

STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF PROFANITY-BASED
INTENSIFIERS IN INFORMAL ENGLISH MEDIA

RESEARCH PAPER

The research paper is submitted to fulfil the requirements for obtaining a
Bachelor's Degree (S1) in Education in the English Education Study
Program



By:

RIZA MOCHAMAD SYAHRIZAL

41032122221004

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
THE FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
NUSANTARA ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY
BANDUNG

2026

STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

Name: Riza Mochamad Syahrizal

Study Program: English Education Department

Faculty: FKIP

University: Universitas Islam Nusantara

Hereby, I declare truthfully that the paper entitled “Students’ Understanding of Profanity-Based Intensifiers in Informal Media” is my original work. This thesis is prepared using Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) applicable to the English Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Nusantara Islamic University Bandung. The entire research process, data collection, analysis and writing is carried out independently and responsibly, without committing plagiarism or other violations of academic ethics.

I also realize that as an author, I take full responsibility for the authenticity and integrity of this scientific work. If, in the future, there is a violation of scientific ethic, such as plagiarism, falsification of data, or inconsistency with the established procedures, I am willing to accept academic and legal consequences by applicable regulations. Thus, I make this statement with full awareness and responsibility to be able to use it as it should.

Bandung
The Researcher,

Riza Mochamad S

LEGALIZATION SHEET
STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF PROFANITY-BASED
INTENSIFIERS IN INFORMAL MEDIA

By:

Riza Mochamad Syahrizal

41032122221004

Approved and Ratified by:

Advisor,

Supervisor,

Paulina Novarita M. Hum

NIDN: 0415118606

Siti Sopiah, M. P.d

NIDN: 0428058301

Legalized By:

Dean of FKIP Uninus

Head of English Education

Riki Ruswandi, M. Hum

NIDN: 042807902

Dr. Leny Saili Rahmah, S. Pd. M. Hum

NIDN: 0415018605

MOTTO

You cannot understand, nor do you want to.

You can't go home.

There is no difference between what is
right and what is necessary

Do you feel like a hero yet?

Can you even remember why you
came here?

If you were a better person,
you wouldn't be here.

PRESENTATION

This thesis represents a significant milestone in my academic journey rather than merely fulfilling one of the requirements for completing my undergraduate studies. The process of conducting this research has provided valuable opportunities to learn, overcome challenges, and develop both academically and personally. Completed in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia, this work is dedicated with sincere gratitude to my parents, my sister, my friends, and everyone whose encouragement, patience, and support have been an essential part of this journey.

Working on this research has taught me that meaningful achievements are not determined by how quickly they are accomplished, but by the commitment, perseverance, and lessons gained throughout the process. Every challenge, obstacle, and moment of uncertainty became an opportunity to strengthen my determination, broaden my perspective, and improve my understanding of both research and personal responsibility.

This thesis reflects not only the knowledge I have gained during my studies but also the dedication and persistence required to complete a long academic process. I hope that this work will make a meaningful contribution to the field of English language education, particularly in studies related to Understanding Linguistic Intensifiers, while also serving as a source of reference and inspiration for future researchers who wish to explore similar topics. Above all, I hope this thesis demonstrates the value of continuous learning, hard work, and resilience in pursuing academic goals.

ABSTRACT

This study investigates students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers in informal English media. Profanity intensifiers such as “damn,” “bloody,” and “fucking” frequently appear in movies, video games, social media, and other informal English communication. These expressions often function as intensifiers to strengthen emotional emphasis rather than as literal offensive language. The study aims to identify students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers, determine the most familiar intensifiers among students, and analyze how students interpret their functions in English expressions. This research uses a quantitative descriptive method. The participants of the study are undergraduate students from the English Education Department. The data are collected through questionnaires distributed using Google Forms.

The findings of this study are expected to show that students who are frequently exposed to informal English media have better understanding of profanity-based intensifiers. The study also expects that students recognize profanity intensifiers mainly as emotional emphasis markers in informal communication contexts. The results of the study are expected to contribute to sociolinguistics, pragmatics, and English language learning, especially regarding students' comprehension of authentic informal English expressions commonly found in modern media.

Keywords: profanity, intensifiers, informal English, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, media language, English learners

PREFACE

It is imperative to express profound gratitude and acknowledge the benevolence of Allah SWT, whose blessings, mercy, and guidance have facilitated the completion of this research study, entitled "The Stfi's Student's Difficulty WithThe Toefl Listening Test." The present study is submitted as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in English Education.

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Bandung, July 2026

Author

Riza Mochamad Syahrizal

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This Chapter Present an introduction of the research it also contains background of study, problem statement, the objective of the study, research question and hypothesis, and benefits of the research

A. Background of the Study

Language functions as a tool for communication, emotional expression, and social interaction. In daily communication, speakers often use informal language to express feelings, attitudes, or emphasis. One common feature of informal English is the use of profanity-based intensifiers. These expressions appear frequently in movies, video games, social media, and online discussions.

