

Taboos Spoken by the Characters in a *SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run* Playing in Movies in 2020

Taruna Bachtera Putra Bachtiar (1), Liliek Soepriatmadji, (2)

Faculty of Law and Language,
Stikubank University

teratiar@gmail.com (1), fbiblab@gmail.com (2)

Abstract

This study aimed to investigate if there are types and function of taboo words in a *SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run* movie. It was taken from the dialogues in the movie that shows taboo. This study used descriptive qualitative method. The researcher analyze data using two theories, they are Battistella and Wardhaugh theories. The study answered two questions related to statement of the problems. First is what type of taboos are produced and the second is what are the functions that those taboo words by the characters in whole dialogue. The results indicated that: 1) three types appears: epithet, profanity, and vulgarity. Epithet becomes the most type used in the movie because it is used as slurs to the listeners. Besides, vulgarity becomes the least type of it. 2) Several functions appears too. First is to get attention, second is insult to other, and least is provoke. Insulting becomes the most dominant function used because they like to disdain or offend other characters pride. Meanwhile, taboo words used to provoke appears as the least function in the movie. The result of this research can be used as a warning for ourselves (especially Indonesian parents) if taboos can appears in serial cartoon movie.

Keywords: *Taboo words, types, function, SpongeBob Movie.*

INTRODUCTION

Language has an important role in human activity. It cannot be separated from our daily life. Without language, people will not be able to lead their life well. Language also plays an important role to give people an understanding of how to create good communication with one another. According to Lincoln (1992), It is further argued that ‘language is important in every aspect of our lives because it allows people to communicate in a manner that enables the sharing of common ideas’. It has many functions to do with, for instance, to make conversation. It means for humans to communicate with one another and for the sake of their social daily life. Furthermore, people have to develop the abilities to listen, speak, write and read well, to know and receive information.

People who live in Indonesia, mainly in Java, there are many of them tend to regard or respect certain of the value of what we call politeness. Javanese people in short tend to avoid taboo words in their daily speech. Taboo words can also appear in the song, drama, or movie. A movie such as *The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run* is one of them. Furthermore, in this movie, the researcher finds several taboo words which are spoken by the characters. Although

The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run is a cartoon movie from America which the stunts of cartoon movies are appropriate with taboo words.

Based on the explanation above, the problem statements in this study are:

1. What type of taboos are produced in conversation among the characters of the cartoon movie *The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run*?
2. What are the functions of taboo words spoken by the characters in *The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run* movie?

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

The researcher used theory by Battistella (2005) and Wardhaugh (2006). The first theory from Battistella. He concluded the types of taboo words. There are Epithet, Profanity, Vulgarity, and Obscenity. The second theory is from Wardhaugh. He defines that taboo words have functions to draw attention, to show contempt, to be provocative, and to mock authority.

METHODOLOGY

This research employed a descriptive qualitative method to describe the phenomena of taboo words used in the movie. The researcher collected the data with re-watch the movie and verification the transcript. The last step was classifying and transferring the selected dialogues containing taboo words into the data sheet.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Frequency of Occurrences of Types and Function of Taboo Words in *The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run* movie.

No	Types of Taboo Words	Function of Taboo Words				Total	Percentage (%)
		To Draw Attention	To Show Contempt	To be Provocative	To Mock Authority		
1	Epithet	1	9	4	0	14	58.3%
2	Profanity	7	2	0	0	9	37.5%
3	Vulgarity	1	0	0	0	1	4.2%
4	Obscenity	0	0	0	0	0	0%
	Total	9	11	4	0	24	100%
	Percentage (%)	37.5%	45.8%	16.7%	0%	100%	

1. Types of Taboo Words

a. Epithet

Epithet becomes the most taboo word dominantly used by the characters in *The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run* movie. It is taboo word connected to gender, ethnicity, sexuality, race, one's appearance and disabilities. It appears 8 times in the whole of movie. They utter the taboo words such as *stupid, dumb, silly, loser, and crazy*. The characters in *The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run* movie mostly use this taboo words as slurs, insults to attack the listeners by one's appearance and one's disability.

b. Profanity

In *The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run* movie, the characters also utter this taboo word known as religious speech used when they are upset or shocked with the situation. It stands in the second position that appears 3 times in the movie. They utter words such as *hell, heck* and *nonsense*.

c. Vulgarity

In *The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run* movie, vulgarity stands in the third position used by the characters. It appears just once in the movie. There is one character in the movie tends to use vulgarity by mentioning excretory organ for instance *butt*.

