types according to Andersson and Trudgill's(1990) theory of swearing types, which is dependent on their functions and the interlocutor's intention.

4.2 Common Words and Phrases Considered as Bad Language Used by Malaysian Netizens on Facebook

In doing this study, 10 different pictures, videos, and statements posted in "Only in Malaysia" page by the administrator of the page were analyzed. These pictures and videos had received comments which contained a large amount of bad language thus they were used for analysis. From a total of 5425 comments received in the posts, a total of 549 comments encompassed bad language, resulting in the total use of 774 words and expressions which are regarded as bad language. It is further noted that some of these comments contained more than one bad word; hence, they too were counted. While categorizing these 774 bad words according to their linguistic and non-linguistic features and types, it was clear that some of them were more commonly used while some were more innovative. The more commonly used bad words were 'stupid', 'fuck', 'bitch', 'crap', 'asshole', 'damn', 'shit', 'idiot', and 'bloody'. These words had appeared either in their original state (root form) or through inflections and derivations. To verify the latter, a reference was made to some swear word websites in Malaysia like https://mymalaysia.wordpress.com/2006/08/15/how-to-swear-insult-cuss-and-curse-in-malay/ and http://www.youswear.com/index.asp?language=Malaysian.

Table 4.1 illustrates the frequency in occurrence of most commonly used bad words. From the data analyzed, it was found that the most commonly used bad word is *fuck* and its inflections and derivations. This bad word, *fuck,* was regarded by many Malaysian as a relatively strong bad word. The frequency count of this commonly used bad word encompasses idiomatic expressions such as *WTF* '*what the fuck', dafug*, as well as *freaking* which is considered as a pseudo swear word or the euphemistic alternative of the word *fuck*. Analysis indicates that the word *fuck* and its variations (i.e. including inflections and derivations) were used a total of 106 times out of 774 words by Malaysian netizens and this accounts for 13.69% of the total usage.

The following examples are some of the instances from the corpus (data) in which *fuck*, its derivations and inflections were used. In example #2, the word *motherf**king* was used where 'uc' was substituted with the symbols "**". In example #12, the word *fucking* is used as predicative negative adjective for emphasis by the netizen without any changes in the appearance of the word. In example #27, one of the netizens wrote *fucking* with a fashionable spelling as in *fking*. In example #55, the word *shut the fuck up!* was used. And finally, in example #71, *dafug* was an internet term substituting *what the fuck* was used.

1. Example #2: do you think this is a *motherf**king* game Mrs. X?
2. Example #12: The best *fucking* joke i heard for the day...not a single crime was drag into the scene.
3. Example #27: and also cunt like you who try to shut of free speech with the power that you think you have. *fking* cunt
4. In example #55: Why can't you just *stfu* and don make yourself look like an idiot!?
5. In example #71: *Dafuq.* Wasted 7minutes of my time to this utterly nonsense. Stupidity written all over her face.

The second most commonly used bad word was *stupid*. The word was mostly used for labelling out-group members and inanimate objects as a way for alienating the out-group members and for building solidarity among the members (Mechling, 1984, as cited in Jay, 2000). Some instances of the term *stupid* as detected in the data are illustrated below. *Stupid* was used a total of 84 times out of 774 bad words by Malaysian netizens.

1. Example #291: *s2pid* ppl blocking wedding
2. Example #300: *Stupid* bitch
3. Example #380: The *stupida* old women ever…

In example #291, the sound "t" in *stupid* was used in a fashionable manner where it was substituted by the use of number "2". In example #300, *stupid* without any changes in its appearance, was used as a premodifying negative adjective. In example #380, *Stupida* was used by making little changes in its appearance when the word was cleverly added with a suffix "a' to create a special effect of the word.

The third most commonly used bad language was *bitch*, which occurred 59 times out of 774 bad words. That is 7.62% of the total bad word usage. Some of the instances from the data in which *bitch* was used by Malaysian netizens are depicted below:

1. Example #21: I want to *bitch-slap* her... so she can forgive me
2. Example #58: Arrogant *bitch!!!* It's Bawani to forgive her!!
3. Example#127: LOOK! snatching, screaming, showing off qualifications and *bitching* about age do not seem like a form of respect to others ur old don't mean ur right.

Bitch, like other frequent bad words, was used in different linguistic forms. For instance, *bitch* was used as an imaginary action by a netizen, in example #21. It was used as a personal insult in example #58 while it was used as a figurative verb in example #127.

The next bad word detected in the data was the word *crap* with 35 instances; thus, it was ranked fourth in the frequency of occurrence of bad words.

1. Example #22: *crap*...tcss!!!
2. Example #150: You spoke bullshit just to show how *crappy* ur brains were and you came up so high

In example #22, *crap* was used as a general expletive whilst in example #150, *crappy* was used as an adjective. Comparatively, the word *asshole*/*ass* and *damn* came into sequence, occurring at 4.13% or in 32 instances. They both ranked as the fifth most frequently used bad word among the Malaysian netizens. The following examples are instances of comments found in the data in which these two bad words were used by Malaysian netizens.

1. Example #398: *Damm* farking commercial...... not enuf expose meh.... plssss lah !!!!!
2. Example #462: If you have any brains you shouldn't hve gave those remarks you heartless *asshole*.

In example #398 mentioned above, *Damm* was used with a fashion spelling and as an emphatic adjective. However, *asshole* in example #462 was used as a personal insult with its standard spelling.

Other forms of bad language were also detected but they appeared to be minimal in use. Table 4.1 illustrates the commonly used bad words found in the data and their frequency of occurrence in the data.

Table 4.1: The Frequency occurrence of common bad words

Word	Frequency of occurrence	Percentage of Usage among common bad word	Percentage of Usage in Total Bad Words
Fuck	**65**	**12.33%**	**8.39%**
Fucking	**24**	**4.55%**	**3.10%**
Dafug	16	**3.03%**	2.06%
Fucked	**1**	0.18%	0.12%
Stupid	**84**	**15.93%**	**10.85%**
Bitch	**59**	**11.19%**	**7.62%**
Crap	**35** **1Crude=crap+rude**)	**6.64%**	**4.52%**
Asshole / ass	**34**	**6.07%**	**4.39%**
Damn	**32**	**6.07%**	**4.13%**
Idiot	**23**	**4.36%**	**2.97%**
Hell	18	3.41%	2.32%
Shit	17 (1 symbol of shit (:poop:)	3.22%	2.19%
Dumb	17	3.22%	2.19%
Fool	16	3.03%	2.06%
Bloody	12	2.27%	1.55%
Moron	10	1.89%	1.29%
Crazy	8	1.51%	1.03%
Silly	6	1.13%	0.77%
Cunt	5	0.94%	0.64%
Cockblock	5	0.94%	0.64%
Retarded	5	0.94%	0.64%
Whore	4	0.75%	0.51%
Gay	4	0.75%	0.51%
Noob	4	0.75%	0.51%
Pissed	3	0.56%	0.38%
Faggot	3 (fag 2- faggot 1)	0.56%	0.38%
Fap	3	0.56%	0.38%
Screw	3	0.56%	0.38%
Trolled(pissed off- pissing)	3	0.56%	0.38%
Slut	2	0.37%	0.25%
Dick	1	0.18%	0.12%
Bollock	1	0.18%	0.12%
Butthurt	1	0.18%	0.12%
Balls	1	0.18%	0.12%
Prostitute	1	0.18%	0.12%
Mad	1	0.18%	0.12%
Bugger	1	0.18%	0.12%

Overall common bad words	527		
Other bad words	247		
Total bad words	774		100%

<p style="text-align:center">Continued Table 4.1: The Frequency occurrence of common bad words</p>

The section below discusses the most common types of bad words used by Malaysian netizens. It begins by focusing on the ones which were more common, followed by those which have been described earlier.

4.2.1 Common Bad Words

In the above section, it was mentioned that Malaysian netizens used either those bad words which are commonly used in different websites and those which have been defined as creative or new because they have not been identified anywhere else before. As mentioned above, the common bad language detected from the data of 774 bad words are *fuck, stupid, crap, ass/asshole* and so on. It was also mentioned that bad language may also encompass those possessing the derivations and inflections of the root word. In this section, these bad words as well as their inflections and derivations will be discussed in further detail.

Inflections and derivations of the word 'Fuck'

The word *fuck* was earlier mentioned to be the more distinguished of bad language that had contributed to the paradox. Though *fuck* was consistently referred to as among the most regularly used bad words, it was also judged as one of the most offensive and abusive ones (Fagersten, 2012). The etymology of this word, its literary appearance and its linguistic development have all been documented exhaustively (Hughes, 1998; McEnery and Xioa, 2004; Montagu, 1967; Sheidlower, 1999). The high frequency of occurrence of the word *fuck* has been attributed to the variations in which it comes, comprising of nouns (*fuck, fucker, motherfucker)*, verbs (to *fuck*), adjectives (*fucking*, *fucked*) and eventually adverbs (*fucking*).

It appears that compared to other bad words used in the data, the word *fuck* was very productive in that it was used numerous times and it could be used in a multipurpose manner (Fagersten, 2012,p.117). Clearly, the word *fuck* and its variations had accounted for 13.69 % (106 instances) of the total bad word usage.

Fuck as noun

From the analysis, it was noted that the word 'fuck' was used as a noun 66 times by Malaysian netizens, making it a total of 8.52%. Among all the instances of *fuck* which were found in the data, which accounted for 78.78% of them that is in 52 instances (16.66% of its total usage), *fuck* was used in a formulaic manner, for instance *how in the fuck, what the fuck, fuck you, fuck it, fuck up, fuck off*. The following examples are instances of comments extracted from the data in which the word *fuck* was used in formulaic expressions. The examples are illustrated as they were used by Malaysian netizens in the data.

1. Example # 348: *what the fcuk* is she doing there? OMG.

2. Example #168: LOL change the name to suara X desperado 1 malaysia.. bodoh sial.. and a big *FUCK OFF* to \the admin.. if u gona say thanks.. ur welcome...

3. Example #169: *How in the F* the students supposed to do their homework after talking*?*

4. Example # 55: Why can't you just *stfu* and don make yourself look like an idiot!?

5. Example # 180: this writer sure high as *fck*.. kena ganja while writing

Besides being used as a formulaic expression as seen in phrases and sentences, in 21.21% of its total occurrences, *fuck* served as a verb as illustrated below. In this example, the word *fuck* was used as a verb literally.

1. Example # 208 (verb): *FUCFK* that WHORE!

Fuck **as adjective**

Another inflection of *fuck* was adjective with 22.64 % of its total usage and it was ranked among the second most frequently used form with 15 instances.

As seen in the following examples, netizens used *fucking* both with the standard spelling and fashionable spelling as well as an emphatic pre-modifier.

1. Example # 12: The best *fucking* joke i heard for the day...not a single crime was drag into the scene.
2. Example # 398: Damm *farking* commercial...... not enuf expose meh.... plssss lah !!!!!
3. Example#464: *Fucking* whore Ms. X..god damn you slut !

Earlier, it was mentioned that the word *freaking* could be interchangeably used as the euphemistic alternative of *fucking* and the data indicated that this word occurred only twice in the entire data. Below are the examples found in the data.

1. Example # 393: really *freakin'* wedding
2. Example # 195: *lmfao* (laughing my fucking ass off)

Fuck **as adverb**

The word *fucking* was used as an adverb in 37.5% (9 instances) of the comments in the data. The following are examples illustrating this.

1. Example #461: Ms. X....apa kata ko terjun skali dari tingkat 6 tu? We DONT *FUCKING* NEED RACIST WHORE LIKE YOU...NUFF SAID...
2. Example # 540: *Fucking* unbelievable. Rich abusing their rights and correct way of living. Shame on them!!!

Fricking is another instance of the euphemistic alternative of *fucking* which occurred only once in the data as an adverb. The following is the only instance of *fricking* detected in the data.

1. Example #151: Dude-your English is *fricking* hilarious

Inflections of the word *fuck*

a. Motherfucker

Motherfucking was a word that was rated as one of the most offensive bad words and it was also considered as a highly aggressive form of the word *fuck* (McEnery, 2006). Analysis of data suggests that the word *motherfucking* occurred at 0.65% of the total usage of bad words containing *fuck*.

Similarly, the word *motherfucking* was used both as adjective and adverb by Malaysian netizens. This is illustrated in example #2 and example #157. It was also noted that the word *motherfucking* was used in a fashionable sense as a pre-modifier, negative form of adjective.

1. Example # 2 (adjective): do you think this is a *motherf**king* game Mrs. X?
2. Example# 157 (Adverb): By the way, your England is *mother farking* powder.

b. *Fucker*

Another inflection of the word *fuck* was the word *fucker* which occurred 0.12% of the total bad word usage and 0.94% in the set of data which uses *fuck*. This is illustrated through the following examples:

1. Example # 179:   Brady *fxxker* utusan, mabuk todi ka?(messenger ,you are drunk today)

II. Stupid

The next bad language that rates highly after *fuck* and its inflections in the data was the word *stupid*, which occurred 10.58 % (84 instances) in the entire data. This term was used as an

accusatory term directed to the addressee as an insult. Predominant usage of *stupid* in the data, which includes 90.47 % of its total occurrences (76 instances), was a negative or disparaging adjective. In other words, in 76 instances, this word was used as an adjective before a noun to add negativity to that specific noun. The following instances are extracted from the data to illustrate.

1. Example # 380: The <u>*stupida*</u> old women ever
2. Example # 138: YOU NEED TO LEARN ENGLISH...same for your *stupid* off the point president!

However, the remaining 8 (9.52% of its total usage) occurrences of *stupid* in the data includes the use of *stupid* as a noun. It was then used as a substantive, derogatory and insulting reference to someone or a deed. One example was also found in the data where *stupid* was used as formulaic expression, i.e. *what a ...* In comments #494 and #80 extracted from the data, *stupid* was used as an insulting reference to someone; however, in #469, the netizen used *stupid* in a the formulaic phrase *what a......*

1. Example # 494: *stupid* everywhere
2. Example # 80: Hahahaha by days she is making fool of herself....want to forgive it seems...damn *stupid*....
3. Example # 467: Really ya? *What a stupid*, crazy, foolishness

III. Bitch

The word *bitch* has been used mainly to refer to women although women may also be insulted with terms like *slut* and *whore*. Among these three terms, *bitch* had a total of 59 occurrences out of 774 total bad words or 7.62 % of the total bad word usage. This term was the third most frequently used bad word found in the comments shared by Malaysian netizens. The social acceptance of *bitch* can perhaps be considered as a contributing factor in its high

frequency (Fagesrten, 2012). Directing this term on someone implies that the person is both socially and sexually undesirable. In addition, the term also suggests condemnation of women (Jay, 1992). For instance, in example #7, the term *bitch* was used to denote a woman whom the administrator of "Only in Malaysia" referred to as "a disgrace to the women in Malaysia".

1. Example # 7: u stupid *bitch*, and whore!!!

Bitch was also found to serve different grammatical forms in the data such as verb *bitching* in example #127: but LOOK! snatching, screaming, showing off qualifications and *bitching* about age. As a noun in example #134: because it is a waste of time to talk to a brain retarded *bitch* like X ZJ! It was found in one example in the data where *bitch* was used as a verb modifier, the following example #21 is the case in which *bitch* was used by a Malaysian netizen to describe the type and the method of slapping: I want to *bitch*-slap her... so she can forgive me. However, *bitch* was most prevailingly used by Malaysian netizens as a noun (as a substantive and pejorative reference to a woman) with a total of 88.13% from the total word usage (or 52 instances out of 774 total bad words). The following is given as illustration:

1. Example # 134: I would have walked away also simply because is a waste of time to talk to a brain retarded *bitch* like XZJ!

In the data, *bitch* was used 6 times or in 10.16% of the total usage as a formulaic expression namely *what a ……* (1 instance), *bitch please!* (3 instances) or *bitch-slap her*! (2 instances). The following comments are instances extracted from the data where *bitch* was used in different formulaic expressions:

1. Example # 204: what a *bitch*.
2. Example # 234: *Bitch* slap her. Even parents cannot sit like that
3. Example # 83: I don't see any sincerity when she read out that long-ass planned speech. *Bitch* please. Mrs. Y has better class than you.

Bitch was once (1.69% of the total word usage) found to be used as a verb in the data, as example #127 (participle verb) illustrates.

1. Example # 127: snatching, screaming, showing off qualifications and *bitching* about age do not seem like a form of respect to others ur old dont mean ur right, if it is so, then y not set the election min age to 80?

IV. Crap

The term is used as a scatological term with reference to bodily fluid and elimination and it is also known as a euphemistic alternative of 'shit'. Moreover, it is also the fourth most common bad word used at the frequency of 4.52% out of 774 total bad words. It was invoked 35 times as a swear word in different contexts in the data.

The term was also used in diverse grammatical forms and as a phrasal expression which reveals the productive aspect of *crap*. In 25 instances out of its 35 total word usage that is 71.42% of its total usages, *crap* was used in formulaic expressions like *what a .....* (4times), *bunch /load of ....* (4 times). *Crap* was also found to be repeated 17 times in another formulaic expression namely *holy ......* which was repeated by one user for revealing his/her anger of the situation. The following examples are instances of comments from data in which *crap* was used in diverse formulaic expressions:

1. Example# 113: Listen listen *what a crap*.. Mamak gal u go bak home watch your own video... Craaaaap !!

2. Example # 121: shes just laying off *a bunch of craps*, make her look like she make sense, and finish winning

3. Example # 109: that's y she has NO choice to taLk rubbish n out of topic! *hoLy crap, crap, crap, crap, crap, crap, crap, crap, crap, crap, crap, crap, crap, crap, crap, crap, crap* -__-

The term *crap* was also found to be used as an adjective in 14.28% (5 occurrences) of its total word usage, and it was used as a noun in 8.57 % (3 instances) of its total word usage in the data. It was also discovered that *crap* was used only twice (5.71%) as a verb in the data.

In example #476 taken from the data, *crappy* as a derivation of *crap* was used as an adjective. However, in example #169, it was used in a compound noun *bullcrap* by one of the Malaysian netizens. In the final example below, example #9, *crap* was used as a verb.

1. Example # 476 (adjective): this is stupid, she's stupid she practically killed herself over a *crappy* boyfriend

2. Example # 169 (noun): Its like doing a research about something after presenting.. Isn't this another *BULLCRAP?*

3. Example # 9: Forgive??? Y didn't ask for forgiveness!! Again she is *crapping*!

V. Ass/ Asshole.

The term *ass* and *asshole* were ranked as the fifth commonly used bad words at 4.39% (34 instances) of the total bad words count found in the data. Sharing a common theme/referent with *bitch*, *ass* also refers to an animal, donkey, in this case. However, the term *ass* is barely used in the literal sense (Fagersten, 2012). It appears that the term *ass* is being used as a term for denoting a stupid person or as a vulgar word referring to the buttocks (Fagersten, 2012). The term *asshole* was numbered among the bad words in this study used in figurative sense. This term is commonly used as a synonymous term for *ass*, whereas in its literal sense, it refers to *anus* (Fagersten, 2012). Also, it is pejoratively used in order to be directed at people and represent them. *Asshole* is also regarded as an variant of *arsehole* , which is considered as a type of vulgarism and bad language which is used for describing the anus (http://www.urbandictionary.com).