These strong words are used to make another word stronger like an adjective. According to Quirk et al. (1985), intensifiers increase the degree or intensity of an expression. In informal English communication, profanity words such as “damn,” “bloody,” and “fucking” often function as intensifiers instead of literal swear words. For example, in the sentence “That game is fucking difficult,” the word “fucking” intensifies the adjective “difficult.”

We see these words a lot in casual English media. When we learn English outside of the classroom like when we watch movies play video games or use media, we are exposed to casual language and slang. This is called learning. We can also learn language when we are doing something fun online like watching a video or chatting with friends. We might see expressions like "difficult" or "fucking amazing" when we are watching a movie playing a game or reading comments online. Wu et al. (2024) found that online spaces increasingly expose EFL learners to English swearing, while Harmaini (2026) reported that Indonesian Generation Z learners encounter English through platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok. Xavier (2024) also showed that audiovisual media use taboo language for characterization and social meaning. Therefore, students need to understand

profanity-based intensifiers in context rather than interpret every occurrence as a direct insult. This means that students see words not just as something offensive but also as a natural part of communication. Jay (2009) said that strong words can have social and practical functions depending on how they are used.

Students often see words in English media. Some students do not understand what these words mean or how they are used. We do not often talk about English expressions in the classroom. Students have levels of understanding when it comes to profanity.

For students who are learning to be English teachers it is important to understand expressions because real-life communication is often different from the English we learn in textbooks. Students who watch movies or use social media a lot may understand strong words in different ways depending on their background, culture and language skills. Some students may understand these words as emphasis markers while others may think they are insults or aggressive language. Previous studies have examined taboo language, swearing, and profanity in different contexts. Love (2021) looked at how people use profanity in casual conversations in the UK. Khusna et al. (2022) studied how young Indonesian think about swearing. Daulay et al. (2024) looked at the types and functions of language in a movie script of *Uncut Gems*.

Xavier (2024) how profanity is used in movies to show what characters are like and to tell stories. Wu et al. (2024) studied how people who learn English as a language think about and experience strong English words. These studies show that strong words have functions, including linguistic, social and media-related functions. However, they do not specifically look at how Indonesian students who are learning to be English teachers understand words in casual English media. This study tries to fill this gap by looking at how students understand expressions like "difficult" "bloody stupid" and "fucking amazing".

This research wants to find out how students understand words, in casual English media. The study looks at how students interpret the meanings and functions of words through a quantitative analysis using Google Forms.

B. Limitation of the Problem

This study is about English Education students. How they understand profanities that are used to make things sound stronger in informal English media like video games, movies, social media and other things they find online. It looks at how these profanities are used to make something mean more rather than when people use them to insult someone or express strong feelings.

The participants of this study are undergraduate students enrolled in English Education programs and other programs from several universities in Indonesia. The study is limited to investigating three aspects: how much these students have seen profanity used in informal English media, how well they know some specific profanity that were chosen for the study, and what they think these words mean when they are used in a sentence. The study does not look at things about profanity, such as what people think about them how they are used when people talk or how they make people feel because that is not what this study is about.

C. Research Questions

The study addresses the following questions:

1. How frequently are English Education students exposed to profanity-based intensifiers through informal English media?
2. How often do English Education students use English-based profanity in daily communication?
3. How do students interpret the functions of profanity-based intensifiers in English expressions?

D. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. To identify students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers in informal English media.
2. To determine the most familiar profanity intensifiers among students.
3. To analyze students' interpretation of profanity intensifier functions.

E. Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to provide benefits for:

1. Students:

The study on English expressions helps students learn about the English that people use every day in real life.

2. Lecturers:

The study gives teachers some ideas about how students understand informal English expressions when they are learning English.

3. Researchers:

The study on English expressions will be useful for people who study how language is used in different situations and how it affects the people who use it.

4. Future Researchers:

The study on English expressions will be a good guide, for people who want to study things like profanity, strong language how people use language or the language that people use in the media.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The second Chapter is review of related the theoretical foundations related to profanity-based intensifiers, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, English language learning, and students' comprehension of informal English media.

A. Sociolinguistics

Language is more than a set of grammar rules and vocabulary. It is also a way that people interact with each other and show their relationships, identities, cultures and what they want to communicate. The study of how language and society are connected is called sociolinguistics. According to Holmes (2013), sociolinguistics looks at how language changes based on things like age, gender, job, ethnicity, social class and the situation in which people are communicating. Of looking at language as something that stands alone sociolinguistics helps us understand why people choose certain words or phrases to get a specific point across.