2. Types of Taboo Words

a. To Show Contempt

Plankton : oh, fishstick. What could that *boob* have to do with it? Heh,

Karen : *Boob* savant, you mean. SpongeBob is the one who keeps foiling your plans.

The word *boob* refers to “*fool, stupid, chump*”. It is a taboo word because it is impolite when someone conveyed it to someone, even more with the goal of insulting something or someone. The conversation above shows that Plankton utters it to show his contempt toward SpongeBob personality. This taboo words indicate how Plankton shows his disrespect toward SpongeBob's pride because he thinks that SpongeBob will not obstruct his plan to steal the Krabby Patty Secret Formula.

SpongeBob : wait what?! You're gonna replace me with a robot?
Don't do it!

Sandy : No, *Silly*, that's gonna happen anyway. This is something much more innovative and start-uppy.

The word *silly* also refers to “*stupid or foolish*”. It is a taboo word because it is also impolite when someone conveyed it to interlocutor. The conversation above shows that Sandy utters

it to mock SpongeBob as he suddenly panic. This taboo words indicate how Sandy shows her disrespect toward SpongeBob's pride because she thinks SpongeBob not smarter than herself.

b. To Draw Attention

Patrick : Good morning, SpongeBob!

SpongeBob : Good morning, Patrick!

Squidward : Would you two *knuckleheads* keep it out here?!

In the example above, the word *knucklehead* refers to "a *stupid* person". It can be considered as a taboo word. Squidward uttered this taboo word to get the listeners attention to not shout soon.

Otto : You're fired!

Plankton : What the *heck* is that thing?

Karen : I don't know, but I'm taking it home, it's so cute.

In the example above, the word *heck* refers to a combination of the words *hell and fuck*. It can be considered as taboo words uttered by Plankton and has a function to get Karen attention to tell and explain what the thing that Plankton saw.

c. To Be Provocative

Patrick : I say buddy movie and you say, oh, whatever that
dumb thing you said .

SpongeBob : Good Oh, really? *Dumb* thing, I'm *dumb*? Oh, I love
your sense of irony, Patrick.

In the example above, the word *dumb* refers to "*stupid, foolish, and silly*". It can be considered as taboo words which uttered by both speakers. They uttered it to provoke one another. First, Patrick wants to make SpongeBob angry, and so does the opposite.

SpongeBob : You... You gambled away my challenge coin? You
wrecked our entire mission with one *stupid* bet?!

Patrick : Well, only if you kept saying...

In the example above, the word *stupid* refers to "*foolish*". It is a taboo word uttered by SpongeBob. The aim of SpongeBob as the speaker is to make Patrick as the listener angry with what he said and this taboo word completely impolite as a part of his dialogue.

Table 4. Frequency of The Characters who utter the Taboo Words in *The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run* movie.

No	List of the characters	Types of Taboo Words				Total	Percentage (%)
		epithet	profanity	vulgarity	obscenity		
1	Plankton	4	2	0	0	6	22.22%
2	King Poseidon	2	2	1	0	5	18.52%
3	Patrick	4	0	0	0	4	14.81%
4	SpongeBob	3	0	0	0	3	11.11%
5	Squidward	1	1	0	0	2	7.41%
6	Mr. Krabs	1	0	0	0	1	3.7%
7	Sandy	1	0	0	0	1	3.7%
8	Tiffany	0	1	0	0	1	3.7%
9	Sage	1	0	0	0	1	3.7%
10	El Diablo	1	0	0	0	1	3.7%
11	Karen	1	0	0	0	1	3.7%
12	Hotel Employee	1	0	0	0	1	3.7%
	Total					27	100%

From the table above, it notified that Plankton is the character who often utter taboo words in *The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run* movie which 6 times (22.22%). He utters two types of taboo words, first is epithet and profanity as the second one. For epithet, Plankton said “stupid”, “boob” and “loser”. For profanity, he said “nonsense” and “heck”. This character utter taboo words mostly to express his anger. It relates to Plankton characteristics that known as egotistical, aggressive and power-hungry in the movie.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis there are ten types of taboo words found in the film such as Epithets, Profanity, and Vulgarity. The dominant type used in *The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run* movie is Epithets. Regarding to the function of the taboo words three functions were found, namely to show contempt, to draw attention, and to provoke. The dominant function used in *The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run* movie is to show contempt.

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