The terms a*ss* and *asshole* as appealing terms for denoting a stupid person and stupid deed were used predominantly in the data by Malaysian netizens. These terms were used as a noun, adjective or in interjections in Malaysian netizens' comments. However, *ass* and *asshole* were invoked 18 times out of total 34 instances of their occurrence as a noun in the data.

These terms were also used as a noun denoting a stupid person in the data. It was found that in 14 instances out 34 instances of *ass* and *asshole*, these terms were used for denoting a stupid person. In example #88 which was taken from data, *ass* was used for referring to the person whom the administrator referred to as "a disgrace to the women in Malaysia". In example #462 and #482, *asshole* was used by Malaysian netizens to denote people who were heartless to the tragedy which happened on Valentine's Day in one of Malaysia's shopping malls, Berjaya Times Square, where a girl jumped from the 6th floor. While some people were very upset and sad about the tragedy, others were looking at it with mockery. In this regard, some sympathizing netizens had reverted to use bad words to denote their emotions of this mockery by calling those who had mocked the tragedy as *asshole*. The following examples #462 and #482 help to illustrate.

1. Example # 88: u r unforgivable dumb *ass*, even animal know respect more than u do.
2. Example # 462: If you have any brains you shouldn't hve gave those remarks you heartless *asshole*.

However, *ass* as a noun was used in 4 instances out of 18 instances of noun usage in data as anatomical *ass*, though in such examples, *ass* was used with exaggeration or in the metaphorical sense. The following instances extracted from the data are some instances which can illustrate the examples in the data in which *ass* was used in its anatomical sense.

1. Example # 56: wish we had the power to push her fat *ass* off whatever position she is or ever will occupy
2. Example #251: ...protocol my ass...godmother my *ass*...even biological mother din sit between them la

It was found in the data that in 8 examples out of 34 instances of their total word usage, *ass* and *asshole* were invoked in interjections, which accounts for 23.52% of the total word usage. In example #8 extracted from the data, *asshole* was used as an interjections, whereas,

in example #290, *ass* was used as an interjection in a compound noun and in combination with *dumb*. The following examples extracted from the data clearly illustrate this.

1. Example# 8: .u destroy urself!!!! u are not standard enuf to forgive anybody...*asshole!!!*
2. Example # 290: y in the blue hell u guys who got nothing to do with tis wana be nosy for? *Dumbasses..*

The unique and productive characteristic of *ass* was also prevalent in 4 of its occurrences out of 34 instances of its total occurrences in the data (11.76 % of its total usage). *Ass* was used in these examples for making composite adjectives. The following comments taken from the data reveal the productive characteristics of *ass* where *ass* was used as composite adjective.

1. Example # 83: I don't see any sincerity when she read out that *long-ass* planned speech.
2. Example #116: Kiss *government's ass* forum. Where is the freedom of speech.

Ass was also found to be used in formulaic expressions in the data. In 4 examples out of 34 instances of its total word usage, *ass* was used in formulaic expressions. The following example extracted from data is an instance of formulaic usage of the term *ass*.

1. Example # 244: *ROTFLMAO...*being famous for all the wrong reasons (Rolling on the floor, laughing my *ass* out)

VI. Damn

Another term which was used considerably by Malaysian netizens is *damn*. The term *damn* makes reference to religion and it is considered a hell-related term. *Damn* was numbered among the commonly used bad language by the Malaysian netizens. *Damn* fulfills conventional swearing intention; therefore, it is used for expressing displeasure (Fagersten, 2012). *Damn* accounted for 4.13% (32 occurrences) of total bad word usages in the data. However, *damn* was used by Malaysian netizens predominantly as interjection or

exclamation, which counts 16 times, or 50% of the total *damn* usages in the data. The following examples, which were extracted from data are instances in which *damn* was used as exclamation/ interjection:

1. Example # 457: Stupid *damm damm*!!
2. Example #521: mesti sedap ! *damn* i never tried that ... but is it legal

It was disclosed from data that the second most common usage of *damn* among Malaysian netizens was as an intensifier or adverbial booster. *Damn* was used 12 times out of its total 32 occurrences as intensifier or adverbial booster by Malaysian netizens, which accounts for 37.5% of its total usage. Examples #257 and #398 are instances of comments used by Malaysian netizens in the data in which *damn* was used as an intensifier and adverbial booster.

1. Example # 257:   think twice before going so fuckin' *damn* high profile...
2. Example # 398: *Damm* farking commercial...... not enuf expose meh.... plssss lah !!!!!

Damn as a curse word was used twice out of its 32 total instances in the data (this accounts for 6.25 % of its total usage in the data). The cursing examples encompassing *damn* in the data were used by Malaysian netizens with the intention of wishing harm on the addressee. In example #464 extracted from the data, *damn* was used by a Malaysian netizen as a cursing form of bad language in the phrase '*god damn you*'.

1. Example # 464: Fucking whore Ms. X..*god damn you slut* !

There was also evidence of *damn* in formulaic expressions in the data. *Damn* in the formulaic expression, i.e. *damn it*, was used only once out of its 32 total instances, which account for 3.12 % of its usage in the data. In this example, the expression '*damn it'* was also used with a fashion spelling. The following example is the instances of *damn* in formulaic expression while its distinctive characteristics are clearly illustrated:

1. Example # 519: *Dnmt*... Bloody Hell

As an adjective, *damn* was found to be used only once in the data, which accounts for 3.12% of its total usage. Example #482 extracted from the data is the only instance of *damn* in the data where *damn* was used as adjective:

1. Example # 482: Do mind sharing ur tough wit ur brain and respect ppl around u dont give a <u>damn</u> comment"

VII .Hell

The term *hell* is another religious-related term which can be regarded as an instance of bad language. This term was also found to be used commonly by the Malaysian netizens in Facebook. *Hell* was used 18 times out of 774 total bad words used by Malaysian netizens which accounts for 2.32% of total bad word usage. Predominantly, *hell* was found to be used in formulaic expressions by Malaysian netizens in the data such as *go to* ..., and *what the*……. The following examples extracted from data are instances where *hell* was used in formulaic expressions.

1. Example # 123: *what the hell* with the animal?cant you understand with questions?
2. Example # 4: *GO to HELL* LA....

Hell, in the data, was used twice (11.11% of its total usage) as a noun. The following two examples extracted from data are instances where *hell* was used as a noun by Malaysian netizens.

1. Example #152:   PLEAASE SHE WAS SCARED AS SHIIT and intimidated as *hell*, she stepped out of the podium and went to confront Miss Y!
2. Example # 302:   *the hell* is that... that beehive women should be sit under the table...

4.3 What are the distinctive characteristics of these words/phrases, also considered as bad language, used by Malaysian netizens on the Facebook?

To answer this question, Thelwall's (2008) model is applied (see chapter 3). Bad language used in Facebook can be dissected according to the various characteristics associated with them, namely their referents/theme, their different linguistic types, which are mostly their syntactic forms, degree of offensiveness, and specifying those bad words which are regarded implicit or creative.

4.3.1 Bad Words' Referents

As a term used by Thelwall (2008), the analysis of bad words used by Malaysian netizens will be illustrated in 12 categories: a) intellect based terms of abuse, b) animal terms, c) sexual relations, sex, d) religion, e) excrement, f) sexual organs, g) narcotic and crime, h) death, i) homophobia, j) prostitutions, k) racist term of abuse, and l) physically disabled. Bad words may denote various and diverse referents with dissimilar underlying themes, such as religious themes, scatology, sex and sexual relations, animals and so on. Thelwall (2008) affirmed that bad words may denote one or a number of taboo themes. In this study, 12 major taboo referents were recognized based on the combination of McEnery (2006) and Anderson (2002)'s categorization of bad words; however, there were also other minor taboo themes found in the data, which were labelled by the researcher. The results of the analysis disclosed that Malaysian netizens mostly tend to make reference to the stupidity theme. It was found that they used intellect-based terms of abuse with 164 instances in the data out of 774 total bad words, which accounts for 21.13% of total bad words. Additionally, the next major theme used by Malaysian netizens in the data was animal terms with 153 instances out of 774 total bad word usage, which accounts for 19.71% of total bad word usage. Using animal terms and relating these terms to individuals is a notably intriguing class of metaphors.

Furthermore, those terms which were associated with human sexuality and sexual acts were detected as the third commonly used referent in the data with 132 instances out of 774 total bad word usage (at 17.01 %). The following examples from data are instances in which bad words were used by Malaysian netizens with various themes. In example #77 extracted from data, *moron* was used, which is considered as an intellect-based term of abuse and make reference to stupidity theme. Terms such as *bitch, dog* and *monkey* in example #166 are bad terms which make reference to animal themes. In the last example, #52, which was extracted from data *fucking* was used by a Malaysian netizen, which denote human sexuality.

1. Example # 77: Lol....what a *moron!* She is a waste to earth's oxygen.

2. Example # 166: *Bitch!* Don sound like you are right and an adult to us, listen *bitch!* Stop lecturing us here like u did in the video! We all watched the video, and listen! You are rude n act like *a mad dog*! This is why she runaway, *monkey!*

3. Example # 52: Anyway, we'll forgive u... dumb *fucking* bitch

Table 4.2 illustrates the frequency of occurrence of each referent in the data used by Malaysian netizens. Moreover, the table reveals the fact that bad language was used with various referents by Malaysian netizens in the data. The result of the analysis can also shed light on some of the cultural factors associated witch choosing a bad word with a specific referent. Among 776 different referents found in the data, 164 instances were examples of bad words which made reference to intellect-based terms of abuse. In 153 instances, bad words denoted animal terms while bad language with sexual relations referent was ranked as the third most common referent among Malaysian netizens with 132 instances out of 776 total bad language referents. See the following table for more clarification and depiction on the different themes and instances of each theme found in the data.

Table 4.2: The Frequency of Words According to their Referents

No.	Reference Type	Frequency	Percentage
1	Intellect based terms of abuse	**164**	**21.13%**
2	Animal terms	**153**	**19.71%**
3	Sexual relations	**132**	**17.01%**
4	Religion	**109**	**14.04 %**
5	Excrement	58	7.47 %
6	Sexual organs	51	6.57%
7	Narcotic and Crime	17	2.19%
8	Death	10	1.28%
9	Homophobic	9	1.15%
10	Prostitutions	8	1.03%
11	Racist term of abuse	2	0.25%
12	Physically disabled	0	0.00%
13	Others	62	8.11%
	Total	776	100%

The referents and the themes from which bad words are rooted may change over time; moreover, they may differ from one country to another, and from one culture to another. This is based on the norms in that country or that culture. For instance, in Western countries, there is a rise in sexual connotations with the decrease in religious connotations (Thelwall, 2008, p.3). Besides, in gender-related bad language, referring to sexuality is also one of the most important traits (Jay, 2000). Thelwall (2008) also asserted that the present use of bad

language inclines to make reference to both present and previous subjects/themes. However, the discrepancy between these referents are enough to merit separate treatments. In the following sections, these different themes and their examples will be delved into and more examples will be provided from data for more illustration.

I. Intellect based terms of abuse

The prominently used theme when choosing from the pool of bad language by Malaysian netizens was related to intellect theme and with reference to stupidity. It was found that bad words with stupidity theme and those abusing intellect theme were ranked as the first type of bad words used by Malaysian netizens in the data. The result of the analysis revealed noticeable instances of bad language referring to intellect-based terms of abuse in the data, there were 164 instances out of 776 total bad word usage which abused intellect and referred to stupidity. These instances account for 21.13 % of total bad word usage with different referents. *Silly* and *got talent* are two of the examples found in the data which are regarded as intellect-based terms of abuse and they refer to the stupidity theme. The following examples reflect these two instances of bad language. In example #5, the word *silly* was used repeatedly by a Malaysian netizen to emphasize the word. However, in example #6, *got talent* was used ironically to degrade the addressee.

1. Example # 5: *Silly...silly...silly*...shame of u as a Malaysian...Damm!!!
2. Example# 6: Malaysian Got Talent

II. Animal terms

Animal referents were another theme from which Malaysian netizens picked and created bad language. When animal names are employed in an attempt to equate and associate the subject to the status of a particular animal, they are labeled as animal term of abuse. Animal terms

are also recognized as one of the main classes of taboo words and therefore considered as bad language (Jay, 2009). Bad words with animal themes were the second frequently used theme among Malaysians netizens with 153 instances out of 776 total bad word usage, which accounts for 19.71% of the total data.

Animal terms of abuse are particularly insulting when the animal status is ambiguous or even challenging to classify (Leach, 1964). See section 2.8.2.3 for more detailed information concerning animal terms. The offensiveness of animal terms lie in the ideology of human's supremacy to animals (Goatly, 2006). However, animal terms are regarded more offensive when their target are women rather than male targets (Haslam, et al. 2011). The following examples are instances of bad language with animal theme in the data presented here for more illustration.

1. Example #68: *cocky* low life *bitch.*
2. Example #370: big *hippo* ^ ^
3. Example #384: Eh the Mr.Y wedding served halal food or not?". "No lah, where got halal, can't u see a *fat roasted pork* in the middle?
4. Example #403: what's more the big fat ugly *lion queen* who escaped from the zoo be the wedding crasher sat her big fat ass in the middle
5. Example#407: all the guest should push that *whale* back to the water. or just shoot it instead. she's got more stitches on her face than chucky!

Examples #370, #384, #403 and #407 are name-calling insults found in the data which were created by the Malaysian netizens based on physical similarities and appearance of the addressee to specific animals. They make references to different animals such as hippo, pork and lion which were directed to the addressee who belongs to a high authority in the Malaysian society. Moreover, in example # 68, *bitch* as an animal term was used in a name-calling personal insult, for revealing the netizen's dislike and hatred against the addressee, which was intensified by using another animal term, i.e. *cocky*.

III. Sexual Relations

Other taboo themes from which bad language could be rooted are themes related to sexuality, i.e. sexual relations and sexual activities. Sexual relations were the third most commonly used theme among Malaysian netizens when using English bad language. The most common term in this category is the term *fuck*, which makes reference to sexual relations. After analyzing bad words used in the data, it was detected that words related to sexual relations and sexual activities were used 132 times out of 776 total bad word usages in the data, which account for 17.01% of total bad word usage. Among the words related to sexual activities, the word *fuck* was predominantly used by Malaysian netizens. The high frequency of this word may probably result from the versatility of this term since it can be used as various parts of speech and can take various forms. However, the discussion over *fuck* and its different aspects was fully deliberated earlier in section 4.2.1. Ljung (2011) also acknowledged that *fuck* is a very versatile term due to its use in various forms. The fair amount of anecdotal evidences can also prove *fuck'*s versatility (p.40). Another theme which is closely related to sexual relations is mother theme. Mother theme is considered by Ljung (2011) as one of the major themes of swearing and bad language use because mother theme is mostly associated with words related to sexual relations. Though this theme was not treated separately in the present study, the use of this theme by Malaysian netizens was illustrated through example #154 extracted from data. In the following examples extracted from data, *fuck* was used with two different functions. In this example, *fuck* was used with the word "mother" to make a negative adjective by referring to mother theme. However, in example #208, *fuck* was used with its literal meaning.

1. Example #154: Natrah, youre a *mother fucking* bitch. Period.
2. Example #208: *FUCFK* that WHORE!

In addition to the sexual activities related to intercourse category, there are still some other terms related to sexual relations that were singled out and used by Malaysian netizens in the data such as terms related to sodomy and fellatio. *Blow job, suckers, cockblocker* and *cockblock* are instances of bad terms related to sexual relations which were used by Malaysian netizens in data. The use of such bad terms as used by Malaysian netizens are depicted below in the following examples for more illustration.

1. Example # 163: Ok. And when u r free *give us a blow job* so that can shut your mouth. Ok.

2. Example #428: It's a trap! Can't believe all of u *suckers* actually thinking this photo is real.. *facepalm* btw happy Valentine's day ya fools!

3. Example #206: LOL!!!!OMG!!! *Cockblocker*!!!!

4. Example # 327: dafuq. why X cockblock in the middle =.=

Ljung (2011) ascertains that words related to these two categories, i.e. sodomy and fellatio, are commonly used in abusive swearing, in particular, offensive name-calling and unfriendly suggestions as the two forms of abusive swearing (p.40). The analyzed data revealed that Malaysian netizens also used words related to sodomy and fellatio in name-calling insults and unfriendly suggestions. In the first example above, example #163, a netizen used the phrase *give us a blow job* as an unfriendly suggestion. This type of bad language is related to sexual activity which denotes sodomy (http://dictionary.reference.com) and it was used with its literal meaning as an unfriendly suggestion in the data. In example #428, *suckers* and in example #155 *bugger,* in examples #206 and #307 *cockblockers and cockblock* respectively were used in name-calling expressions by Malaysian netizens in the data. Meanwhile, in the following example extracted from data, the word *cockblock* was used as an expletive interjection:

1. Example # 238: *Cockblock*

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IV. Religion

Religion is another theme from which bad language can be derived, particularly when the religious terms are treated with irreverence, abuse or contempt and lack of piety (Jay, 1992). Bad words which make reference to religion denote god, holy affairs and sacred things. Such bad words are used for revealing ignorance or indifference to God, religion or holy affairs and they are not based on downgrading and degrading these matters (Jay, 1992, p. 3). Words with religious or supernatural referents include terms having to do with *god*, *Christ*, *hell*, evil as well as damnation. In some cultures, there is a discrepancy between celestial swearing regarding terms such as *God*, *Christ* and diabolic swearing regarding terms such as *hell*, *evil* and *devil* (Ljung, 2011). However, in the present study, these two types of swearing were taken as one form of bad language since they make reference to religious theme; therefore, they were studied as belonging to one category while they were both used in Malaysian netizens' comments in the data for depicting irreverence, abuse or contempt and lack of piety as well as ignoring and showing indifference to God, religion or holy affairs. Bad words with religious referents were rated as the fourth frequently used bad words in the data, which accounts for 14.04% of total bad language usage (109 instances). In the following instances extracted from the data, Malaysian netizens used words with religious referents with contempt, ignorance, irreverence, lack of piety that are the reasons supporting why these terms were considered bad language. *Mother of god* in example #76, *what the hell* in example #123, *evil bless* in example #150 and *damn* in #246 are instances of bad language used in the data which denote religious theme with contempt, abuse, and lack of piety. See these terms in the following examples from the data for more illustration.