Recently researchers have been looking at how people use language on the internet and in media. This includes things like media, streaming services, online games and virtual communities. These places have created ways for language to change and evolve. People use language, slang and words that are specific to the internet in these environments. They also use language that is not typically used in educational settings (Tagg & Seargeant, 2021). One of the ideas in sociolinguistics is that language can vary. People do not use the language all the time. They change the way they speak based on the situation, who they are talking to what they want to say and what is considered normal in their group. According to Holmes (2013), these variations are natural consequences of social interaction and communicative needs.

Research conducted by Wu, Miller, and Zhang (2024) Found that people learning English as a foreign language often come across swear words when they are online or watching movies. The study showed that many of these learners knew what the words meant. They were not sure how to use them properly or when it was

okay to use them. The researchers thought that English classrooms should teach students about these kinds of words because they are a part of real-life communication. Similarly, Harmaini (2026) about how young people in Indonesia learn English through media. The study found that platforms like YouTube, TikTok and Instagram can help people learn English words and phrases even if they are not trying to learn English. This is because they are exposed to English language in these environments that provides continuous exposure to authentic English vocabulary and expressions. Students often acquire new lexical items incidentally while focusing on entertainment rather than language learning. This phenomenon supports the concept of Informal Digital Learning of English (IDLE), in which learners improve their English competence through activities outside formal educational contexts. Lately researchers have been looking at words in a different way, just thinking of them as profanity they are trying to understand how they are used in communication. Crespo-Fernández (2025) that researchers are now studying words to see how they are used to express emotions create relationships and add humor to conversations.

Informal language is becoming more important for people learning English because it is often different from the language taught in classrooms. Digital media, like movies and social media are where many university students hear English spoken. They come across slang, abbreviations and swear words that are not typically taught in school. From a perspective swear words are a type of language variation. They can be used to express emotions create relationships and add humor to conversations. To understand swear words you need to know the context in which they are being used not what they mean. Sociolinguistics is a way to understand how language is used in different situations. It helps us see how language changes based on how people interact with each other and the context in which they are communicating. This is important for English language education because it helps learners understand how to use language in real-life situations.

Therefore, sociolinguistics is a foundation, for this study. It helps us understand how profanity-based intensifiers are used in English media and how English Education students understand them.

B. Profanity and Taboo Language

Taboo language is made up of words or expressions that people do not say because they are about things that are considered private or embarrassing. These things are different in societies because people have different ideas about what is polite what is right and wrong and what is acceptable. Therefore, something that is considered offensive in one place might be okay in another place. According to Allan (2023), we should not just look at the words themselves to decide if they are taboo. We need to think about how language, culture and what people expect from each other are all connected. Words become taboo because people in a society decide they are bad. So, whether a word is considered offensive or not depends on the situation what the person saying it means who is. What they are trying to communicate.

There are kinds of taboo language. Allan (2023) says that some common kinds include words that're against someone's religion, sexual words, words about bodily functions, words that are mean to certain groups of people and words that are mean to family members. Among these kinds profanity is something that people talk about a lot because it is used much in everyday conversations and in movies and television shows. Stapleton and Beers Fägersten (2023) said that swearing is used for reasons, including to control emotions to be funny to show friendship to create an identity and to make a point in a conversation. Their research shows that people often use profanity on purpose to show emotions to make friends or to show what they believe in. This way of thinking is different from the idea that profanity is always impolite or unacceptable. Similarly, Love (2021) analyzed a lot of conversations in English. Found that swear words are used more and more in informal conversations in Britain. The study showed that people use profanity when they are talking to friends and family which means that these words are now a part of conversations and not just used to be mean.

Recent studies in English language education have highlighted this issue. Wu et al. (2024) studied what people learning English think about English swear words. Found that many of them know what the words are but are not sure what they mean in different situations. These learners often hear profanity in movies,

videos, games and on media but they do not learn about it in their English classes. So, they are learning about it on their own from the media or from their teachers.

Profanity is also used a lot in movies, television shows, video games and online content. The people who make these things often use words to make the characters seem real to show emotions or to make the conversation sound natural. Xavier (2024) argued that taboo language in media helps to tell the story make the characters more believable and create relationships between them. So, profanity is not just used to be offensive. It is also used to make the story better and to keep the audience interested.

Profanity usually refers to swear words that people use to express emotions like anger, surprise or excitement. It is different from insults because it is often used to make communication stronger. Recent studies have shown that swear words can be used in different ways not just to be offensive. It is also important to know the difference between profanity and pragmatic profanity. Literal profanity is when someone uses a word to directly insult someone. For example, calling someone a bad name is profanity because it is meant to hurt their feelings. On the hand pragmatic profanity is when swear words are used to add emotion to what someone is saying but they are not meant to hurt anyone. For instance, saying "That's fucking amazing" or "This is damn difficult" uses profanity to make the sentence stronger. It is not meant to be mean. This difference is important for people learning English. If they think that every time, they hear a word it is meant to be mean they might not understand what is being said. They might think that someone is being hostile when they are just trying to show emotions.