1. Example #76: *mother of god*... what i just saw?... should i say listen ?
2. Example# 123: *what the hell* with the animal?cant you understand with questions?

3. Example# 150: Freaking appologise to her in public for your stupidity. *Evil bless,g*o die.

4. Example#246: *Damn* that lady in the center

Expressions which employ the form of an appeal and address in the name of a venerated figure or even an honored attribute are regarded as hortatory swearing which have religious theme. Expression such as "*For the love of Christ*", "*In the name of all that is good*" are in this group (Montagu, 1967,p.106). An example of such expression was also found in the data, which is illustrated below in example #158. In this example extracted from data, *Good God* is an instance of hortatory swearing used by Malaysian netizens and the name of *God* as venerated figure was addressed:

1. Example #158: *Good God*, your English is atrocious! And, writing in all caps is shouting at people, and extremely rude.

The British English term, *bloody*, is regarded as a term without having a clear theme (Ljung, 2011); nonetheless, the etymology of this word make reference to some religious themes. The origin of the word bloody regarding the "folk etymology" is derived from the corruption of "by our lady" (Hughes, 2006). Accordingly, in the present study, this term was considered to have religious references. In example #162 and #301 extracted from data, *bloody*, which has religious theme, was used by Malaysians as intensifier.

1. Example # 162: Because she dont understand your *bloody* noob english. Wana debate with her?

2. Example #301: why the *bloody* fucking hell is she sitting there? totally ruin the whole wedding dinner mood!

V. Excrement

Scatological terms or words pertaining to excrement are those with the taboo referent. Bodily fluids and eliminations and terms such as *crap, pees* are considered in this classification (Jay,

2000; Mabry, 1974). After analyzing data, it was found that bad words which made reference to excrement and scatological theme were among the commonly used bad words by Malaysian netizens. It appeared that in 58 instances in the data, bad language with excrement theme was used. This accounted for 7.47% of total bad word usage. *Crap* and *shit* are the two terms related to excrement theme that were used both alone or in formulaic expressions like *load of* or *bull ……..* in the data by Malaysian netizens. Some of the examples found in the data in which bad language was used with excrement theme are as follows:

1. Example#3: yeayeayea=== *load of crap*
2. Example #23: all i hear is *full of sh!t~~~~~*
3. Example #152: FAIL in english, fail in life. Madam X 's guts? PLEAASE SHE WAS SCARED *AS SHIIT* and intimidated as hell
4. Example#169: Its like doing a research about something after presenting.. Isn't this another *BULLCRAP*?

As can be seen, in example #3, *crap* was used in a formulaic expression of *load of crap*, and in example #169, *crap* was used in a compound noun *bullcrap*. Another bad term with excrement theme used by Malaysian netizens when using English bad language in the data was the word *shit*, in example #23 in the above examples from data, the netizen used *shit* in a phrase *full of shit* to refer to the speech she/he heard and in example #152, *shit* was used to show the degree of fear felt by netizens and to degrade the addressee.

VI. Sexual organs

Sex organs are among the common referents from which bad language is derived. Taboo terms which make reference to sex organs were among the common types of bad words used by Malaysian netizens in the data. It was detected from the data that there were 51 instances out of 776 total bad language that referred to sexual organs, which constitutes 6.57% of total bad word usage. *Cunt* and *prick* are the two common exponents of this group. Malaysian

netizens used these two terms in describing people whom they disliked and used these terms as a way to illustrate their negative emotions toward these people. This is in line with Ljung's (2011) findings. Ljung (2011) determines that using terms related to sex organs as epithets is a way to picture and describe people whom the speaker or writer dislikes (Ljung, 2011, p.38). The following two examples are instances of comments extracted from the data in which *cunt* and *prick* were used by netizens as personal insult for describing people whom they disliked.

1. Example # 27: street demo is a way that *rakyat* show that they are not satisfy with their gov and also cunt like you who try to shut of free speech with the power that byou think you have. fking *cunt*

2. Example # 131: we will stand together to teach *pricks* like you a good lesson.

In addition, Ljung (2011) believes that using a wide range of taboo words which make reference to human posterior is a way to disapprovingly referring to other individuals (p.38). The data also revealed that Malaysian netizens referred to human posterior in their bad language to disapprove other people and to refer critically to them. Example #116 extracted from data is an instance of bad language use in which one of the Malaysia netizens used *ass* to disapprove the type of forum. See the example for more illustration.

1. Example # 116: *Kiss government's ass* forum. Where is the freedom of speech?

However, there were some examples in the data in which the condemnation and disapproving language was made by making reference to non-taboo parts of human body, but by referring to the lower parts of human body for degrading i.e. *foot*. The use of *foot* in formulaic expression of *to my .....* in example #345, which is extracted from data, can be hypothesized to be considered as a euphemistic term for *ass* or else it can be investigated for its cultural roots.

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1. Example # 345: Protocol to *my foot*....

The analysis revealed that the use of words related to testicles such as *ball* and *bollock* were also evident among the words related to sexual organs. Meanwhile, *bollock* was used only once as an expletive interjection in the data (See example #117). In example #421, *ball* was used as a noun to denote the stupidity of the girl in that context, see the following examples for more illustration of *bollock* and *ball* as used by Malaysian netizens in Facebook comments.

1. Example #117: *bollock!*
2. Example # 421: girl got some serious *balls*.

The findings of Ljung (2011), who investigated cursing and swearing behavior cross-culturally and among different countries, can prove the findings. Ljung (2011) admitted that generally, the summoning testicles in action are used for expletive interjections. However, in some countries, e.g. Dutch swearing, the testicles related terms can be used as a noun denoting a stupid person.

VII. Narcotic and Crime

Referents related to narcotics and crime are other referents found in bad language used by Malaysian netizens. Bad terms which make reference to drugs and narcotic or mentioning a crime will be considered in this group. Some of the bad words in the data made reference to addictive drugs and they usually affect a personal mood or behavior. It was found that there were 17 instances of bad words out of 776 total bad word usage with narcotics and crime theme in the data, which accounts for 2.19% of the total data. The following examples are some of the examples of bad words found in the data with narcotic theme. In the following examples, the first example, #78 and the last #184 are the instances of unfriendly suggestions in which the word *drunk* referred to physical situation of the addressee which results from

drinking a type of drug *go home, you are drunk.* This expression was used in a number of comments by the Malaysian netizens in the data. In comment #122, *cracko* as a narcotic term was used in an ironic way for degrading the person.

1. Example #78: Go home X, You are *Drunk*!!!
2. Example #122: looking at u siding the animals, u're only born with 5 senses or something??! *U just* seem like a *cracko*!
3. Example #184: Go home newspaper, you are *drunk*

VIII. Death

Death and dying is another theme found to be used by Malaysian netizens when using and choosing from English bad language. 10 instances out of 776 total bad words were detected in the data in which the word *die* was used as a cursing or unfriendly suggestion which accounts for 1.28 % of total bad language used. In all cultures for natural explanations, death and dying are enclosed by powerful taboos which makes them bad to talk about though the vocabulary of different languages have been affected by them (Ljung, 2011). Nowadays in English language, one of the most common allusion to death is the term *die* which is mostly used in unfriendly suggestions (Ljung, 2011). *Boil* is another term which makes reference to death and it was used by Malaysian netizens as an expletive interjection. The following examples with allusion to death and dying were taken from the data to illustrate death referents in bad language. In the first two comments, #361 and #426, *die* was used; however, in the last comment taken from data, *boil* was used in the form of expletive interjections which implies the concept of death.

1. Example #361: erkkk......!Mati tercekik tengok this picture....*Die...die...die....*
2. Example#426: hahahaha stupid, *die*
3. Example #360: *Boil*

Talking about lifeless people and relatives is also another taboo theme which is related to death (Ljung, 2011), and Malaysian netizens also used lifeless people in their Facebook comments when they were using name-calling insults as a form of bad language. In the following example, #108, which is extracted from the data, a Malaysian netizen used the phrase *bunch of zombies* ironically for degrading the addressee.

1. Example #108: The audience (students) are brainwashed haha oh god *bunch of zombies*.

IX. Homophobic

Homophobic referents were also found to be employed by Malaysian netizens when using English bad language. The term homophobic refers to words such as *gay*, *fag*, *faggot*, *bugger* and *sucker*. Words with homophobic themes are not necessarily and deliberately directed to the pupils who are labelled as gay or lesbians; however, such terms can be used to refer to anything or anyone considered to be unmasculine, uncool or even non-normative (Armstrong, 1997; Cameron, 1997; Duncan, 1999, as cited in Thurlow, 2001). Bad words with homophobic referents were used 9 times out of 776 total bad word usages in the data, which accounts for 1.15% of other referents. Homophobic terms were used as homophobic pejorative or homophobic bullying. Besides, as mentioned earlier in this section, these terms are not directed to individuals who are gay and lesbian. An instance of using homophobic terms was found in one of the stimulus in the data where a group of boys at a school was wearing Malaysian girls' school uniform that is blue skirt and everybody could see their hairy legs in the picture. These boys also imitated girls' poses. Malaysian netizens used a number of bad words with homophobic referents in this context. For further illustration, the following examples extracted from the data are instances of comments used by Malaysian netizens in which bad words with homophobic reference were used.

1. Example #492: *gay* boy
2. Example # 503: Gaayyy
3. Example # 504: *Fag* prostitute.

In another context, a Malaysian netizen used the homophobic term, *suckers*, as a naming practice, personal insult, for those who were reacting brutally to a tragedy. The following example #428 extracted from data is an instance of bad language in which *sucker* was used by Malaysian netizens as a bad word with homophobic reference.

1. Example #428: It's a trap! Can't believe all of u *suckers* actually thinking this photo is real.. *facepalm* btw happy Valentine's day ya fools!

In abusive name-calling, homophobic pejoratives are especially used for indicating disrespect to authority (Thurlow, 2001). The analysis detected that this type of homophobic pejorative was also evident in the data which was used by Malaysian netizens. For instance, in the following example, #155, from the data, *bugger* as a homophobic pejorative was used by a Malaysian netizen to call an authority, who was one of leaders of Suara Wanita 1 Malaysia.

1. Example # 155: Dont talk about respect la *bugger*. Yet dont talk about intellect because you are so crude and coarse

In addition to the previous examples, in another context where a local tabloid marked Justin Bieber as a country, some Malaysian netizens also used homophobic bullying and homophobic pejoratives. The examples of these comments from data are provided below in examples #176 and #187 for more illustration.

1. Example # 176: *Gay* paper
2. Example # 187; But for some girls, Omg its Justin bieber , listen actually he is a *gay*

It was reported in other studies that among homophobic pejoratives, *gay* along with *gayboy* and *gaylord* are the frequently used homophobic pejoratives (Thurlow, 2001, p. 32). The finding of the present study also revealed that among the bad words with homophobic reference, *gay* was the most commonly used bad word among Malaysian netizens in the data. They used this term with various purposes which that are not of concern in this study.

X. Prostitutions

Prostitution is another theme from which bad language can be picked, which was also found to be used by Malaysian netizens on Facebook. The figurative meaning of words with prostitution theme refers to someone who compromises their integrity and honor for the sake of money (Ljung, 2011, p.43). Terms involving *whore* and *slut* are the two common terms from this category which are used in expletive interjections or as name-calling nouns. With 8 instances out of 776 total bad word usages and at 1.03%, prostitution theme was considered as a not very common referent among Malaysian netizens when choosing their bad language. *Whore* as an instance of bad word with prostitution reference in examples #464 and # 208 was used as a name-calling insult while *slut* as another example of bad language with prostitution reference in example #464 was used as expletive interjection. In example # 504, the word *prostitute* was used by one of the Malaysian participants as a name-calling insult in the data. The following are examples of bad language with prostitution reference used by Malaysian netizens.

1. Example #464: Fucking *whore* Ms. X..god damn you slut !
2. Example #208: FUCFK that *WHORE!*
3. Example #504: Fag *prostitute.*

XI. Racist term of abuse

Bad language which abuses racist issues was not commonly used by Malaysian netizens as detected in the data. Racist terms of abuse are bad words which refer to racial differences and disrespect to some races by degrading and humiliating them. The result of analysis revealed that in the data, the word *racist* was used by Malaysian netizens only twice to address people who were considered prejudiced. The following examples are the two instances of racist term of abuse which were found in the data. In the following comments from the data, *racist* was used as a negative intensifier for other bad words.

1. Example #100: This *racist* stupid brainless bitch should be kicked out from the country
2. Example #452: Ms. X you *racist* bitch.

XII. Physically disabled

Another theme for insulting and degrading individuals is targeting addressees' physical disability. Those bad terms and expressions which refer to physical deficiency and physical disabilities are regarded in this category. The result of the analysis resolved that there was no evidence and no examples of bad language which make reference to the physically disabled themes in the data.

XIII. Others

In addition to the previous major taboo referents/themes, the analysis revealed that there were still other bad words with other references which had offensive semantic references but they could not be assigned to the existing categories. Accordingly, the researcher created 4 separate categories, namely the physical/ appearance aspects, unpleasant things, hostility, and one category for bad words with various references which cannot be categorized due to

their insufficient number in the present data. It is hoped that in the future, more research will be done on distinguishing other taboo referents which have not been distinguished until the present moment. The most commonly used referent in the data which has not been specified by Anderson (cited in Karjaleinin, 2002) and McEnery (2006) but was referred to by Malaysian netizens was the abnormal physical aspects of the addressee such as size, shape and appearance. The researcher identified 31 instances of bad language out of 776 total bad word usages in the data which abused the physical aspects of the addressee. Through this form of bad language, individuals can create and practice insulting names based on the physical differences and physical peculiarities of the addressee. Example #241, which is extracted from data, illustrates an instance of bad language use with reference to both abnormal size and shape of the addressee. Besides that, in example #358, the size and appearance of the addressee were being called upon for the purpose of insulting the addressee. *Huge bulb* and *big bush* in the two following examples are name-calling personal insults used by Malaysian netizens in the data, which make reference to peculiarities and abnormalities in physical aspects of the addressee.

1. Example # 241: *a huge bulb* shining in the middle ><
2. Example #358: A *big bush* siting in the middle of the two love birds. Deng this is so not right, Who is she between??

Another referent which was detected to be used in the data was waste and unpleasant theme. In example #16, #142 and #406 extracted from the data, *rubbish, trash* and *dustbin* are examples of bad words referring to waste and unpleasant theme. In example #406, *dustbin* was used as an abusive name-calling insult for referring to an authority who was sitting between a bride and her groom. The groom was people's hero and Malaysian participants believed that the person of high authority was ruining their wedding day. Her action caused great anger among Malaysian netizens. The following examples are instances of comment

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from the data for more depiction and illustration of bad language in which Malaysian netizens

used bad words while referring to unpleasant themes like garbage and leftovers.

1. Example #16:fear for ur family n young children should have been there before u opened ur mouth n *spat rubbish*! FYI

2. Example #142: LISTEN! LISTEN! LISTEN! LISTEN! LISTEN! LISTEN! LISTEN! LISTEN! X you are NOTHING! but a piece of *TRASH!*

3. Example #406: *Dustbin* in the middle..yakk!

Another referent which has not been specified by Anderson (cited in Karjaleinin,2002) and

McEnery (2006) was hostility theme, which the researcher found to be used in the data by

Malaysian netizens considerably. Hostility theme mostly appeared in unfriendly suggestions

in the data, like *get lost*, which disclose the hostility of speaker to the addressee, example

#33 is an instance of bad language practice with hostility theme.

1. Example #33:SWIM do not welcome you.please *get lost!!*

The analyzed data disclosed that using paralinguistic features were also prevalent in the data.

Malaysian netizens used paralinguistic features to fulfill their various intentions such as to

avoid writing the real bad word but still implying the bad word they meant. Next, they may

want to be creative and they may have other intentions which are worth studying in the future.

However, 30 participants in the questionnaire were asked to find out their intention for using

paralinguistic features when using bad language (see questionnaire analysis section 4.6).

Examples #126 and #268 are instances of bad words extracted from data in which

paralinguistic features were applied by Malaysian netizens. Since paralinguistic features

were used in creating these bad words, their referents could not be recognized by the

researcher; therefore, they are not classified in any specified referent category. The following

examples are instances of bad language in which Malaysian netizens used paralinguistic features. See the following examples for more clarification.

1. Example #126: guys i personally respect Ms.Y, apart from that im happy to see all of us in the same page and understand malaysian Politics is *C%*#&#.*
2. Example #268: *Very..........wrong*!! >:-<

Table 4.3 depicts the frequency in occurrence of three other referents and themes for categorizing bad words detected. After analyzing the data, it was found that 31 instances of bad language were used by Malaysian netizens which denote physical aspects of the addressee. In 9 examples in the data, bad words referred to waste and unpleasant things. Finally, there were only 2 instances of bad words in the data which referred to hostility. Nonetheless, there were 20 instances of bad words used by Malaysian netizens that made reference to other referents and denoted different referents for which the researcher could not specify one category due to insufficient instances for each referent. Consequently, they remained unclassified in this study.

Table. 4.3: Researcher's classification of bad words' referents for remaining bad words

No	Other Referent	Frequency of Usage	Percentage
1	Physical (appearance,Size & Shape)	31	49.99%
2	Waste and unpleasant	9	14.51%
3	Hostility	2	3.22%
4	Not specific referent (unclassifiable)	20	32.25%
	Total	62	100%

1. Example #10: *WTH* u forgive her??

Mainstream bad words found in the data referred exclusively to one theme; albeit several bad terms were found in the data which referred to more than one taboo referent. For instance, in the expression *what the heck*, the term *heck* is the combination of *hell* and *fuck*; accordingly it refers to both religious and sexuality theme. Thelwall (2008) also affirmed that bad words may denote one or a number of taboo themes. In the following example extracted from the data, the abbreviated form of *what the heck* was used by a Malaysian netizen, which denotes both religion and sexual relations. See the example for more clarification.

4.3.2 Bad Language Linguistic Types and Syntactic Forms

Bad words can be classified and specified according to their linguistic type that is their syntactic forms. This type of classification scheme is quite dependent on the morphosyntax. A term may be classified within different categories according to its part of speech. Linguistic types of bad words, that is, where bad words occasionally occur by Malaysian netizens in social media networks, i.e. Facebook, were investigated in this section.

It was found that bad words are predominantly used as personal insult by Malaysian with 238 occurrences in the data, which accounts for 31.11% of total bad word usage. These terms were used to reveal the aggression and hostility of netizens toward the addressee and in some instances to mock the addressee. In example #7 extracted from data, *bitch* and *whore* were used by the netizens towards the addressee to insult him/her; however, in comment #45 extracted from the data, one of the netizens used the name of a singer "Lady Gaga" directed to the addressee that could be for particular purposes. Tough "Lady Gaga" is the name of a person and cannot be regarded as bad language but immediately after "Lady Gaga", the netizen used the word *Syaitan*, which means evil and devil. By comparing "Lady Gaga" to evil, the addressee intended to reveal the addressee's personality in his/her point of view.

Therefore, this name can be regarded as an offensive name-calling which eventually can be regarded as personal insult, a form of bad language.

1. Example #7: u stupid *bitch*, and *whore*!!!
2. Example #45: Born this way - *Lady gaga (Syaitan)*

The second most common syntactic form of bad language in Malaysian netizens' comments was emphatic adverb/adjective OR adverbial booster or pre-modifying intensifying negative adjective to intensify another bad term or change an innocent noun to an offensive term in a context. However, sometimes bad words are just used by the interlocutors to put emphasis on another term. In example #80 extracted from the data, *damn* was used to intensify and emphasize *stupid. Crap* in example #26 was used as a pre-modifying intensifying negative adjective to add negativity to the word "life", and in example #12, *fucking* was used to intensify "joke". Below are the examples extracted from the data in which *damn, crap* and *fucking* were used as emphatic adjective/adverb.

1. Example # 80: Hahahaha by days she is making fool of herself....want to forgive it seems...*damn stupid*....
2. Example #26: It must been hard for you to live such arrogant and *crap* life all this while.
3. Example # 12: The best *fucking* joke i heard for the day...

Table 4.4 specifies different classifications of bad words' linguistic types or their syntactic forms and the number of instances of each linguistic type found in the data which were used by Malaysian netizens. As can be seen in Table 4.4, with 238 instances that account for 31.11% of total bad word usage, personal insults were the most frequently used linguistic form/syntactic form of bad language by Malaysian netizens. Emphatic adverb/adjective or adverbial booster or pre-modifying intensifying negative adjective ranked as the second most commonly used linguistic type in the data by Malaysian netizens with 144 instances, which

account for 18.81% of total bad language. Still another linguistic form was idiomatic set phrases or figurative extension of literal meaning, which was detected to be used noticeably by Malaysian netizens. This linguistic type of bad language ranked as the third most frequently used type with 136 instances in the data, which accounts for 17.64% of total bad word usage.

Table4.4: Linguistic Type of Bad Words

No	Linguistic Type	Frequency of Usage	Percentage
1	Predicative negative adjective	53	6.92%
2	Cursing expletive	19	2.48%
3	Destinational usage	15	1.96%
4	Emphatic adverb/adjective OR Adverbial booster OR Premodifying intensifying negative adjective	46 ⎤ 15 ⎬ **144** 83 ⎦	6.01% ⎤ 1.96% ⎬ **18.81%** 10.84% ⎦
5	General expletive	103	13.46%
6	Idiomatic set phrase OR Figurative extension of literal meaning	93 ⎤ ⎬ **135** 42 ⎦	12.15% ⎤ ⎬ **7.64%** 5.49% ⎦
7	Literal usage denoting taboo referent	17	2.22%
8	Imagery based on literal meaning	19	2.48%
9	Pronominal form with undefined referent	22	2.87%
10	Personal: Personal insult referring to defined entity	**238**	**31.11%**

4.3.3 Degree of Offensiveness

Bad words vary in their degree of offensiveness. They can be labelled as very strong, strong, moderate, mild and very mild; however, their degree of offensiveness is dependent on various factors. Bad words' offensiveness and factors influencing their degree of offensiveness were discussed thoroughly in chapter two, section 2.6. The study revealed that Malaysian netizens commonly favored using "very mild" and "mild" bad words. The analysis of data detected 256 instances of bad words in the data which were regarded as "very mild" bad words and 119 instances of bad words in the data were found to be "mild". *Bitch*, in the following example extracted from the data, is regarded as a "mild" bad word and *stupid* is regarded as a "very mild" bad word based on the bad words' scale of offence proposed by McEnery (2006) and Thelwall (2008).

1. Example #300: *Stupid Bitch*

There are various factors associated with the degree of offensiveness of bad words such as context, religious and non-religious respondents, conservative and liberal respondents and it is also dependent on the gender of interlocutors. Furthermore, culture is another factor which determines the vulgarity and offensiveness of various terms (Sapolsky et al., 2011). Therefore, despite the fact that Malaysians may mostly choose to use from what were labelled as "mild" and "very mild" bad words based on the findings of the previous studies, their perception of offensiveness rating of such expressions may differ. Correspondingly, through questionnaire, 30 young Malaysians were asked to rate bad words both traditionally, that is, rating bad words without the context as well as rating them in contextualized situations for understanding the strength and offensiveness degree of bad words in the Malaysian context. See section 4.6.2 and 4.6.3 in this chapter for more exploration of the strength and offensiveness of bad words among bilingual Malaysians.

The following Table 4.5 reveals different classifications of bad words' strength and offensiveness along with euphemistic expressions as well as the number of instances for each category found to be used by Malaysian netizens in the corpus of Facebook. In addition, the table illustrates bad words whose strength were not specified by previous studies such as *WTH*, the abbreviated form of *what the heck,* and *fart* which was used as expletives by Malaysian netizens in the data.

1. Example #17: *farts*....asking u to apologize... not to forgive.. who ask ur forgiveness... u should be begging for forgiveness

Table 4.5: The Offensives Degree of Bad Words used by Malaysian Netizens

No	Strength	Frequency of usage	Percentage
1	Very Strong (Vstg)	10	1.34%
2	Strong (Strg)	95	12.73%
3	Moderate (md)	25	3.35%
4	Very Mild (Vmld)	256	**34.31 %**
5	Mild	119	15.95%
6	Euphemism (euph)	18	2.41%
7	Not Specified (Nsp)	223	29.89%

4.3.4 Implicit Bad Words

Using implicit bad language was also evident in the corpus of Facebook. According to Thelwall (2008), swearing is regarded implicit when it is inspired by the use of clever language such as moving the letters inside a bad term, using homophones, substitution of bad

terms by quite innocent terms. Pseudo swear words can also be regarded as implicit ones. The data depict that clever language was also used by Malaysian netizens at 12.25% of the occurrence (96 instances in total use of bad language). Implicit bad words were used by Malaysian netizens for a variety of intentions, such as reducing the strength and offensiveness of a bad word or showing their creativity, etcetera. The analysis revealed that Malaysian netizens used a variety of ways to create implicit bad words. In the following examples which are extracted from the data, different examples of implicit bad words used by Malaysian netizens in the corpus of Facebook are depicted for more illustration. In example #29, *dafug*, which is the internet term for *what the fuck*, was used. *Fish*, which is a totally innocent term, was substituted for the bad word *fuck* in comment #215. In example #242 taken from the data, the netizen creatively substituted number "3" instead of "three" which made the bad word as an implicit bad word and finally in example #539, *PHD* can be taken ironically as a postgraduate degree; however, the netizens specified what the letters stand for immediately after the word.

1. Example # 29: saying Mrs. Y least educated student. *dafuq* u think u are?
2. Example # 215: whatt the *fishhhhh*
3. Example #242: Can we *3some* maybe?
4. Example # 539: *PHD* - permanent head damage

4.4 Functions Performed by Bad Language

The functions performed by the use of bad words and expressions which were used by the individuals on the "Only in Malaysia" page can be categorized into four different types based on their functions. The two major types and the two secondary types of bad language according to the classification proposed by Andersson and Trudgill (1990) in their theory of swearing types were investigated in the present study. After analyzing the data, it was found

that different types of bad language were used at different degrees by Malaysian netizens. Table 4.6 clearly illustrates the frequency of occurrences of different types of bad language based on their functions which were performed by Malaysian netizens and the number of instances used in the corpus of Facebook by Malaysian netizens.

Table 4.6: Functions performed by Bad Language

No	Types of Bad Language	Frequency	Percentage
1	Abusive	316	**45.53%**
2	Expletives	219	**31.55%**
3	Auxiliary	107	15.41%
4	Humorous	52	7.49%
	Total	**694**	**100%**

As can be seen in Table 4.6, abusive type of bad language or terms of abuse with the intention of insulting and degrading others is the predominant type of bad language used by Malaysian netizens; this term is also called terms of abuse or terms of insult. This type of bad language was the prevailing type of bad language among Malaysian netizens on Facebook at 45.53%, which is 316 occurrences in the whole data. They are derogatory and usually include name-calling, and diverse forms of curses (Andersson, and Trudgill, 1990). Unfriendly suggestions are also regarded abusive when aimed at and directed to others (Stroh-wollin, 2008, as cited in Ljung, 2011). In the abusive type of bad language, sarcastic insults with the intention of mocking and degrading the addressee was also evident in the data. The following examples from the data are some of the instances of abusive type of bad language used by Malaysian netizens, which are provided here for more illustration.

1. Example # 19: ugly *biatch*
2. Example # 108: The audience (students) are brainwashed haha oh *god bunch of zombies.*

Example #14: If you want to talk about professionalism, be humble enough to learn your shortcomings and acknowledge your mistakes. Otherwise, just *shut your trap.* In example #19 and #14, the bad languages were used by the Malaysian netizens to address a woman who was a member of Suara Wanita 1 Malaysia and triggered anger among the audience by stopping a student from speaking. She also asserted that animals like human have problems. The admin of the "Only in Malaysia" page was also angry with the situation, therefore, he expressed his anger by sharing a post on "Only in Malaysia" page in which he wrote, "Stop using Suara Wanita 1 Malaysia as your logo", and he also added that she was never qualified to speak on behalf of the women in Malaysia. *Bunch of zombies* in example #108 above is an instance of abusive type of bad language used by one of the participants which was used in the same context to address students watching the forum and clapping for what she (the speaker) was saying.

As discussed earlier in chapter two, name-calling insults can also be considered as a form of abusive type of bad language, see chapter 2 sections 2.8.2, 2.8.2.1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. In the corpus of Facebook, a considerable number of abusive type of bad language were instances of name-calling insults. Although these name-calling insults shared the same intention of directing disparaging epithets on the addressee, they vary among themselves regarding their theme and their reference as well as their semantic categories. These expressions are principally created based on the physical peculiarities of the addressee. The following example which is extracted from the data is an instance of abusive name-calling type of bad language, which is based on the physical aspects of the addressee.

1. Example # 249: Y that *' fatty '* sit next to Mr.Y?

Fatty is an abusive type of bad language used by Malaysian netizens to address a woman belonging to high authority since she was sitting between the bride and groom who is the

Malaysian hero in sports. One of the participants called that woman "fatty" due to the fact that she was a little bit chubby. Example #372 and # 358 are other instances of abusive type of bad language used by other Malaysian netizens in the same context on Facebook to address the same woman. These two instances referred to the concrete referents since name-calling insults may also make reference to the concrete referents, for example:

1. Example # 372: *Super mangkuk! (Bowl)*
2. Example # 358: A *big bush* siting in the middle of the two love birds.

Super mangkuk and *big bush* are two instances of name-calling insults which were used to refer to the woman belonging to high authority and who was sitting between the bride and groom. In addition, these insulting names may sometimes rely more on social awareness. It was found in the data that Malaysian netizens were also creating the abusive type of bad language by relying on their social awareness. The following example, #526, is extracted from the data to clearly illustrate an instance of name-calling insult based on social awareness:

1. Example # 526: *MAFIA*

Understanding the semantic reference/theme underlying these offensive name-calling insults used by Malaysian netizens in the corpus of Facebook will provide more information on the perception of the Malaysian netizens about others and the disfavored out-group members. To illustrate, in example #526, *MAFIA* with its reference to narcotics and crime was used by a Malaysian netizen in the context where a car was parked in a parking lot belonging to handicapped people. The use of *MAFIA* illustrates the perception of Malaysian netizens about people who do not follow rules, regulations as well as others' rights.

Unfriendly suggestions are another type of insult which is considered as an abusive type of bad language whose practice in the use of bad language was evident in the data by Malaysian

netizens. Unfriendly suggestions also comprise of a considerable amount of total abusive type of bad language use in the data. The following examples from the data are instances of unfriendly suggestions which are regarded as abusive type of bad language.

1. Example # 33: SWIM do not welcome you.please *get lost!!*
2. Example # 115: *Go home, you are drunk*

Get lost and *go home* are three instances of unfriendly suggestions which are used by Malaysian netizens as the reaction to the speech and deeds of a woman who was a member of Suara Wanita 1 Malaysia.

In the following examples pulled out of the data, Malaysian netizens used two abusive types of bad language in their comments they shared. *Evil bless* is an abusive type of bad language used in cursing form. *Go die* and *shut the fuck up* are abusive in the form of unfriendly suggestions while *low class slut* in the second example from data is a name-calling insult of abusive type of bad language. These abusive expressions as used by the Malaysian netizens in the data are provided below for more illustration:

1. Example # 150: Freaking apologize to her in public for your stupidity. *Evil bless, go die*
2. Example # 163: *Shut the fuck up* la u *low class slut.*

These examples are used to address a woman who was the a member of Suara Wanita 1 Malaysia and who aroused anger in the audience by stopping a student from speaking and asserting that animals like human have problems. Later in a post the admin wrote "STOP using Suara Wanita 1 Malaysia as your logo, and asserted that she is never qualified to speak on behalf of the women in Malaysia.

Abusive expressions were also found to be used in their literal meaning by the Malaysian netizens in the corpus of Facebook. Example #163 is an instance of abusive type of bad

language used in the aforementioned context while carrying its literal meaning and making reference to sexual relationships:

1. Example # 163: Ok. And when u r free *give us a blow job* so that can shut your mouth. Ok.

Using a bad term or a string of bad terms as an expletive type of bad language ranks as the second most frequent type of bad language among Malaysian netizens. There were 219 instances of expletive type of bad language used by Malaysian netizens in the data, which accounts for 31.55% of total bad word usages. Expletives can be found in exclamations of surprise, pain, or irritation and they are regarded as one of the most typical exponents of bad language (Ljung, 2011). The following examples are instances of expletive type of bad language found in the data, which are provided here for more clarification.

1. Example # 10: i had watched the whole full length and i feel that is your problem and you are the person who are wrong!! *WTH* u forgive her?? did she need it? *Dafuq!?*

2. Example # 113: Listen listen *what a crap.*.Mamak gal u go bak home watch your own video...

3. Example # 169: *How in the F* the students suppose to do their homework after talking? Its like doing a research about something after presenting

4. Example # 285: Obviously. *Geez**..~* -__-"

5. Example #302: *the hell is that...*

WTH, dafug, how in the f, Geez and *the hell is that* in the above examples are instances of bad language as expletive type of bad language used in the data by Malaysian netizens in different comments and with different intentions.

Another type of bad language representing lazy type of swearing is auxiliary swearing. The data ascertain that though there are quite a substantial number of comments (107 instances, 15.41% of total swearing types) proving that bad language and swearing is becoming a way of speaking among Malaysian netizens, this type of swearing is still at a lower degree

compared to abusive and expletive types of swearing. The following examples are the comments that included auxiliary type of swearing used by Malaysian netizens in the data.

1. Example # 85: So *damn* funny. Why she should forgive not apologise ? Super duper stupid ..
2. Example #339: a couple's worst nightmare : *A SCREWED-UP* WEDDING DINNER!
3. Example #498: *damn c*ool haha wish I did it in school

Damn in comment #85 and #498 and *screwed-up* in comment #339 are auxiliary types of bad language used in the data. The last type of bad language is humorous type of bad language. Using bad language for playful reasons and in a humorous way considerably occurred less than other types of bad language among Malaysian netizens in Facebook. There were 52 instances of humorous type of bad language in the data, which account for 7.42% of total instances. In all these comments, bad words were used for their humorous function. The following examples taken from data are particularly demonstrative of using bad language in humorous ways and for humorous purposes.

1. Example #102: Go home X …… *U r drunk!* Hihi….
2. Example # 148: COW IS MOOOOIIIIIIINNNNNGG~
3. Example # 157: By the way, your England *is mother farking powder*.
4. Example # 346: *so light the light bulb*

Berger (1970) asserts that though using bad language and swearing is a way to ride oneself from the hostile aggression and as a way to please one's integrity and honor, it can express humorous element by representing a grotesque caricature and absurd reductionism (p.285). Humorous types of swearing are sometimes similar to the abusive type; therefore, in a corpus it was difficult to distinguish between these two types of swearing. For this reason and in order to affirm the findings of the study, some of the problematic utterances were selected to be investigated by interviewing the participants about their intentions. The detailed analysis

of these utterances and the participants' intentions are provided in this chapter, section 4.6. One of the important ways of determining whether a word or expression is humorous or not is the tone of the speaker, which will be missed in the corpus; however, the interjections used in the utterances like lol (laugh out loud) shows that the purpose of speaker was to be more playful than insulting. In addition, analyzing bad terms and phrases in their context was a benefit for deciding on the types of swearing. However, the use of other expletive and interjections like *shit! Fuck! Hell!* indicates that the purpose of the speaker is to insult rather than being playful. For instance, example #316: "Lol get *a hole bitch*" is regarded as humorous swearing while in comment #302 *the hell is* that..., *beehive* is considered as an abusive swearing in the form of name-calling insult for degrading the addressee.

4.5 Summary of Corpus Analysis

Bad words found in the corpus were specified and dissected based on the model proposed by Thelwall (2008). They were dissected based on their referents and the themes they referred to, their linguistic types, bad words' strength and their offensiveness. The implicit bad words, those involving clever language, were also distinguished in the data. In the following section, the analysis of questionnaire is offered. The questionnaire's design and its analysis were mainly provided to reveal the offensiveness and strength of bad words among Malaysian netizens.

4.6 Questionnaire Analysis

The questionnaire was designed to gain insight into some of the questions incited from the analysis of the corpus of Facebook and to find the Malaysian netizens' perception of bad words' offensiveness. The analysis of questionnaire is presented in this chapter. Analyzing the questionnaire not only disclosed the Malaysians' attitudes towards the offensiveness of

some bad words both within and without the context but also provided answers to some of the questions incited from the analysis of corpus.

4.6.1 Analysis of Part I

The first part of the questionnaire is designed to reveal some general information about how frequently Malaysian netizens use bad language, when and where they use bad words and so on. The following three questions in the first part of the questionnaire were designed to discover the preferred language used by Malaysian netizens on Facebook, their level of English language competency as well as the way they preferred to appear on Facebook.

Which language do you use in Facebook?
What is your competence in the English Language?
How do you appear on FB pages?
After analyzing the first part of the questionnaire, a considerable number of participants, 66.66% of them, reported to use both their first language and English language in Facebook, and only 33.33% of them stated to use only English language. Among the participants in the questionnaire, 56.66% of them stated to have "Average" knowledge of English language, 33.33% of the participants stated to have "Good" knowledge of English language. However, only 2 of the participants (6.66%) testified that they have a "Very good" knowledge of English and only one of the participants, that is only 3.33% of total number of participants in the questionnaire, believed that he/she has "Poor" knowledge of English. Among these participants, 80% of them appear on Facebook with their "Real name" and their true identity whereas 20% of them stated that they appear on Facebook "Anonymously" and with anonymous identity.