In classes profanity is a challenge because teachers might not want to talk about it because of cultural differences and because they do not want to offend anyone. Learners are going to hear these words outside of class anyway. So, if teachers do not teach them about it the learners might not know how to understand it when they hear it. For this reason, learning about profanity should be part of learning how to communicate in English. Learners need to know when profanity is

used to insult someone, when it is used to show emotions and when it is used to make a sentence stronger. Knowing this will help them understand English better and be able to communicate effectively.

In this study profanity is the main thing being looked at. It is not about how profanity is bad language. It is about how profanities used in informal English especially in media. By studying how learners understand these expressions this research will help us understand more, about how languages used in society how people communicate and how to teach English better especially with all the informal English that learners are exposed to through the internet and social media.

C. Profanity as Adjective Intensifiers

People often change adjectives to show levels of strength. Of just saying something is "good" or "bad " people often make their opinions stronger by adding extra words. These extra words are important in communication because they help people show feelings, opinions and personal views clearly. In English these extra words appear not only in formal language but also in daily talks, movies and online messages. According to Quirk et al. (1985) These extra words are parts of language that change how strong an adjective or adverb is. Common examples are "very " "extremely " "really ". Quite." These words make the meaning stronger without changing the type of word. For example, in the sentence "The test was very hard " the word "very" acts as an intensifier because it makes "hard" stronger.

Recent studies show that English speakers are using unusual intensifiers, especially in casual talks. Love (2021) after looking at spoken British English found that casual speech is using expressive words instead of the usual ones. Many of these words come from words that are normally not allowed in conversation especially swear words because they show stronger feelings than normal words. This change is part of something called bleaching. Semantic bleaching is when a word loses some of its meaning but becomes more useful in how it is used. According to McEnery et al. (2023) Many words that were once considered offensive in English have gone through semantic bleaching because they are used so much that their strong meaning has faded in some situations. Because of these

words like "damn" and "fucking" are often used to show emphasis of as real offensive words.

Using words as intensifiers is also connected to being real in conversation. People often use these words to show that they are being natural, honest and emotionally involved. Stapleton and Beers Fägersten (2023) say that swearing helps in talking to others by showing how much someone really cares about what they're saying. Of just being offensive swearing can show that someone is being genuine and emotionally connected. Wu et al. (2024) Found that students who are learning English as a language often hear swear words in movies, online videos, games and social media. Even though these students usually know the swear words they often don't know how they are used in real situations. Specifically, they have trouble telling the difference between words that are meant to hurt and those that are used to show strong feelings.

For English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, however, understanding these words is hard. Students often learn vocabulary in classes where swear words are not discussed. As a result, students might know the words. Not how they are used in real communication. Profanity-based intensifiers are swear word that are not meant to be offensive anymore. Are used to make adjectives stronger. Their use is different from their meaning. For example, in the sentence "That movie was fucking amazing " the word "fucking" does not insult the person. Refer to its actual meaning. Instead, it makes "amazing" stronger showing a positive opinion. Similarly, expressions such as "damn difficult," "bloody brilliant," "damn funny," and "fucking ridiculous" show how swear words are used as intensifiers instead of insults. These examples show that swear words have changed in how they're used in modern English. Their main purpose is usually to add feelings instead of to hurt anyone.

How people understand words as intensifiers depends a lot, on the situation. The same word can mean things depending on how it is used and why it is used. Think about these examples:

- "You're a fucking idiot."

Here, "fucking" strengthens an insult directed at another person.

- "This is fucking difficult."

In this example, "fucking" intensifies the adjective "difficult" without targeting another individual.

Although both sentences contain the same profanity word, their pragmatic functions differ substantially. The first performs a face-threatening act, while the second expresses frustration toward a situation.

When we talk to each other online, we often use strong words to show how we feel. You see this on media when people play games together on streaming sites, podcasts and videos. People say things like "good" or "bloody annoying" or "fucking incredible". When people who speak English naturally hear these words, they know the person is just showing feelings they do not think the person is being rude.

If you want to learn English it is helpful to understand what these strong words mean. This way you can understand what people are really saying when you listen to them talk. You will be better at understanding conversations especially when you watch videos or listen to podcasts.

This study is looking at how students understand these words. It is not trying to get students to use these words. To understand what they mean when other people use them. The goal is to help students get better at understanding how people talk in life especially when they watch English videos or listen to podcasts.

D. Pragmatics and Meaning in Context

Understanding language is not about knowing words and how they are put together. People often share meanings that're not exactly what the words say. The field of pragmatics looks at how meanings created using the situation what the

speaker wants to say and how people communicate with each other.

According to Yule (1996), pragmatics is about what the speaker means what the situation means and how people understand what is said at a moment. It is not about what words mean in a book. Pragmatics looks at what the speaker's trying to say and how people understand that message. Pragmatics is very important because it helps us understand what people really mean when they say something.

New ideas in pragmatics focus on language as something people do together than just how it is structured. For example, Interpersonal Pragmatics looks at how people use language to build relationships show feelings create who they are and handle talks (Stapleton & Beers Fägersten, 2023). This way of thinking is very important when looking at swearing because words that are not nice often do things in conversations that're not what the words say. Swearing is an example of pragmatics because pragmatics looks at what the speaker is trying to say and how people understand that message.

Context is very important when understanding swearing. Without knowing the situation people might not get what the speaker really meant. For instance, the phrase "That exam was fucking difficult" might seem rude if taken literally. In the situation where it is said the swearing is just making the speakers feelings stronger about the test. Pragmatics helps us understand what the speaker really means. That is important when looking at swearing.

Levinson (1983) explained that understanding what is said depends on things that work together. These include who is speaking how the people talking know each other, where the conversation is happening and what people know together. These things decide if a sentence is seen as strong, sarcastic or friendly. Pragmatics is, about understanding what the speaker means and that is why it is so important.

What the person wants to say changes what is understood. Two people can say the sentence but mean different things. For example:

Speaker A:

"That movie was fucking amazing."

Speaker B:

"You're fucking useless."

The two sentences have the words but they are used in different ways. The first sentence is saying something the person are really happy. The second sentence is an insult it is saying something about someone.

This illustrates one of the central principles of pragmatics: meaning cannot be understood independently of context.

This shows that the meaning of words is not about the words themselves but about how they're used. You have to think about the situation and the people involved to understand what is being said. Recent studies support this interpretation. Wu et al. (2024) found that people learning English as a language often know what profanity mean but they do not know how to use them in the way. They get confused about what the words mean like are they being used to be funny or to show anger. The people doing the study said that being able to use language in the way is very important for communicating. Using language in the way means being able to understand what people really mean not just what the words say. It is about being able to pick up on the feelings and ideas behind the words. Taguchi (2023) that this is a skill for people learning a language.

When you watch movies or TV shows. Play video games you need to be able to understand the language in a way. The people in these things often use words to show feelings, like excitement or frustration. If you only know the meaning of the words you might not understand what is going on.

Another thing that is important is understanding how words can make people feel. Words are not just about what they mean. About how they make you feel. According to recent research by Beers Fägersten and Stapleton (2023), using words can be a way to show feelings and be real. It is not always, about being mean. About being honest and connecting with people. Profanity is often used to show how someone is feeling than to be hurtful.

For example:

"The concert was fucking incredible."

The speaker expresses excitement.

"This traffic is fucking terrible."

The speaker expresses frustration.

"That is a damn good idea."

The speaker expresses strong approval.

In each example, the profanity modifies emotional intensity instead of functioning as a direct insult.

These practical features show why strong swear words are hard for people learning English. People learning English need to know what the words mean and also understand how they are used in a conversation what the speaker is trying to say how they feel and what they want to communicate. To really get this people learning English need to be around English a lot. This study uses how people really talk as one of its ideas. The study looks at how students understand strong swear words by seeing if they can figure out what they mean in a conversation not just what the words mean. This way of thinking is in line, with what the study's trying to find out which is how students who want to teach English understand strong swear words they see in informal English media like profanity-based intensifiers.

E. Informal English Media and Incidental Language Learning

Learning a language is no longer just for classrooms. The fast growth of tools has changed how people see and learn foreign languages. People who want to learn English now meet language through movies TV shows, video games,

streaming sites, podcasts, social media and online groups. These places give chances to see real English that is very different from what is in school books. So, people often come across words, slang, expressions that are not used in school and even bad language.

One idea that explains this is called Informal Digital Learning of English or IDLE. According to Lee (2020) IDLE is when people learn English by themselves using tools outside of school. Unlike school IDLE is based on what people like and what they do every day not on goals. Students learn English while watching YouTube videos joining game groups talking on social sites or watching English shows.

Lee (2020) argues that IDLE helps people learn better because it gives real language experiences. When people see language many times they learn words, expressions, how to speak and how to use language in the right way. Digital places also show people the kinds of English that are used today like words and bad language so they can see how real people talk in real life. Another idea that is important for this study is called Incidental Language Learning. Hulstijn (2001) says that this is when people learn a language without trying to remember the language itself. Instead, they learn it while doing something like reading, listening or playing games.