The other questions in part one of the questionnaire provided were aimed to disclose bad language use behavior of Malaysian netizens on Facebook.

Do you use swearing (use bad language) in English?

If you choose a, b, and C, where do you learn these words from? (You can choose More Than One Answers)

In what emotional state are you most likely to use swear words? (You can choose More Than One Answers)

Which of the following is most likely to affect whether or not you will use bad words? (You can choose More Than One Answers)

A majority of the participants, which is 83.33% of total participants, stated to use bad language "Rarely" and only 16.66% of the participants reported to use bad language "Sometimes". No participant claims to use bad language "Often" or "Never". For Malaysians, the chief source of learning bad language and swearing is through "Movies" which was specified by 42.85% of the Malaysians. The participants determined in the questionnaire that the next source for learning bad language is their "Friends", that is for 37.14% of the Malaysians and finally "School" for 20% of Malaysians is the third main source of learning bad language. None of the participants declared to learn bad language from "Newspapers" and their "Instructors".

To find out in what emotional states Malaysians are more expected to use bad language, the participants were asked to mark the emotional state in which they are most likely to use swear words. Participants claim that "When they are angry" and "When they are stressed", they are most likely to use bad language and to swear. These two emotional states with the same percentage of 28.30% are the two main reasons of using bad language among Malaysians. However, "joking" and "teasing" others are the next two motives of using bad language among Malaysians. "When I am joking" and "When I am teasing" rated the same percent of 16.98 after "When I am stressed" and "When I am angry". "When I am happy" weas rated as the third emotional state with 3.77% in which Malaysian participants are likely to use bad words. Only 1.8% of the participants, that is only one of the participants, declared that he/she

uses bad language when he/she is stressed. There are also a number of issues which have noticeable and significant impact on participants whether to use bad language or not. Participants' emotional situation and how they feel is the supreme reason influencing participants to use bad language. "How I feel" was rated by 45.45% of Malaysians as the leading factor influencing participants to use bad language, then participants rated "Whom I am talking to (commenting on)" and "What I am talking (commenting) about" as the next persuasive factors with 22.72% and 20.45% respectively. Ultimately, the least important factor among Malaysians was the context in which they are. Owing to the fact that "Where I am" was rated only by 11.36% of the total participants as an inducing factor.

Among the other characteristics of bad language, the analysis of corpus of Facebook revealed that the use of signs was also noticeable; consequently, in order to find out more about the use of signs and Malaysian's intentions for using sign, the subsequent questions were asked in the questionnaire.

Do you use signs (e.g. *,#, !, $) in Facebook when you use bad language words?
If Yes to Q.10 identify your reason, please choose from the following choices (you can choose More Than One Answers)

As revealed in part 4.3.5 from the analysis of the corpus, 30 examples of using bleeps, signs and symbols were found in the data, for more clarification of why Malaysians use fashion spelling which can be useful for future studies. The participants of questionnaire were asked if they use signs like *, !, $, #. The analysis revealed that 46.66% of the participants use signs and 53.33% of them indicated that they "*Do not*" use signs and symbols when using bad language in Facebook. The primary and crucial reason for using signs and symbols, which was rated at 85.71% by the participants, was that Malaysian believed that by using signs, their bad language and swearing utterances look less offensive. "It is fun" and "It is more creative" with the same percentage of 14.28% were rated as the second reason for using signs

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and symbols on Facebook when they used bad language. None of the participants choose "It is easier and faster" as a reason for using signs in typing bad words on Facebook.

4.6.2 Analysis of Part II

Part II of the questionnaire is seeking for some information regarding the offensiveness of bad words through traditional rating of bad words in order to find Malaysians' attitudes toward such terms in non-contextualized situation. The participants were asked to rate each bad word on the strength scale of 1 to 5, '1' being 'Very Mild', and '5' being 'Very Strong'. Table 4.7 indicates the number of participants who labelled each bad word.

Table 4.7: Non-contextualized Rating of Bad Words

Strength Bad Words	Very Mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very Strong (5)
Ass	9.99% (3)	9.99% (3)	16.66% (5)	33.33%(10)	30% (9)
Asshole	6.66% (2)	13.33% (4)	6.66% (2)	23.33% (7)	50% (15)
Bastard	6.66% (2)	3.33% (1)	20% (6)	33.33%(10)	36.66% (11)
Bitch	3.33% (1)	6.66% (2)	20% (6)	13.33%(4)	56.66%(17)
Cunt	3.33% (1)	6.66% (2)	9.99% (3)	23.33%(7)	56.66%(17)
Damn	33.33%(10)	3.33% (1)	23.33% (7)	16.66%(5)	23.33% (7)
Dick	3.33% (1)	9.99% (3)	16.66% (4)	33.33%(10)	40% (12)
Fuck	3.33% (1)	0% (0)	23.33% (7)	16.66% (5)	56.66% (17)
Shit	36.66 (11)	9.99% (3)	9.99% (3)	20% (6)	23.33% (7)
Hell	30% (9)	16.66% (5)	13.33% (4)	20% (6)	20% (6)
Motherfucking	3.33% (1)	0% (0)	13.33% (4)	13.33% (4)	69.99% (21)

Table 4.7 depicts a variation among the participants' notions and attitudes toward the offensiveness of each bad word. To illustrate, while some participants consider one word as "Very Strong" or "Strong", some others may consider it as "Very Mild", "Mild" or "Moderate". *Ass* in the non-contextualized situation was considered by 33.33% of the

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participants (10 participants) as a "Strong" bad word. However, nearly the same number of the participants, 9 of the participants (30%), rated this word as a "Very Strong" bad word. Whilst only 16.66% of participants labelled *Ass* as "Moderate", only 9.99% of the participants labeled this word as "Very Mild" and "Mild" bad. *Asshole* is regarded by a very considerable percentage of the participants, 50%, as a "Very Strong" bad word. 23.33% of the participants labelled *asshole* as a "Strong" bad word. The same percentage of the questionnaire participants (6.66%) rated this word as "Very mild" and "Moderate". *Bastard* was labelled as a "Very strong" bad word by 36.66% (11 individuals) of the questionnaire participants. Almost the same number of the participants, 10 individuals (33.33%) rated this word as a "Strong" bad word. Among the participants of the questionnaire, 20% categorized *bastard* as "Moderate", while 6.66% and 3.33% of participants rated *bastard* as a "Very mild" and "Mild" bad word respectively.

Bitch, a term which is mostly used to insult woman addressees, was labelled by a majority of the questionnaire participants, 56.66% (17 individuals), as a "Very strong" bad word. 20% of the participants (6 individuals) categorized bitch as "Moderate" and 13.33% of the participants (4 individuals) rated the word as a "Strong" bad word. Two of the questionnaire participants (6.66%) reported to consider the word as a "Mild" and only 1 participant (3.33%) rated *bitch* as a "Very mild" bad word. *Cunt* is another insulting term which was rated by the questionnaire participants to find out their perceived offensiveness rating of the word in a non-contextualized situation. A substantial number of the participants 56.66% (17 individuals) reported to consider *cunt* as a "Very strong" bad word. As a "Strong" bad word, this word was labelled by 23.33% of the participants (7individuals). 9.99% (3 participants) reported to consider *cunt* as "Moderate", 6.66% (2 participants) as "Mild" and merely 3.33% of the participants (1 individual) considered this word as a "Very mild" swear word.

Damn with its reference to the religious theme considered by 33.33% of the participants (10 individuals) as a "Very mild" swear word. The identical number of questionnaire participants, 7 (23.33%), labelled *damn* as "Moderate" and "Very strong" swear word. Meanwhile, 16.66% (5 individuals) categorized this word as a "Very strong" swear word.

Dick is another bad word which was labelled by 40% of the participants (12 individuals) as a "Very strong" bad word. 10 participants (33.33%) rated the word as a "Strong" bad word. 4 participants (13.33%) and 3 participants (9.99%) categorized *dick* as "Moderate" and "Very mild" respectively. Only 1 individual (3.33%) reported to consider this word as a "Very mild" bad word.

Fuck, its inflations and derivations, are among the most frequently used bad words among the Malaysian netizens. This word was assessed by the questionnaire participants, where 56.66% (17 individuals) rated it as a "Very strong" bad word. "Moderate" label was the next highly rated label by 23.33% of the participants (7individuals). As a "Strong" swear word, *fuck* was rated by 16.66% of the participants (5 individuals). Merely one person (3.33%) characterized this word as a "Very mild" swear word, whereas none of the participants seems to consider this word as a "Mild" bad word.

Shit was labelled as a "Very mild" swear word by 36.66% of the participants (11individuals). 23.33% of the questionnaire participants (7individuals) reported to consider *shit* as "Very strong", 20% (6 individuals) labeled this word as a "Strong" bad word. The same number of participants, 3 individuals (9.99%) rated *shit* as a "Moderate" and "Mild" bad word.

Hell with its reference to religion was regarded by most participants, 30% (19 individuals), as a "Very mild" swear word. The same proportion of the participants, 20% (6 individuals),

labeled *hell* as a "Very strong" and "Strong" swear word. 16.66% of the questionnaire participants rated it as a "Mild" while 13.33% rated it as a "Moderate" swear word.

Another bad word which was measured in non-contextualized situations was *motherfucking*. *Motherfucking* with its mother theme was categorized by a substantial number of the participants, which are 69.99% of them (21 individuals), as a "Very strong" bad word. Equally, 13.33% (4 individuals) of the participants rated *motherfucking* as "Moderate" and "Strong" bad word. Just one of the participants (3.33%) reported to characterize this word as a "Very mild" bad word, and none of the questionnaire participants seems to consider it as a "Mild" swear word.

It was found in the literature search that there are various and diverse labels assigned to bad words. In order to find Malaysians' perception of the best label for such words, the following question was asked in the questionnaire.

If you had to talk about these words as a group, how would you refer to them? That is, what kind of words are these? (For example: swear word, bad words, dirty words, etc.)

When the Malaysian participants were asked to provide a label for the above words, a majority of them, 34.61%, labeled these words as "Bad words", 30.76% of the participants labeled them as "Dirty words", and 7.69 % of the participants believed that the best label for such words are "Swear words" and "Rude words". "Offensive word" and "Foul words" as labels for such words were rated by an equal number of participants, which is 3.84%. Of the total participants, however, 7.69% of participants believed that these kinds of words are not considered as impolite and rude and they are considered polite in their conversations.

Before being asked to rate the bad words in the context, the participants were asked to state if the offensiveness of bad words is fixed and unchanging. 80% of the participants believed

that the offensiveness of bad words is not fixed and it is totally dependent on various factors such as the context, situation, and society. They also believed that the offensiveness of bad words alter and change depending on the person we talk to as well as the emotional status in which the speaker utter such words.

4.6.3 Analysis of Part III

In part III, participants were asked to label the bad words considering both the context and the dialogue in which the bad language words were used.

In the questionnaire, first the context and description of the picture and subject were provided for the participants, then some of the comments including bad words and regarding the context were provided. The participants were asked to specify the degree of offence of that bad word by considering both the context and the comment in which it was used. In this section, all the contexts and the comments in the questionnaire will be analyzed individually.

Context: <u>A woman who is the priminister of Suara Wanita 1 Malaysia had a dispute with a student in a public forum when she stops a student (Miss Y) from speaking and reckoned that all animals have problem, later after so many criticism in social media she announced in her Facebook page that "I forgive Miss Y".</u>

Motherfucking is regarded as among the "Very Strong" bad words, its strength among the Malaysian netizens and in contextualized situation was also measured through the questionnaire as it was used by one of the Malaysian netizens in the above context.

14.1 Do you think this is a <u>motherf**king</u> game Mrs. X?

Strength Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Motherfucking	9.99% (3)	6.66% (2)	16.66% (5)	16.66% (5)	50% (15)

As an intensifier, *motherfucking* was regarded as a "Very strong" bad word by 50% of the participants. Equal proportion of the participants, 16.66%, labelled this word as "Moderate" and "Strong" bad word. Meanwhile, 9.99% of the participants regarded this bad word as a "Very mild" one, and as a "Mild" bad word, *motherfucking* was labelled by 6.66% of the questionnaire participants.

Crapping is another bad word whose strength was measured in a contextualized situation in this study.

14.2 Forgive??? Y didn't ask for forgiveness!! Again she is <u>crapping!</u>

Strength Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Crapping	26.66% (8)	16.66% (5)	16.66% (5)	33.33%(10)	6.66% (2)

Crapping, in this comment, was used as a verb and with a figurative meaning. It was rated as a "Strong" bad word by one third of the participants (33.33%), while 26.66% of the questionnaire participants characterized *crapping* as "Very mild'. Identical number of the participants, 5 individuals (16.66%), reported to consider the word as "Mild" and "Moderate". In contrast, only 2 individuals (6.66%) labeled *crapping* as a "Very strong" bad word.

McEnery (2006) and Thelwall (2008) categorized *fart* as a "Mild" bad word, *fart* as an expletive was also measured among Malaysians through the questionnaire in a contextualized situation.

14.3 <u>farts</u>....asking u to apologize... not to forgive.. who ask ur forgiveness... u should be begging for forgiveness

Strength Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Farts	16.66% (5)	13.33% (4)	36.66%(11)	16.66% (5)	16.66% (5)

Fart in this comment is used as a general expletive and generally 36.66% of the participants (11 individuals) reported to characterize this word as a "Moderate" bad word. Fart as "Very mild", "Strong" and "Very strong" bad word was rated in the same way by 16.66% of questionnaire participants. Meanwhile, only 13.33% of the participants labelled *fart* as "Mild".

Cunt and *fucking* are among the words whose strength was measured by McEnery (2006) and Thelwall (2008). In order to compare Malaysians' perception of their offensiveness with previous studies, the following comment from data was used in the questionnaire.

14.4 street demo is a way that *rakyat* show that they are not satisfy with their gov. and also <u>cunt</u> like you who try to shut of free speech with the power that byou think you have. <u>fking cunt</u>

Strength Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Cunt	6.66% (2)	13.33% (4)	3.33% (1)	23.33% (7)	53.33% (16)
Fucking	6.665 (2)	9.99% (3)	9.99% (3)	20% (6)	53.33% (16)

Cunt as a personal insult was rated by more than half of the participants, 53.33% of the participants, as a "Very strong" bad word. 23.33% of the participants rated *cunt* as a "Strong" bad word. As a "Mild" bad word, *cunt* was categorized by 13.33% of the participants. 6.66%

of the participants labeled *cunt* as a "Very mild" swear word while only 3.33% of the participants (1individual) regarded *cunt* as a "Moderate" bad word.

Fucking as a negative intensifier is viewed by a majority of the participants, 53.33%, as a "Very strong" bad word. 20% of the questionnaire participants labelled *fucking* as "Strong" swear word. As a "Mild" and "Moderate" bad word, *fucking* was assessed identically by 9.99% of the participants. On the other hand only 2 individuals (6.66%) considered this word as a "very mild" bad word.

In the literature search, there was not any report from the offensiveness of *douchebag*, so in the following question in the questionnaire, the researcher aimed to measure its strength among Malaysians.

14.5 LoL...acting like a victim....douche bag

Strength / Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Douche bag	6.66% (2)	26.66% (8)	9.99% (3)	40% (12)	16.66% (5)

Expletive *douchebag* in the above comment was labelled as a "Strong" swear word by 40% of the questionnaire participants (12 individuals). The next label, which was highly rated by 26.66% of the individuals for *douchebag*, was "Mild" label. 16.66% of the participants regarded this word as "Very strong", 9.99% as a "Moderate" and 6.66% as a "Very mild" swear word.

The Malaysian netizens sometimes used a string of bad words in their comments. In the following question extracted from data, the researcher intended to measure the strength of *dumb, fucking* and *bitch* as very commonly used bad words and in a string.

14.6Anyway, we'll forgive u... <u>dumb fucking bitch</u>

Strength Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Dumb	9.99% (3)	16.66% (5)	9.99% (3)	20% (6)	43.33% (13)
Fucking	0% (0)	13.33% (4)	6.66% (2)	20% (6)	59.99% (18)
Bitch	3.33% (1)	3.33% (1)	9.99% (3)	20% (6)	63.33% (19)

Dumb as a negative adjective and as an intensifier in this comment was labeled by a noticeable proportion of the questionnaire participants, 43.33%, as a "Very strong" bad word. 20% labelled this word as a "Strong", and 16.66% as a "Mild" bad word. *Dumb* as a "Moderate" and "Very mild" bad word was assessed identically by 9.99% of the participants.

Fucking, in this comment, also as a negative adjective was regarded as a "Very strong" swear word by a considerable percentage of participants, 59.99% (18 individuals). 20% of the participants rated *fucking* as a "Strong" bad word, 13.33% as a "Mild" swear word and 6.66% considered this word as a "Moderate" swear word. However, none of the questionnaire participants regarded the word as a "Very mild" bad word.

Name-calling insult, *bitch*, was labelled as a "Very strong" bad word by 63.33% of the participants, which is nearly one third of the questionnaire participants. *Bitch* was rated by 20% of the participants as a "Strong" bad word. 9.99% characterized the word as "Moderate", 3.33% as a "Mild" and 3.33% as a "Very mild" bad word in this context.

Bitch is also among the frequently used bad words, which was used not only as a personal insult but also in formulaic expressions like the following comment, which was intended to measure its offensiveness in formulaic expressions.

14.7 @bitch please

Strength / Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Bitch	13.33% (4)	3.33% (1)	16.66% (5)	23.33% (7)	43.33% (13)

Bitch in the formulaic phrase @ *bitch please* was also rated "Very strong" by 43.33% of the participants. Though the number of people who considered this word as a "Very strong" bad word decreased compared to example 14.6, it is still regarded as a "Very strong" swear word by most of the participants. The number of participants who characterized *bitch* as a "strong" bad word increased to 23.33% in comparison to example 14.6. As a "Moderate" bad word, *bitch* was labelled by 16.66% of the questionnaire participants. Meanwhile, 4 participants (13.33%) characterized this word as "Very mild" and only 1 participant (3.33%) categorized *bitch* as a "Mild" bad word. The next question in the questionnaire intended to measure the offensiveness of two uses of *asshole* in a comment; one was used as an expletive while the other one was used as a name-calling insult.

14.8 Asshole!! Opps I forgive you for being called an Asshole!!!

Strength / Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Asshole	9.99% (3)	6.66% (2)	16.66% (5)	13.33% (4)	53.33% (16)
Asshole	9.99% (3)	0% (0)	16.66% (5)	20% (6)	53.33% (16)

Asshole as a general expletive was regarded as "Very strong" by 53.33% of the questionnaire participants. 16.66% of the participants labeled it as "Moderate" while 13.33% of the participants rated *asshole* as a "Strong" bad word. *Asshole* as a "Very mild" and "Mild" swear word was characterized by 9.99% and 6.66% of the participants respectively.