Even though this idea came before the rise of tools new research shows that this kind of learning is now very important online. Harmaini (2026) investigated how Indonesian young people learn English through media. The study found that people learned words and phrases when they watched videos on YouTube, Instagram, TikTok and other sites. They did not try to study English. They learned new words naturally by seeing real media. These results show that digital media helps people learn words and know how to use them better.

Video games are also a source of real English. Unlike books games have talks that sound like real speech. Characters use words, slang, short forms and even profanity to make the game feel real. As players watch the story and talk they see language in situations, which helps them learn new words without trying. Movies and TV shows also show real life English. These media mix words with pictures

helping people guess what the words mean from body language, faces and what is happening. According to Xavier (2024), profanity in movies help make characters real. Show strong feelings. Swear words are not just for being rude. To show how real people talk and feel.

Social media has become a way to learn informal English. Sites like X, Reddit, TikTok, Instagram and Discord make people talk quickly creatively and in a way. People use slang, short forms, emojis, jokes and profanity to share thoughts. Since this is how people really talk learners see a type of English than what is in books. Research by Wu et al. (2024) Found that many English learners first see words through digital media, not school. People said they heard language when watching movies, playing games reading comments playing online games and talking on social media. However, Many learners also said they were unsure what these words meant or when it was okay to use them because school didn't teach them.

This creates a problem for teachers. Even though learners meet words in real media school programs usually do not talk about these words because of culture and ethics. So, learners figure it out on their own by watching and hearing them again and again. Some learn the meaning others think all profanity are rude no matter the situation. From the point of view of teaching English using media helps learners get better at talking. Real media shows people how to use language, including words, how to speak how people talk and how to use language in the right way. Learning about words should be part of learning how to use language correctly not about using profanities. In this study informal English media is the way students see profanity. Expressions like "difficult," "bloody brilliant," and "fucking amazing" often appear in movies, shows, games and online chats.

F. Students' Understanding of Profanity-Based Intensifiers

Understanding language is not just about knowing what each word means. To communicate well students, need to know how to put words what the speaker is trying to say and what is okay to say in different situations. When people are learning a language understanding what is being said is a big part of being able to

communicate.

According to Nation (2022) knowing a word is not about knowing what it means in the dictionary. Students also need to know how to use the word what words it goes with and when it is okay to use it. This is especially important for words because they can mean different things depending on how they are used. For example, a student may know that the word "damn" is a word. To really understand what someone means when they say "damn good" or "damn difficult" the student needs to know that "damn" is being used to add emphasis not to insult someone. If the student does not know this, they might think the person is being mean when they are really just trying to show feelings

Being able to understand what people mean in situations is a big part of language comprehension. Taguchi (2023) defines that this means being able to understand and use language in a way that's appropriate for the situation the culture and the people involved. Students who are good at this can tell what the speaker is trying to say even if they are not saying it directly. have shown that students learning English as a language often have trouble understanding informal expressions that include profanity. Wu et al. (2024) found that learners usually knew what the profanity meant. They were not sure how to use them in context. The students were not sure if the expressions were being used to show anger, surprise or excitement.

These findings suggest that understanding profanity requires both lexical knowledge and pragmatic awareness. Students need to be able to tell the difference between words that are being used to insult someone, words that are being used to show feelings and words that are being used to add emphasis. Exposure also plays an important role in language comprehension. According to Lee (2020), learners who use the internet and watch English language videos are more likely to understand expressions than students who only learn in the classroom. When students see and hear language in use, they can start to recognize patterns and understand what the words mean.

Repeated exposure to profanity-based intensifiers may therefore contribute to

students' understanding. Learners who frequently watch English-language films, play narrative video games, or participate in online communities are more likely to encounter expressions such as "fucking amazing," "damn funny," or "bloody ridiculous." Over time, repeated contextual exposure enables learners to recognize these expressions as markers of emotional intensity rather than literal offensive language.

Just seeing and hearing the language is not enough. Students' backgrounds, language level and what they have learned before also affect how they understand the language. In some cultures, students may be taught that all profanities are impolite so they may not understand that some expressions are used to add emphasis not to insult. Consequently, they may fail to recognize the grammatical function of profanity-based intensifiers in authentic communication. Within English language education, understanding authentic language is an important component of communicative competence. Learners should be able to interpret expressions according to their communicative purposes rather than relying exclusively on literal meanings. This objective aligns with contemporary approaches to language teaching, which emphasize authentic materials and contextualized language use.

G. Review of Previous Studies

To understand what we already know we need to look at what other people have found out. Many recent studies have looked at how people use language like swearing and informal English when they talk to each other. Not many of these studies have looked at how students understand when bad language is used to make something sound stronger or more extreme in informal English media.

The first study was conducted by Love (2021), entitled *Swearing in Informal Spoken English: 1990s to 2010s*. The study employed a corpus-based quantitative approach to investigate the frequency and distribution of swear words in spoken British English. Using the Spoken British National Corpus 2014 and comparing it with the 1994 corpus, Love found that the use of swear words had increased considerably over the two decades. The study also demonstrated that swear words no longer functioned solely as offensive language but frequently

appeared as conversational markers, emotional expressions, and intensifiers. Although the study provides valuable evidence regarding contemporary English swearing, it focuses on native speakers' language production rather than English learners' comprehension. Furthermore, it does not specifically examine profanity functioning as adjective intensifiers.

The second study was conducted by Khusna, Pertiwi, and Eskarina (2022), entitled *Indonesian Youths' Perception toward Swearing and Taboo Expression*. Using a quantitative survey distributed through Google Forms, the researchers investigated Indonesian youths' attitudes toward swearing. The findings indicated that respondents generally perceived swearing as context-dependent. While many participants considered swearing inappropriate in formal situations, they accepted it in informal communication among friends. The study contributes to understanding Indonesian perceptions of taboo language. However, it focuses on attitudes and perceptions rather than linguistic comprehension or grammatical functions of profanity.

Another relevant study was conducted by Stapleton and Beers Fägersten (2023), who examined interpersonal functions of swearing from a pragmatic perspective. Their study argued that swearing serves multiple communicative purposes, including emotional regulation, humor, solidarity, identity construction, and conversational emphasis. Rather than viewing profanity as merely offensive language, the researchers demonstrated that swear words function as important interpersonal resources in everyday communication. Although their study strengthens the theoretical understanding of swearing, it does not investigate second-language learners or educational contexts.

Wu, Miller, and Zhang (2024) conducted one of the most relevant studies for the present research. Their study, entitled *Beware and Swear: English-as-a-Foreign-Language Learners' Perceptions and Experiences Regarding Swearing in English*, explored how EFL learners perceive and experience English swearing. Using questionnaires and interviews, the researchers found that participants frequently encountered swear words through movies, online videos, video games, and social media.

A qualitative study conducted by Xavier (2024) analyzed taboo language in films from the perspective of audiovisual discourse. The findings suggested that profanity contributes to characterization, emotional authenticity, interpersonal relationships, and narrative realism. Swear words were found to perform numerous communicative functions beyond expressing anger or aggression. This study supports the argument that audiovisual media expose learners to authentic language. However, it focuses on discourse analysis rather than learner comprehension. Daulay, Dimas, and Alvindi (2024) investigated taboo language in the film *Uncut Gems*. Using qualitative content analysis, the researchers identified various categories and communicative functions of taboo expressions appearing in the script. The findings revealed that vulgarity constituted the most frequent category, while provocation represented the dominant communicative function. Similar to previous studies, the research focused on linguistic analysis of media texts rather than students' understanding.

More recently, Harmaini (2026) investigated incidental English learning through social media among Indonesian Generation Z learners. The study employed a quantitative survey to examine how exposure to English-language content on digital platforms contributed to language development. The findings indicated that students frequently acquired vocabulary and expressions incidentally while consuming entertainment content. Although the study did not investigate profanity specifically, it provides strong evidence that digital media serve as important sources of authentic English input.

Overall, previous studies demonstrate that profanity has important linguistic, pragmatic, and social functions in authentic English communication. They also show that English learners frequently encounter swear words through digital media. However, limited research specifically measures English Education students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers functioning as adjective modifiers in informal English media. Most previous studies examine attitudes, frequency, discourse functions, or media representations rather than learners' comprehension. Therefore, the present study seeks to fill this gap by quantitatively investigating students' familiarity with and understanding of profanity-based intensifiers using questionnaire data collected through Google Forms.

H. Conceptual Framework

The current study assumes that English Education students are often exposed to English communication through informal media, such as movies, television shows, video games, streaming services and social media. These types of media often include words that are used to increase the strength of emotions not to be offensive in a way.

According to the theory of Informal Digital Learning of English (Lee 2020) students learn language through activities that happen outside of school. Also, incidental language learning means that students pick up vocabulary and how to use language properly naturally while they are focused on entertainment of trying to learn the language on purpose (Hulstijn, 2001). Because of this being regularly exposed to English media helps students become more familiar with informal ways of speaking. Understanding words that are used as expressions also depends on how well someone can use language, in context (Taguchi, 2023). Students need to figure out what the expressions mean based on the situation not just what the dictionary says. Students who know more about English communication are likely to see these words as a way to add emotion not as actual insults.

Based on these theoretical foundations, the conceptual relationship of the study is illustrated below.