Asshole as a name-calling insult was also labelled as a "Very strong" bad word by 53.33% of the participants. 20% of the participants regarded this word as a "Strong" bad word. *Asshole* was characterized by as a "Moderate" bad word by 16.66% of the participants, and 9.99% of the participants reported to consider this word as a "Very mild" bad word; however, none of the participants seems to consider *asshole* as a "Mild" bad word.

Dickhead is another insult term used in the data by Malaysian netizens. In order to obtain the Malaysians' perception of its offensiveness and strength, the comment with its related context was provided in the questionnaire.

14.9 U look like a talking <u>dick head!</u>

Strength Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Dickhead	6.66% (2)	3.33% (1)	9.99% (3)	33.33%(10)	46.66% (14)

Dickhead with its reference to sexual organs and as a negative adjective was characterized by nearly half of the questionnaire participants, 46.66%, as a "Very strong" bad word. *Dickhead* as a "Strong" bad word was rated by 33.33% of the participants. 9.99% of the participants claimed that *dickhead* was a "Moderate" bad word. However, as a "Very mild" bad word, *dick* was labeled by 6.66% of the questionnaire participants. Only one of the participants, which represent 3.33%, claimed that he/she considered the word as a "Mild" bad word.

Bullshit was categorized as a "Very Mild" bad word by McEnery (2006) and Thelwall (2008). The questionnaire was also aimed to measure the strength of this word from the view point of Malaysians. *Crappy* was also among the bad words found in the data, previously as

a verb, its strength was investigated in the questionnaire. In the following question, *crappy* is investigated as an adjective.

14.10 You spoke <u>bullshit</u> just to show how <u>crappy</u> ur brains were and you came up so high.

Strength Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Bullshit	13.33% (4)	16.66% (5)	23.33% (7)	30% (9)	16.66% (5)
Crappy	26.66% (8)	9.99% (3)	9.99% (3)	36.66%(11)	16.66% (5)

With its figurative meaning, *bullshit* was characterized as a "Strong" bad word by nearly one third of the participants (30%). 23.33% of the participants rated this word as a "Moderate" bad word. Identical number of the participants, 5 individuals (16.66%), rated *bullshit* as a "Mild" and "Very strong" swear word. *Bullshit* as a "Very mild" bad word was rated by 13.33% of the participants.

Crappy as a negative adjective was regarded as a "Strong" bad word by 36.66% of the participants. On the other hand, a considerable proportion of the participants, 26.66%, also believed that in this comment and within this context, *crappy* can be regarded as a "Very mild" bad word. 16.66% of the participants labelled this word as "Very strong". *Crappy* as a "Mild" and "Moderate" bad word was characterized by equal number of participants, 3 individuals (9.99%).

The next questions in the questionnaire follow from another context in the data, in which a group of boys were wearing girls' uniform at school.

15. Context: A group of boys wearing girls uniform at school

The strength of *Oh my god*, *bloody* and *hell,* all with their reference to religion, were also measured through the questionnaire.

15.1 i just want to say. Oh My God. Bloody Hell

Strength / Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Oh my God	56.66% (17)	6.66% (2)	23.33% (7)	9.99% (3)	3.33% (1)
Bloody	26.66% (8)	3.33% (1)	36.66%(11)	16.66% (5)	16.66% (5)
Hell	40% (12)	3.33% (1)	26.66% (8)	16.66% (4)	13.33% (5)

Oh my God with its religious theme and as a general expletive was labeled by a majority of the participants, 56.66%, as "Very mild". 23.33% of the questionnaire participants rated this expression as "Moderate". As a "Strong" swearing expression, it was rated by 9.99% of the participants, and 6.66% of the participants labeled such expression as a "Mild" one. Meanwhile, only 3.33% of the participants considered this expression as a "Very strong" swearing expression.

Bloody also with its religious theme was regarded as a "Moderate" bad word by 36.66% of the participants. The next label assigned to bloody was "Very mild" by 26.66% of the participants. *Bloody* as a "Strong" and "Very strong" bad word was labelled equally by 16.66% of the participants. And as a "Mild" bad word, this word was rated only by 3.33% of the questionnaire participants.

Religious swear word, *hell*, was regarded as "Very mild" by 40% of the questionnaire participants. As a "Moderate" bad word, it was assessed by 26.66% of the participants. 16.66% of the participants evaluated *hell* as a "Strong" swear word. *Hell* was rated as "Very strong" and "Mild" by 13.33% and 3.33% of the participants respectively.

The strength of *fag* and *prostitute* which were not specified in McEnery's (2005) and Thelwall's (2008) studies were also investigated through the questionnaire in a contextualized situation and in the comments used by Malaysians.

15.2 <u>Fag</u> prostitute.

Strength Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Fag	3.33% (1)	6.66% (2)	9.99% (3)	36.66%(11)	43.33% (13)
Prostitute	3.33% (1)	3.33% (1)	9.99% (3)	26.66% (8)	56.66% (17)

Fag as a negative adjective was regarded as a "Very strong" bad word by 43.33% of the participants. As a "Strong" bad word, this word was categorized by 36.66% of the participants. 9.99% of the questionnaire participants assessed *fag* as a "Moderate" bad word. 6.66% of the participants considered this word as a "Mild" bad word and only 3.33% characterized this word as "Very mild".

The term *prostitute* was categorized as a "Very strong" bad word by 56.66% of the participants. 26.66% of the participants rated this word as a "Strong" bad word. *Prostitute* was labeled as a "Moderate" bad word by 9.99% the participants. Meanwhile, both as a "Mild" and "Very mild" bad word, *prostitute* was labeled by 3.33% of the participants.

The next bad word investigated in the questionnaire was *gay*. In the literature search, *gay* as a homophobic term was found to be considered as a "Moderate" bad word, but the result of the present study reveals a contrary result.

15.3 <u>Gay</u> boy

Strength Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Gay	13.33% (4)	16.66% (5)	20% (6)	30% (9)	20% (6)

Despite the fact that the context is not a serious context, *gay* as a homophobic term was labeled as a "Strong" bad word by 30% of the participants. *Gay* as a "Moderate" and "Very strong" bad word was rated equally by 20% of the participants. 16.66% of the questionnaire

participants regarded *gay* as a "Mild" and 13.33% considered this word as a "Very mild" bad word.

Owing to the fact that *fucking*, its variations and inflections were very common in the data, finding its strength in different contexts and with different linguistic functions in the sentence is highly significant. *Whore* was another bad word whose strength among Malaysian was studied in a contextualized situation.

16. Context: The tragedy happened at 11am, when a girl jumped from the 6th floor Berjaya Times Square on Valentine's Day

16.1 Sarah ismail....*apa kata ko terjun skali dari tingkat 6 tu*? We DONT FUCKING NEED RACIST WHORE LIKE YOU...NUFF SAID

Strength Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Fucking	6.66% (2)	6.66% (2)	13.33% (4)	16.66% (5)	56.66% (17)
Whore	3.33% (1)	9.99% (3)	9.99% (3)	16.66% (5)	59.99% (18)

Though *fucking* in this example was used to emphasize and to intensify the verb, it was labeled as a "Very strong" bad word by 56.66% of the questionnaire participants. As a "Strong" bad word, *fucking* was rated by 16.66% of the participants and 13.33% characterized this word as a "Moderate" bad word. *Fucking* as a "Mild" and "Very mild" bad word was labelled equally by 6.66% of the questionnaire participants.

Whore with the prostitution theme was characterized as a "Very strong" bad word by more than half of the participants, which is 59.99% of the participants. As a "Strong" bad word, *whore* was rated by 16.66% of the participants. *Whore* was not considered as "Moderate", "Mild" and "Very mild" bad word by as many as the participants. As a "Moderate" and

"Mild" bad word, *whore* was rated equally by 9.99% of the participants and 3.33% labelled this word as a "Very mild" bad word.

The strength and offensiveness of *damn* and *asshole* was studied through the following comment.

16.2 Some <u>ass hole</u> dont know how yo respect ppl death... Do mind sharing ur tough wit ur brain and respect ppl around u dont give a <u>damn comment</u>" u not da only one here read" about da girl..

Strength Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Asshole	3.33% (1)	3.33% (1)	26.66% (8)	26.66% (8)	40% (12)
Damn	6.66% (2)	20% (6)	33.33%(10)	9.99% (3)	30% (9)

As a name-calling insult, *asshole* was assessed as a "Very strong" bad word by 40% of the participants. Identically, *asshole* was labeled as a "Strong" and "Moderate" bad word by 26.66% of the participants. Likewise, *asshole* was equally labeled as a "Mild" and "Very mild" bad word just by 3.33% of the questionnaire participants.

As an intensifying adjective, *damn* was regarded by 33.33% of the participants (10 individuals) as a "Moderate" bad word. With a slight difference, 30% of the participants characterized *damn* as a "Very strong" bad word. In contrast, it was labeled as a "Mild" swear word by 20% of the questionnaire participants. 9.99% of the participants rated this word as a "Strong" and 6.66% of the participants rated it as a "Very mild" swear word.

In the next context, the strength of some other bad words were examined in diverse comments shared by Malaysian participants.

17. Context: A woman belonging to a high authority is sitting between bride and groom, who is people hero, on their wedding day.

17.1 Why the <u>fucking fat ass</u> separate them?

Strength Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Fucking	3.33% (1)	6.66% (2)	9.99% (3)	23.33% (7)	56.66% (17)
Ass	3.33% (1)	9.99% (3)	23.33% (4)	23.33% (7)	50% (15)

Fucking is a term with a sexual theme and in this comment it was used as a negative intensifying adjective and labeled as a "Very strong" bad word by 56.66% of the participants. "Strong" label was assigned to *fucking* by 23.33% of the participants. *Fucking* was also rated as a "Moderate", "Mild" and "Very mild" bad word by 9.99%, 6.66% and 3.33% of the questionnaire participants respectively.

Ass was used with a figurative meaning and as a name-calling insult for a person belonging to high authority, it was considered as a "Very strong" bad word by 50% of the participants. 23.33% of the participants rated *ass* as a "Strong" bad word in this context. As a "Moderate" bad word, *ass* was characterized by 13.33% of the participants. "Mild" and "Very mild" were assigned to *ass* by 9.99% and 3.33% of the participants respectively.

In the following question in the questionnaire, the strength of *damn* as a curse word was also investigated.

17.2 <u>Damn</u> that lady in the center

Strength Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Damn	6.66% (2)	16.66% (5)	23.33% (7)	36.66%(11)	16.66% (5)

Damn as a cursing verb and with its literal meaning was characterized as a "Strong" swear word by 36.66% of the participants. As a "Moderate" swear word, it was rated by 23.33% of the participants. *Damn* as a "Very strong" and "Mild" swear word was labeled identically by the same proportion of the participants, 6.66%. Meanwhile, only 6.66% of the participants regarded *damn* as a "Very mild" bad word.

Due to the fact that there was not any record in the literature about the strength of *cockblock,* its strength was examined in the contextualized situation in the questionnaire.

17.3Cockblock

Strength / Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Cockblock	3.33% (1)	9.99% (3)	16.66% (5)	40% (12)	30% (9)

As a general expletive, *cockblock* was regarded as a "Strong" bad word by 40% of the participants. *Cockblock* as a "Very strong" bad word was labeled by 16.66% of the participants. 9.99% of the participants rated it as a "Mild" and just 3.33% of the participants labeled *cockblock* as a "Very mild" bad word.

The offensiveness and strength of *dafug*, which is the internet term for *what the fuck*, was also examined since its strength has not been clarified in previous studies.

17.4 dafugggg ... why she in the middle ...

Strength / Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Dafug	3.33% (1)	3.33% (1)	33.33%(10)	36.66%(11)	23.33% (7)

Dafug is a shortened term of the colloquialism *what the fuck*. Generally, the questionnaire participants, 36.66% (11 individuals), rated the word as a "Strong" bad word. *Dafug* as a

"Moderate" bad word was labeled by nearly the same proportion of the participants, 33.33%. With a slight difference, 23.33% of the participants characterized *dafug* as a "Very strong" bad word. This word was rated equally as "Mild" and "Very mild" by 3.33% of the participants.

The strength of *fuck* and *whore* in Malaysians' perception and in the contextualized situation was also examined in the following question.

17.5 <u>FUCFK</u> that <u>WHORE!\</u>

Strength / Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Fuck	3.33% (1)	6.66% (2)	6.66% (2)	36.66%(11)	46.66% (14)
Whore	3.33% (1)	3.33% (1)	9.99% (3)	13.33% (4)	69.99% (21)

Fuck as a verb with sexual theme was regarded as a "Very strong" bad word by 46.66% of the participants. 36.66% of the participants labeled *fuck* as a "Strong" bad word; moreover, it was rated identically by 6.66% of the participants as a "Moderate" and "Mild" bad word. *Fuck* was characterized only by 3.33% of the participants as a "Very mild" swear word.

More than two thirds of the participants, 69.99%, agreed that *whore* as a name-calling insult was a "Very strong" bad word. As a "Strong" bad word, *whore* was rated by 13.33% of the questionnaire participants. 9.99% of the participants regarded *whore* as a "Moderate" bad word and a trivial proportion of the participants, 3.33%, identically rated this word as a "Mild" and "Very mild" bad word.

In the subsequent question in the questionnaire, the participants were asked to rate the strength of *bitch* in regards to the context and the comment in which it was used.

17.6 thats one <u>big bitch.</u>Even their mothers din sit between them la

Strength Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Bitch	6.66% (2)	13.33% (4)	9.99% (3)	20% (6)	50% (15)

Bitch was regarded as a "Very strong" bad word by 50% of the participants. As a "Strong"

bad word, *bitch* was rated by 20% of the participants.13.33% labelled this word as a "Mild"

bad word. As a "Moderate" bad word, it was labelled by 9.99% of the participants. And as a

"Very mild" bad word, *bitch* was labeled by 6.66% of the participants.

The next bad word is *hell*, whose strength the participants were asked to rate in the formulaic

expression of *what the hell*.

17.7 So wrong...<u>what the hell she</u> sitting in the middle?

Strength Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Hell	23.33% (7)	13.33% (4)	23.33% (7)	26.66% (8)	13.33% (4)

Hell in the formulaic phrase *what the hell!* was regarded "Strong" by 26.66% of the

participants. The participants of the questionnaire identically characterized *hell* as a

"Moderate" and "Very mild" bad word, with 23.33%. That means that 7 participants each

labelled *hell* as a "Moderate" and "Very mild" bad word. Finally, an equal number of the

participants, 4 individuals, rated *hell* as a "Mild" and "Very mild" bad word that is 13.33%

for each label.

Besides the frequently used bad words like *fuck, crap, shit*, etc., Malaysian netizens also used

animal terms to insult, degrade and mock the addressee in the data. Consequently, the

strength and offensiveness of such words were measured through the questionnaire.

17.8 Is that a <u>hippopotamus</u> or <u>fat roast pig</u>?

Strength Bad word	Very mild (1)	Mild (2)	Moderate (3)	Strong (4)	Very strong (5)
Hippotamous	9.99% (3)	20% (6)	33.33%(10)	20% (6)	16.66% (5)
Pig	9.99% (3)	9.99% (3)	30% (9)	23.33% (7)	26.66% (8)

Hippotamus is a name-calling insult with animal theme; however, it can refer to the abnormal aspects of addressee at the same time. *Hippotamus* was characterized as a "Moderate" bad word by 33.33% of the participants. "Strong" and "Mild" labels were assigned by an identical proportion of the participants, 20%, to this word. 16.66% of the participants rated this word as a "Very strong" bad word and as a "Very mild" bad word, *hippotamus* was regarded by 9.99% of the participants.

Pig is another animal term which was rated as a "Moderate" bad word by 30% of the participants, and as a "Strong" bad word, it was characterized by 26.66% of the participants. Meanwhile, 23.33% of them labeled *pig* as a "Strong" bad word. Participants categorized *pig* as a "Mild" and "Very mild" bad word equally by 9.99%.

4.7 Summary of Questionnaire Findings

The analysis of the questionnaire revealed that Malaysian netizens are highly influenced by the context when interpreting the strength and offensiveness of a bad word. The variations and discrepancies between the rating of non-contextualized and contextualized bad words suggest that the questionnaire participants based their evaluation of bad words strength on how the words are practiced. Table 4.8 depicts the rating of the most frequently used bad words both within the context of use and in non-contextualized situation. The result indicates that there is a variation between participants' perceived offensiveness rating of bad words in non-contextualized situations and contextualized ones. To illustrate, participants' perceived

offensiveness of some of the bad words differ completely in non-contextualized situation from contextualized one, for instance while *ass* was labelled by majority of participates as a "Strong" bad word in non-contextualized situation, in the contextualized situation, it was characterized as a "Very strong" bad word. *Damn* is another instance of bad word whose rating in contextualized situations differed from its rating in non-contextualized one. *Damn* in non-contextualized situation was regarded as a "Very strong" bad word but in contextualized situation, it was characterized as a "Moderate" and "Strong" bad word. Table 4.8 depicts the offensiveness degree of bad words in both contextualized and non-contextualized situations; moreover, it reveals the discrepancies and similarities in the offence of bad words in these two situations. Some of the bad words and expressions used in the contextualized situation received more than one label for their offensiveness degree, since those bad words were examined in different comments and contexts.

Table 4.8: Strength of Bad Words in Both Contextualized and Non-contextualized Situations

Bad Word	Non-contextualized	Contextualized
Ass	Strong (33.33%)	Very Strong (50%)
Asshole	Very Strong (50%)	Very Strong (53.33%), Very Strong (53.33%), Very Strong (40%)
Bastard	Very Strong (36.66%)	NA
Bitch	Very Strong (56.66%)	Very Strong (63.33%), Very Strong (43.33%), Very Strong (50%)
Damn	Very Mid (33.33%)	Moderate (33.33%), Strong (36.66%)
Dick	Very Strong (40%)	Very Strong (46.66%)
Fuck	Very Strong (56.66%)	Very Strong (fucking, 53.33%), Very Strong (fucking, 59.99%) Very Strong (fucking, 56.66%), Very Strong (fucking, 56.66%), Very Strong (fuck, 46.66%),
Shit	Very Mild (36.66%)	Strong (bullshit 30%)
Hell	Very Mild (30%)	Very Mild (40%), Strong (26.66%)
Motherfucking	Very Strong(69.99)	Very Strong (36.66%)

Both in contextualized and non-contextualized situations, *bitch* and *asshole* were regarded as a "Very Strong" bad word. *Damn* in a traditional rating task was regarded as a "Very Mild" bad word; however, its strength was rated differently in diverse contexts and comments, and as an intensifier, it was labelled as a "Moderate" bad word but as a curse word, this word was labelled as a "Strong" bad word. *Dick, fuck* and *motherfucking* as the bad terms referring to sexual organs and sexual relations were regarded as "Very Strong" bad words in two different rating tasks. As can be seen in table 4.8, *shit* was rated differently in two different rating tasks. While it was rated as a "Very Mild" bad word alone and out of context, Malaysians regarded this word as a "Strong" bad word in a compound noun, *bullshit*. *Hell* as a bad word with religious theme was regarded as "Very Mild" bad word though when it was used in an expression *what the hell*, it was rated as a "Strong" bad word. The strength of other bad words which were investigated in only one context, either in contextualized situation or in non-contextualized one, is depicted in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: The Strength of Other Bad Words in the Data

Strength	Bad Words
Very Strong	Dumb, fag, prostitute, whore, asshole, bastard, bitch, cunt, dick, fuck, motherfucking
Strong	Crapping, douchebag, gay, cockblock, dafug
Moderate	Fart, bloody, hippotamous, pig
Mild	
Very Mild	God, shit,

In order to avoid subjectivity in deciding the type of bad words, especially those which were more problematic due to the absence of the speaker's tone at the time of uttering such bad words, the researcher conducted an interview with 30 Malaysian netizens whose comments from the corpus were used in the data collection process. In the following section, the analysis and the result of the interviews will be reviewed.

4.8 Online Interview Analysis

In this section, the analysis of qualitative data collected from the online interview, which was conducted through online chatting with 30 Malaysian netizens whose bad language use in the corpus needed more investigation and study due the special characteristics, will be reviewed. The data provide evidence and confirmation as the basis for comparison with the findings from the analysis of the corpus data, which will reveal the intention, feeling as well as the real functions of bad language by Malaysian netizens for the special use of bad language. The interview questions are presented in Appendix C.

The questions in the interview were intended to discover participants' intention of using special bad words and to determine whether the participants use these bad words in order to offend the addressee or they just want to be humorous and fun without the intention of offending and degrading the addressee. This is because distinguishing between abusive and humorous types of bad language was problematic in some situations, resulting from the absence of speakers' tone at the time of uttering bad words. Subsequently, some of the problematic situations were delved into by asking the participants about their emotions and purpose of using such bad words. Table 4.10 illustrates participants' intention and feeling at the time of using particular bad language words and then reveals the analysis of bad words' types based on the participants' responses.

Table 4.10: Participants' Intention of Using Specific Bad Words

No	Utterances	Speaker's intention and feeling	Analysis
1	"# 28: priceless speech..its only a joke...<u>biggest clown</u> than any comedian out there...everywhere i go,i heard people making a joke to each other with this stuff "listen, 'listen, listen'...well this is <u>malaysian got talent!!!</u>	criticize and mock Offend that person because I was really angry with that person. but when I said Malaysian got talent it was a joke	Abusive Humorous
2	"# 45: Born this way - <u>Lady gaga (Syaitan)</u>	I wanted to say she is like Syaitan (evil) because she is so mean I wanted to degrade her because I hate her	Abusive
3	"#50: U look like a talking <u>dick head!</u>.	To criticize the person I wanted to condemn her and mock her because of her stupidity No I don't want to make joke I was really angry at her	Abusive
4	"# 54: well, once *a bitch*, always *a bitch*...beware she is a <u>rich bitch!!!</u>	I was angry at her because of her action so I wanted to show my anger to her Yes to offend that bitch	Abusive Abusive Abusive
5	" # 64: Adui i hear *<u>bitch (Ms.X) barking</u>* why u forgive? go complain like u always do la need u forgive oni guai lan la,	I wanted to say she speak nonsense like a dog that barks Yes I want to offend her because she offended me and others by the way she was reacting and I want to compare her with a dog	Abusive
6	# 68: <u>cocky low life bitch</u>.	To curse her and show my anger Yes of course I wanted to offend, that low life bitch was a trouble in their wedding	Auxiliary Abusive
7	#86:my, my...kakaka...she forgive Miss Y!!! This <u>stupid fool</u> shud <u>shut the fark</u> *up* and stop talking nonsense.Thousand apologies...she is <u>dumb</u>	To release my emotion no I don't intend to be funny, I wanted to damage her	Abusive Abusive Abusive Shut the fark up= abusive Fark= expletive

	dumber...how she got her degree...which U? -((,		
8	"# 119: she got her cert at Curtin too??,	To laugh and mock the way she talk and think I wanted to make fun of her and the way she was talking	Humorous
9	# 134: I would have walked away also simply because is a waste of time to talk to a brain retarded bitch like X ZJ!	Ironically wanted to criticize her To offend her	Abusive (sarcastic)
10	"# 147: NGO my ass.	To insult NGO I wanted to offend yes	Abusive
11	"# 160: wei your England made me pening la	To laugh at the way she was speaking English Want to be humorous	Humorous
12	"# 164: I'm mandarin education, but I can spell " bitch" in English	To inform her that that she is a bitch and I can spell the word correctly to direct it at her Indirectly yes to offend her	Abusive
13	"# 167: Hey bunch of ass hole.... Go back animal planet	I wanted to condemn them for their stupidity I wanted to condemn them, really angry with the situation	Abusive
14	"# 189: TYPO or wrong copy paste...its KAZAKHSTAN...aint no fucking bieber cunt...ooopsss...JUSTIN BIEBER COUNTRY....Go back animal planet....	I wanted to show my surprise Not to offend anyone, not to be funny, just want to show my surprise	Auxiliary Expletive
15	203: Who is that fat bitch?	I was really astonished with the way she was looking between bride and groom ? Not to be funny, of course if she see what I wrote for her she will get offended	Abusive
16	"# 221: i found a fat ass really disturbing	To show my hatred against her I don't think I was trying to be funny, she was really disturbing and disgusting	Abusive
17	"# 251: thats one big bitch.	Label her with disgusting name to offend and laugh at her stupidity	Abusive
18	# 251: thats one big bitch. Even their mothers din sit between them la...even	To lower her personality and show my hatred Ye to offend her	Abusive

	agong oso din sit between them la		
19	"# 258: There's no way to arrange <u>a fat bitch</u> in between... Bride n Groom should sit together.. Not a *pig* in between.	to show how much I am annoyed seeing the situation No I did not intend to be funny I really wanted to offend her if she see my comment	Abusive Abusive
20	"# 259: <u>A big wall is *blocking*</u> in between them	To laugh at her I was joking at the same time I was mocking her	Humorous
21	"#261: Why is <u>porky</u> sitting next to Mr. Y?	I wanted to say how disgusting she look like and to condemn her Not to be funny, I was angry at her	Abusive
22	"#274: <u>thorn among the roses</u>...sad~	i wanted to show my anger and disgust against her No I don't want to make joke, I was angry at her and wanted to say she is so disturbing between bride and groom	Abusive
23	#281: Is that a <u>hippopotamus</u> or <u>fat roast pig</u>	Showing my anger to her Yes offend her but it may be funny for others	Abusive Abusive
24	#284: That's the <u>roasted p**k</u> meal of the nite...pui~!!	To show my anger against her and disagreement about her action Offend	Abusive
25	"#302: <u>the hell *is*</u> that... that <u>beehive women</u> should be sit under the table...let's other people step on her... LCW..u are mine...why did u mary her... what am i lack...(said *beehive women*) ahahhahhaha......"	To express my disagreement about what happened, and to laugh at her stupidity Yes she will be offended if she hear that I call her as a beehive woman I wanted to insult her and laugh at her	Expletive - Emphatic denial (close to oath) Abusive Abusive
26	307: <u>dafuq.</u> why X <u>cockblock in the middle</u> =.=	To release my anger and surprise With Cockblock I was just kidding but dafug no is just release of my emotion	Expletive Humorous
27	" # 312: Sedapnya, *a whole juicy roast pig*	I wanted to lower her in position	Abusive

		Maybe it is funny for others but for her is not humorous I am lowering her down	
28	"# 316: I think she never get marry before. Maybe Mr.x (high authority) kena paksa kawin with her thats why she dont know anything about sitting position Lol get a hole bitch	To make fun of the her and the situation I want to be funny	Humorous
29	"# 378: Shortest cockblock ? Lol....,	To describe her and mock her to degrade and offend her	Abusive
30	# 504: Fag prostitute.	Those boys were looking funny in those uniforms, I just want to make fun of them Not to offend, funny at the way they look like	Humorous

Continued Table 4.10: Participants' Intention of Using Specific Bad Words

The data presented in the table above disclose the fact that bad language was used prominently when Malaysians were angry with a particular situation, event or an individual; consequently, bad language was used for revealing their anger against that situation or that person. Sarcastic insults used for mocking the addressee were prevalent among the abusive types of bad language use in the data (see chapter 2, section 2.7.1.4 for sarcastic expressions). The following table (Table 4.11) indicates the instances of abusive type of bad language compared to humorous type of bad language use in the data and discloses the fact that the humorous type of bad language was used noticeably at a lower level compared to the abusive type of bad language. Among the 38 instances of bad language use by these 30 participants, 31 instances were used abusively to insult, mock and degrade the addressee whereas only 7 instances were used for the humorous purposes.

Table 4.11: Abusive and Humorous Types of Bad Language

Intention of Bad Word Usages	Number of Instances
Use bad words to offend	31
Use bad words for humorous reasons	7

4.9 Summary of Online Interview

An online interview was conducted with 30 participants whose bad language use needs more deep investigation to find their purposes for using such language and to determine the type of bad language used by them. The results revealed that abusive type of bad language is more prevalent with sarcastic and mocking purposes as well as for degrading and mocking the addressee. The result of the interview is also in line with the findings from the corpus analysis, which revealed that abusive type of bad language is more prominent compared to other types of bad language use and particularly the humorous type.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The present study explored English bad language used by Malaysian netizens in social media network sites i.e Facebook in a triangulated exploratory mix method adopting Thelwall' (2008) model of analysing and dissecting swearing as well as Andersson and Trudgill's (1990) model of swearing types. The mix method design provides researching the questioned areas from different aspects and different levels and allow the researcher to comprehensively examine the objectives of the study: textual investigation of bad language in a corpus of Facebook as well as a questionnaire survey to measure and inspect not only the strength of common bad words but also to find the answer to questions aroused from the analysis of corpus. An online interview, however, was used to support the result of corpus analysis and eliminate the subjectivity of the discourse analysis and add validity to the findings of corpus analysis; moreover, it was used to determine the intention of Malaysian netizens in using specific type of bad language. By employing two or more independent measurement processes which confirm a proposition, the researcher can noticeably reduce the uncertainty and ambiguity of interpretation (Webb et al., 1966, p. 3). Hence, by the triangulation of three approaches namely the corpus analysis, the data of which was taken from Facebook, the questionnaire and online interview, the researcher examined, studied and interpreted the use of bad language among Malaysian netizens

Using both qualitative and quantitative methods, this study has been conducted to shed light on the following research questions.

1. What are the most commonly used bad languages, comprising words and phrases, by Malaysian netizens in Facebook?

2. Describe distinctive characteristics of English bad language used on Facebook by Malaysian netizens that is to find:

a) What are the common themes to which Malaysian netizens make reference?

b) What are the frequent syntactic forms of English bad language among Malaysian netizens?

c) How strong and offensive are English bad language, words and phrases, in Facebook?

d) Do Malaysian netizens use clever language for creating implicit bad language on Facebook? If yes? What are the creative bad language by Malaysian netizens?

3. For what reasons are these words and phrases used by Malaysian netizens on Facebook?

The present chapter provides a brief summary of the method and findings of this research (section 5.2) with regard to the three above mentioned research questions and answer the three research questions subsequently.

5.2 Summary of Findings of the Study

In order to study bad language used by Malaysian netizens, the comments used for 10 different pictures, videos, and statements which were shared by the admin, in "Only in Malaysia" page from February 2013 to August 2013 were analysed in depth. A purposive sampling method was used in collecting the data in the period of seven months since these pictures and videos received higher amount of bad language compared to other pictures,

videos and statements. The substantial number of 549 comments containing bad language was collected which embraced 774 bad words since some of the comments contained more than one bad word. The study started with qualitative analysis of discourse of the corpus obtained from social network sites i.e. Facebook and followed by the quantitative analysis of questionnaire and the online interview.

In order to investigate the most commonly used bad languages, comprising words and phrases, among Malaysian netizens in Facebook and to examine their preference in selecting bad words, the discourse of the corpus obtained from Facebook was analysed. The result revealed that the most commonly used bad words by Malaysian netizens in Facebook was *fuck*, its inflections and derivations such as *motherfucking, fucking, stfu, Dafuq*. Consequently, *fuck*, its inflections and derivations were the first preference of Malaysian netizens when they use English bad language. The second preference of Malaysian netizens among English bad word was the term *stupid*. *Stupid* was found to be the second most commonly practiced and favored bad word among Malaysian netizens. It was used typically for labelling inanimate objects and out-group members for alienating them in order to build solidarity among the members, bad words such as *s2pid, stupida* were in this group. The third frequently used bad word on Facebook by Malaysian netizens was the word *Bitch* which was used on its own as a personal insult or in phrases namely *bitch-slap, bitching*. However, *crap* and *ass/asshole* were the other preferred English bad words among Malaysian netizens whether alone or in phrases such as *what a crap* or *bunch/load of crap*. Malaysian bad-language-use pattern in Facebook can be resolved by studying bad words' occurrence and by considering how frequently bad words occur in this context (see Table 4.1 for the frequency occurrence of each bad word in the data).

Additionally, the study investigated various characteristics associated with English bad language used by Malaysian netizens on Facebook, namely their theme to which they refer, their linguistic types, strength, and specifying the bad words regarded implicit or creative. This dissection model of bad words was offered by Thelwall in 2008. Therefore, Thelwall's (2008) model was used in this study

Bad words may denote and refer to one or a number of taboo themes (Thelwall, 2008). In order to study what are the frequent bad words' referent which Malaysian netizens frequently preferred, the researcher used combination of McEnery (2006) and Anderson (as in Karjaleinin, 2002)'s categorization of bad words for more comprehensive understanding of the themes to which bad words belong. Correspondingly, in the present study, 12 major taboo referents and major themes were recognized

McEnery (2006) and Anderson (as in Karjaleinin, 2002)'s categorization of bad words embrace categories namely intellect based terms of abuse, animal terms, sexual relations, religion, excrement, sexual organs, narcotic and crime, death, homophobic, prostitutions, racist term of abuse. In addition to the aforementioned categories, other categories which include words referring to physical abnormalities like *huge bulb, big bush*, waste and unpleasant theme such as *trash, dustbin, rubbish* and hostility theme like the phrase *get lost!!* were detected by the researcher (see Table 4.2 and 4.3 for the frequency in occurrence of each referent among Malaysian netizens). Considering McEnery (2006) and Anderson (2002)'s categorization, it was disclosed that intellect based terms of abuse with stupidity theme, animal terms of abuse and sexuality theme were the first, second and third commonly and frequently used theme by Malaysian netizens respectively when using English bad words in Facebook. On the other hand, among the categories recognized by the researcher, bad words reckoning on the physical abnormality of the addressee were the most commonly used

bad words by Malaysian netizens. Albeit several bad terms were found in the data which referred to more than one taboo referent, for instance in the expression *what the heck*, the term *heck* is the combination of *hell* and *fuck*; accordingly it refers to both religious and sexuality theme.

Regarding the linguistic type (syntactic form) of bad language which is quite dependent on the morphosyntax in the discourse of Facebook, it was found that bad language was used as personal insults predominantly by Malaysian netizens on Facebook. This linguistic type of bad language was occurred higher in the discourse of Facebook compared to other linguistic types. It can be inferred that by using bad language as personal insult in their comments, Malaysian netizens wanted to reveal their aggression and hostility toward the addressee; however, in some instances they might want to mock the addressee. Secondly, Malaysian netizens used bad words as emphatic adverb/adjective or adverbial booster or premodifying intensifying negative adjective to intensify another bad term or change an innocent noun to an offensive term in a context; however, sometimes bad words were just used to put emphasis on another term. The next recurrent syntactic form of bad language found in the data was idiomatic set phrases or figurative extension of literal meaning. They were also used with noticeable instances in the data by Malaysian netizens (see table 4.4 for the occurrence of other bad words' linguistic type).

Bad words vary in their degree of offence. Bad words' strength and their degree of offense was another aspect of bad language investigated in this study. Based on the findings of previous studies it was revealed that Malaysian netizens commonly favor using very mild and mild bad words. Despite the fact that Malaysians may mostly choose to use from mild and very mild bad words, their perception of offensiveness rating of such expressions may differ; as a result, the questionnaire was used to measure the offensive rating of bad words

by young Malaysians both traditionally without the context as well as in contextualized situation for understanding the strength of bad words in Malaysian context; therefore, a comparative analysis was conducted. The result disclosed the fact that Malaysian perception of English bad words' offensiveness and bad words' strength is unlike the previous studies, in UK and USA on words' offensiveness. For Malaysian netizens, the English bad words were considered more offensive and stronger compared to participants in UK and USA. Table 5.1 clearly illustrates the rating of some common bad words.

Table 5.1: The Comparative Analysis of Bad Words' Offensiveness

Bad words	Malaysian		McEnry's (2006) Thelwall's (2008)
	Non-contextualized	Contextualized	
Fuck	Very Strong	Very Strong	Strong
Fucking		Very Strong	Strong
Motherfucking	Very Strong	Very Strong	Very strong
Bitch	Very Strong	Very strong	Mild
Cunt	Very strong	Very Strong	Very Strong
Dick	Very Strong		Moderate
Crap		Strong	Very mild
Dumb		Very Strong	
Ass	Strong		Mild
Asshole	Very Strong	Very Strong	Moderate
Bastard	Very Strong		Moderate
Damn	Very Mild	Moderate/strong	Very mild
Shit	Very Mild	Very mild	Mild
Hell	Very Mild	Very Mild/ Strong	Very mild
Fart		Moderate	Mild
Douchebag		Strong	
Dick head		Very Strong	Moderate
Bullshit		Very Mild / Strong	Very mild
Oh my God		Very Mild	Very mild
Bloody		Moderate	Very mild
Fag		Very Strong	
Prostitute		Very Strong	
Gay		Strong	Moderate
Whore		Very Strong	Moderate moderate
Cockblock		Strong	
DAfug		Strong	
Pig		Moderate	Very mild

The analysis of the questionnaire revealed that Malaysian netizens were highly influenced by the context when interpreting the strength and offensiveness of a bad word. The variations and discrepancies between rating of non-contextualized and contextualized bad words suggest that the questionnaire participants based their evaluation of bad words' strength on how the words are practiced. Participants' perceived offensiveness of some of the bad words differ completely in non-contextualized situation from contextualized one.

The data also indicated the presence of implicit bad words among Malaysian netizens. According to Thelwall (2008), swearing is regarded implicit when it is inspired by the use of clever language such as moving the letters inside a bad term, using homophones, substitution of bad terms by quite innocent terms. From the evidence of implicit bad language in the data, can be inferred that Malaysian netizens create new and implicit bad language for variety of intentions, such as reducing the strength of bad words or showing their creativity.

Regarding the third research question of this study which enquired about the different types of bad language which were used more by Malaysian netizens and for revealing their emotions on Facebook, there were both textual investigation accompanied by interview. The details of analyses were presented in table 4.10. It can be inferred that participants' emotional situation and how they feel were the supreme influential reasons influencing participants in using bad language. Hence, when Malaysian netizens were angry, they used bad language at higher rate compared to other situations. Using bad language for the purpose of joking and teasing were the next triggering factors. The analysis of discourse detected that abusive swearing which encompasses sarcastic insults and unfriendly suggestions and with the intention of mocking and degrading the addressee was used at the higher rate compared to other types of bad language (Table 4.6 for the illustration of different types of bad language). Expletive type of bad language ranked as the second frequent type of bad language among

Malaysian netizens which was inferred to be used in exclamations of surprise, pain, or irritation. In this regard, it can be considered as one of the most typical exponent of bad language and swearing (Ljung, 2011).

The incidence of auxiliary type of bad language which represents lazy type of swearing may prove that using bad language and swearing is becoming a way of speaking among Malaysian netizens, However, this type of swearing is still at a lower degree compared to abusive and expletive types of swearing. Humorous type of bad language was used considerably at lower degree compared to other types of bad language use among Malaysian netizens in Facebook.

5.3 Pedagogical Implications

The finding of the present study may have pedagogical implications for EFL/ ESL instructors because of the focus on different categories, characteristics and types of bad language as well as linguistic manifestation involved in using bad language. In addition, it will help the language curricular designers to consider the other aspect of language that is 'bad' English terms in designing curricular for language learners.

5.4 Suggestion for Further Studies

This research presented some of the characteristics of English bad language in social media networks. However, more research could still be conducted on the bad language among non-native speakers of English who opt to use English bad language in daily conversation or in social media networks.

In addition, comparative research could be done between bad language in Malaysian daily conversation and the bad language in social media networks such as Myspace and Facebook.

For interested researchers, it may be attractive to study the semantic references which is underling these offensive name-callings used by Malaysian netizens in Facebook. Since it

will provide more information on the perception of the Malaysian netizens about the others and the disfavored out- group members.

5.5 Summary

This Chapter has discussed the findings of the present study relying on the three research questions outlined for the study. It has also put forth the pedagogical implication of the study and the few suggestions for prospective forthcoming research. It is hoped that the findings and result of this study and those of future research on Malaysian use of bad language on the corpus of Facebook would greatly contribute to first understanding the status of English bad language among Malaysian netizens and secondly to reveal how they use bad language in net speak.

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SUPPLEMENARY

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Tayyebian , N. and Khemlani David, M. (2013). "Use of Bad language by multilingual Malaysian users of English". Paper presented at the 17th English in Southeast Asia Conference (ESEA 2013), Kuala Lumpur, University of Malaya, December 5-7.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Sample Bad Language Used in the Corpus of Facebook by Malaysian Netizens

go home utusan. ur drunk. hahahah
at 8:10am · Like

go home. u drunk
am · Like

Gay paper
at 8:10am · Like

that dude must b havin bieber fever while writing this ~
at 8:10am · Like · 1

Stupid.. haha
13 at 8:11am · Like

WT..?? Haiya.... Y always her???
12 at 8:08am · Like · 2

semak
12 at 8:08am · Like

WhatTheAhAh
11, 2012 at 8:08am · Like

only in Bolehland
November 11, 2012 at 8:09am · Like · 2

noobshit..
11, 2012 at 11:49am · Like

stupid dumbo.. let the husband and wife sit together la!
1, 2012 at 11:56am · Like · 2

tyg muka tuuuuu
11:56am · Like

Protocol my ass.. I can see that someone is at a place
where she shouldn't be, she should be in the kitchen, not ruining
someone's wedding..
at 11:56am · Like · 2

Dustbin in the middle..yakk!

1, 2012 at 12:06pm · Like · 👍 5

bhahaha LoL...

1, 2012 at 12:10pm · Like

atas pagar!!!

, 2012 at 12:22pm · Like

spoill..

er 11, 2012 at 12:30pm · Like · 👍 1

What the heck fatty gaga doing there

2012 at 12:37pm · Like · 👍 7

Wedding version of "Cockblocking".

2, 2012 at 2:29pm · Like · 👍 1

Brady fxxker utusan, mabuk todi ka?

7, 2013 at 8:14am · Like

apakejadahnye ini??

3 at 8:14am · Like

editor x bt keje

· Like · 👍 2

Salah editor kn....hahaha..

· Like · 👍 1

this writer sure high as fck.. kena ganja while writing

2013 at 8:16am · Like

god bless the editor

16am · Like

Hahaha.. drunken writer n editor

3:16am · Like

Left panel:

Like · Comment · Share   192

11 people like this.

diam la
hour ago · Like

Go home sharifah... U r drunk! hihi..
4

first. LULULLULU
our ago · Like

oi muka tak malu!!!!!!!!!!!11
e · 2

do you think this is a motherf**king game Sharifah
en?
about an hour ago · Like · 1

serupa tahik. hahaha
1

www.facebook.com/... d Faisal Ismail tok hulung dia... melaut ke tempat

Right panel:

Like · Comment · Share   42

109 people like this.

View previous comments   152 of 198

g Booooooo..........
ago via mobile · Like

i think it's a bunch of crap!!!
ur ago · Like

Putar-belit...Thats her Forte...Shame on U
about an hour ago via mobile · Like · 1

sapa yg salah... kenapa dia kena maafkan
sedangkan dia yang salah
about an hour ago · Like · 11

too much listen
our ago via mobile · Like · 1

this is wat v called malaysian, u drive & hit a tree,
they blamed who plant a tree there, robberies, they blamed
the victims y bring so much cash, raped case, they blamed the
victims y wear so sexy. boringgggg
about an hour ago · Like · 22

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Appendix B

Questionnaire

I am doing research on how young Malaysians relate their emotions to the bad language in English on Facebook. I would appreciate if you could spend some time to answer this questionnaire. Your responses to these questions are **Anonymous and will be kept Strictly Confidential.** Therefore**,** kindly answer these questions as accurately as possible and without any prejudice.

Part1.

1. What is your race?

□Malay

□Chinese

□Indian

□Others

2. What is your competence in the English Language?

□Very good   □ Good   □ Average   □ Poor   □Very poor

3. Do you have a Facebook account?

□Yes   □No

4. How do you appear on FB pages?

□Anonymous (Fake name)   □Real name

5. Which language do you use in Facebook?

□My first Language   □ English   □Both

6. Do you use swearing (use bad language) in English? (Words like: Sh!t, moron, Stupid , F*ck (Fck) , A**h***,bloody,pig, etc)

a) Yes, often   b) Yes, sometimes   c) Rarely   d) No, never

7. If you choose a, b, and C, where do you learn these words from? (You can choose **More Than One Answers**)

□School   □Newspapers □ Friends   □Instructors   □Movies

8. Do you use bad language when you comment on pictures and videos shared by different pages and others?

a) Yes, often   b) Yes, sometimes   c) Rarely   d) No, never

9. In your personal profile, Do you use bad language words?

a) Yes, often   b) Yes, sometimes   c) Rarely   d) No, never

10. How often do you use bad language words in the English Language on Facebook?

 a) Often   b) Sometimes   c) Rarely   d) No, never

11. In what emotional state are you most likely to use swear words? (You can choose **More Than One Answers**)

□When I am happy   □When I am stressed   □When I am relaxed   □When I am teasing

□When I am angry   □ when I am joking   □Others

12. Which of the following is most likely to affect whether or not you will use bad words? (You can choose **More Than One Answers**)

□Where I am   □How I feel

□Whom I am talking to (commenting on)   □What I am talking (commenting) about

13. Do you use signs (e.g. *,#, !, $) in Facebook when you use bad language words?

□Yes   □No

14. If **Yes to Q.13** identify your reason, Please choose from the following choices (you can choose **More Than One Answers**)

□ It is Fun   □It is less offensive   □it looks more creative   □It is easier and faster

Other reasons please write here
……………………………………………………………………

Part 2.

15. Do you prefer to use bad language in **English Language** or in your **First Language**?

□English   □ First Language

16. If your answer is your **native language** (first Language) please choose your reason(s) for using your native language:

□It reliefs my Tension

□It is More Natural

□I feels much better

□Others
………………………………………………………………………………………………

17. If your answer to Q15 is English Language please choose your reason(s) for using English language from the following choices, (You can choose **More Than One Answers**)

□Swearing in English gives me a certain sense of satisfaction

□I love how the words sound in English

□I don't feel as bad saying them in English as in my mother tongue

□I like the swear words in English

□It is so much fun n using English language to curse

□English sounds musical to me

□I feel less offensive opinion

□It gives me a secret pleasure (1. No one understands, 2. The way it sounds)

□I enjoy getting mad in English because the language is such that you can say so many things that I cannot say in my First Language.

Part3.

18. The following is a list of words that we may or may not use them on Facebook. Please identify how often you use the following words. Indicate by **Tick**

Word	Often	sometimes	Rarely (Seldom)	Never
Fucking				
Bloody				
Fuck				
Pissed				
bastards				
Wanker				
Cunt				
Whore				
Gay				
Dick				
Hell				
Shit				
Asshole				
Fucked				
Faggot				
Fab				
Piss				
Idiot				
Shit				
Crap				
Stupid				
Arrogant				
Noob				
Dafug				
Damn				

Cockblock				
Bollock				
Moron				

19. Do you use any animal terms in describing (referring to) the people whom you are mad at or angry with as well as to show your hatred in Facebook?

Example: She is a **dog barking** for no reason

a) Yes, often   b) Yes, sometimes   c) Rarely   d) No, never

20. If your answer is **a, b, and c to Q18** please identify how often you use of the following words, indicate by **Tick**

Word	Often	Sometimes	Rarely (Seldom)	Never
Bird				
Dog				
Pig				
Gorilla				
Donkey				
Monkey				
Hippo				

21. The followings are some of the phrases we use to express our emotions in Facebook, please identify how often you use them. Indicate by (**Tick**)

Phrases	Often	Sometimes	Rarely (Seldom)	Never
What the fuck (WTF)				
What the Fish				
What the Heck (WTH)				

22. When do you use bad language more often than usual?

……
………

23. What are your favorite bad language words-swear words and curse words in English?

……
……
………………

24. Have you created any bad words that you use when you are **Angry,** please state**?**

………
………

25. Have you created any bad words that you use when you are **Surprised,** please state?

………
………

26. Have you created any bad words that you use when you are **Happy,** please state?

………
………

27. Have you created any words that you use when you are **Teasing,** please state?

………
………

28. Have you created any words that you use when you are **Joking,** please state?

………
………

Thank you for completing this questionnaire! Your participation and cooperation are greatly appreciated.

Appendix C

Questions of Online Interview

<u>Questions Asked from 30 Participants in Online Interview</u>

Hello, I am doing research on how young Malaysians relate their emotions to swearing and bad language in English on Facebook, I would really appreciate if you help me by answering a few questions. Your name and your responses to my questions are **Anonymous and will be kept Strictly Confidential.**

<u>1st participant:</u>

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you wrote comment like "# 28: priceless speech..its only a joke...biggest clown than any comedian out there...everywhere i go,i heard people making a joke to each other with this stuff "listen, 'listen, listen'...well this is malaysian got talent!!!" how were you feeling? (angry, happy, excited, shocked, etc.)

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

<u>2nd participant:</u>

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you wrote comment like "#50: U look like a talking dick head!.", how were you feeling? (angry, happy, excited, shocked, etc.)

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

<u>3rd participant:</u>

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you wrote the comment like "#302: the hell is that...
that beehive women should be sit
under the table...let's other people step on her...
LCW..u are mine...why did u mary her...

what am i lack...(said beehive women)
ahahhahhaha......", how were you feeling? (angry, happy, excited, shocked, etc.)

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

4th participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3.When you wrote comment like " # 312: Sedapnya, a whole juicy roast pig, how were you feeling? (angry, happy, excited, shocked, etc.) . angry and feel disgusting

4. What is your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

5th participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3.When you wrote comment like " # 307: dafuq. why X cockblock in the middle =.= , how were you feeling? (angry, happy, excited, shocked, etc.)

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

6th participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion? Yes often

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you wrote comment like " #284: That's the roasted p**k meal of the nite...pui~!!, How were you feeling? (angry, happy, excited, shocked, etc.)

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

7th participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you wrote comment like " #281: Is that a hippopotamus or fat roast pig?, how were you feeling? (angry, happy, excited, shocked, etc.)

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

8th participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you wrote comment like "# 259: A big wall is blocking in between them, how were you feeling? (angry, happy, excited, shocked, etc.) shocked and angry at her action

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

9th participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you wrote comment like "# 251: thats one big bitch. How were you feeling? (angry, happy, excited, shocked, etc.)

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

10th participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you write comment like "#261: Why is porky sitting next to Mr. Y? How were you feeling?

5. What was your purpose or intention?

6. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

11th participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc? (angry, happy, excited, shocked, etc.)

3. When you write comment like "# 45: Born this way - Lady gaga (Syaitan), how were you feeling?

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

12th participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you wrote comment like "#274: thorn among the roses...sad~, how were you feeling?

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

13th participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you wrote comment like "# 54: well, once a bitch, always a bitch...beware she is a rich bitch!!! (angry, happy, excited, shocked, etc.)

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

14ᵗʰ participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you write comment like " # 64: Adui i hear bitch (Ms.X) barking why u forgive? go complain like u always do la need u forgive oni guai lan la, how were you feeling? (angry, happy, excited, shocked, etc.)

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

15ᵗʰ participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3.When you write comment like " # 86: my, my...kakaka...she forgive Miss Y!!! This stupid fool shud shut the fark up and stop talking nonsense. Thousand apologies...she is dumb dumber...how she got her degree...which U? -((, how were you feeling? (angry, happy, excited, shocked, etc.)

4.What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

16ᵗʰ participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you write comment like "# 68: cocky low life bitch. …., how were you feeling? (angry, happy, excited, shocked, etc.)

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

17ᵗʰ participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you wrote comment like "# 119: she got her cert at Curtin too??, how were you feeling?

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

18ᵗʰ participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you wrote comment like " # 134: I would have walked away also simply because is a waste of time to talk to a brain retarded bitch like X ZJ!,how were you feeling?

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

19ᵗʰ participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you write comment like "# 147: NGO my ass. how were you feeling?

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

20ᵗʰ participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you write comment like "# 160: wei your England made me pening la.., how were you feeling?

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

21ˢᵗ participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you write comment like "# 164: I'm mandarin education, but I can spell " bitch" in English. How were you feeling?

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

22ⁿᵈ participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you wrote comment like "# 167: Hey bunch of ass hole.... Go back animal planet.... How were you feeling?

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

23ʳᵈ participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3.When you wrote comment like "# 189: TYPO or wrong copy paste...its KAZAKHSTAN...aint no fucking bieber cunt...ooopsss...JUSTIN BIEBER COUNTRY....Go back animal planet...., how were you feeling?

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

Context: a wedding picture of people's hero in the sport field. In which a woman belonging to high authority is sitting between the bride and groom in their wedding day

24ᵗʰ participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion? 2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you write comment like "#203: Who is that fat bitch?, how were you feeling?

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

25th participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc

3. When you wrote comment like "# 221: i found a fat ass really disturbing. How were you feeling? 4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

26th participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

4. When you wrote comment like # 251: thats one big bitch. Even their mothers din sit between them la...even agong oso din sit between them la.How were you feeling?

5. What was your purpose or intention? To lower her personality and show my hatred

6. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous? Ye to offend her

27th participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion? Yes most of the time

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you wrote comment like "# 258: There's no way to arrange a fat bitch in between... Bride n Groom should sit together.. Not a pig in between.., how were you feeling?

4. What is your purpose or intention?

5. Do you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

28th participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you wrote comment like "# 316: I think she never get marry before. Maybe Mr.x (high authority) kena paksa kawin with her thats why she dont know anything about sitting position Lol get a hole bitch....., how were you feeling?

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

Context: Boy at school wearing Malaysian girls' school uniform that is blue skirt as everybody can see their hairy les in the picture, posing imitating girls poses

29th participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you wrote comment like "# 504: Fag prostitute. How were you feeling?

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

30th participant:

1. Does swearing indicate your emotion?

2. What type of emotion do you express by using swear words like Holly Cow, Fck, bitch, burn, etc?

3. When you wrote comment like "# 378: Shortest cockblock ? Lol...., how were you feeling?

4. What was your purpose or intention?

5. Did you intend to offend the person or you just want to be funny and humorous?

Appendix D

Sample picture for which Malaysian Netizens Used Bad Language

1. Admin Status: This made my day ! :D

Local tabloid marks Justin Bieber as a country

A tabloid pullout called Mega from the local Malay newspaper Utuxxn even quoted Justin

Bieber as the ninth biggest country in the world.

Example # 1. Date: 7th January, 2013

2. Admin status: The tragedy happened at 11am,when a girl jumped from the 6th floor Berjaya Times Square on Valentine's Day

Appreciate Your Life ,

Location : KL Berjaya Times Square

Time : 11am 14/02/2013

regarding from OIM's fans , Girl commits suicide after fight with boyfriend 11am just now at Times Square, jumped from 6 floor

Example #2. Date: 14th February, 2013

Appendix E

Complete List of Bad Words and Their Scale of Offence

Swear words	Strength**
Cunt*, jew, **motherfuckin*, motherfucking*, muthafucker*, muthafuckin*, mutherfucker*,** nigga, niggah, niggas, niggaz, nigger, nigguh, paki	Very strong
Fuck*, fucked*, fucken*, fucker*, fuckin*, fucking*, fuckstick*, spastic	Strong
Arsehole, asshole, bastard, bollock, cock, dick, gay, **piss*, pissin*, pissing*,** poof, poofter, poofy, prick, pussy, queer, shag, **shagged, shagging, twat, wank, wanker, wanking,** whore	Moderate
Arse, arsed, ass, bitch, bugger, butthole, christ, cow, dickhead, dipshit, fanny, fart, jesus, moron, pissed*, retard, screw, screwed, screwing, shit*, shite*, shithead*, shittin*, shitty*, slag, slagged, slut, tit*, titties*, tosser	Mild
Bap, bimbo, bird, bloody, bonk, bonking, boob, bullshit*, butt, butthead, crap, damn, dork, dorky, git, god, hell, hussy, idiot, jerk, jug, knocker, pig, pillock, pimp, sod, tart, tarty, turd, wuss	Very mild

Adopted from McEnery (2006) and Thelwall (2008)