1. Exposure to Informal English Media
2. Exposure to Profanity-Based Intensifiers
3. Students' Familiarity with Profanity-Based Intensifier
4. Students' Understanding of Contextual Meaning
5. Interpretation of the Communicative Function of Profanity-Based Intensifiers

In this study, exposure to informal English media functions as the source of authentic language input. Students' familiarity represents the knowledge developed through repeated encounters with profanity-based expressions. Students'

understanding refers to their ability to recognize the contextual meanings and communicative functions of profanity-based intensifiers. Finally, interpretation of communicative function reflects learners' pragmatic competence in distinguishing emotional emphasis from literal offensive meaning. Based on this framework, students' understanding is measured through a questionnaire consisting of comprehension questions and Likert-scale statements distributed using Google Forms.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

This Chapter describes of research method which is applied in the research. The explanation and the Chronicles are as follows: Research Design, Research Participants, Research Setting, Research Instruments, Data Collection Procedure, Data Analysis Technique, Trustworthiness of Data, and Ethical Consideration

A. Research Design

This study that will be conducted employed a quantitative research approach using a descriptive research design. Quantitative research is appropriate because the study aims to collect numerical data and analyze the results statistically to describe English Education students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers in informal English media. The data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed using Google Forms and analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques. According to W. Creswell and D. Creswell (2018), quantitative research is an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. These variables are measured using research instruments so that numerical data can be analyzed through statistical procedures. Quantitative research enables researchers to obtain objective findings based on measurable evidence collected from a relatively large number of participants.

Similarly, Ary et al. (2019) state that quantitative research emphasizes the collection and analysis of numerical information to describe phenomena or examine relationships among variables. The findings are presented statistically to provide an objective description of the research problem. The present study adopts a descriptive quantitative design because its primary purpose is to describe the level of students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers rather than to manipulate variables or investigate cause-and-effect relationships. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), descriptive research is designed to describe the current status of a phenomenon by collecting data from a sample that represents a particular population. This design is appropriate because the researcher intends to examine

students' understanding as it naturally exists without providing any treatment or intervention.

In this study, the researcher also collected supporting information regarding students' exposure to informal English media. Exposure was measured to provide a clearer description of respondents' experiences with authentic English communication through movies, television series, video games, streaming platforms, and social media. However, the main focus of the study remained students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers encountered in those media. The dependent variable, students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers, was operationalized through five indicators. The first indicator is lexical interpretation, referring to students' ability to recognize the meanings of profanity-based words and expressions. The second indicator is grammatical interpretation, referring to students' ability to identify the grammatical function of profanity-based intensifiers within sentences. The third indicator is contextual interpretation, referring to students' ability to infer meanings based on the surrounding linguistic and situational context. The fourth indicator is pragmatic interpretation, referring to students' ability to identify the communicative purposes of profanity-based intensifiers, such as expressing emphasis, surprise, frustration, or admiration. The fifth indicator is perceived understanding, referring to students' self-reported confidence in understanding profanity-based intensifiers encountered in informal English media.

Data were collected using a questionnaire consisting of four sections. The first section gathered respondents' demographic information. The second section collected information regarding respondents' exposure to informal English media. The third section consisted of objective multiple-choice questions designed to measure lexical, grammatical, contextual, and pragmatic interpretation of profanity-based intensifiers. The final section employed a five-point Likert scale to measure respondents' perceived understanding of profanity-based intensifiers.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations. Responses to the objective

comprehension questions were scored based on the number of correct answers, while responses to the Likert-scale statements were analyzed using mean scores to determine respondents' overall level of perceived understanding. The findings were presented in tables and figures to provide a comprehensive description of English Education students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers in informal English media.

Based on these considerations, a descriptive quantitative research design was considered the most appropriate method for addressing the research objectives because it allows this research to obtain measurable, objective, and systematic data regarding students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers encountered in authentic English communication.

B. Research Setting

This study was focused among undergraduate students in Indonesia and enrolled in various programs, that include English Education Department and English Literature, because some of them are expected to possess sufficient English proficiency and are frequently exposed to authentic English communication through academic activities as well as digital media.

The English Education Department was selected as the research setting because its students regularly interact with English in both formal and informal contexts. In addition to learning English through classroom instruction, students frequently access English-language media such as movies, television series, video games, streaming platforms, podcasts, and social media. These media contain authentic English expressions, including slang, idioms, colloquial language, and profanity-based intensifiers that are rarely discussed in formal language classrooms. Consequently, English Education students represent an appropriate population for investigating the understanding of profanity-based intensifiers in informal English media.

The participants of this study consisted of undergraduate students from various academic semesters within the English Education Department. Including students from different semesters provides a broader representation of English learners with varying levels of academic experience and language proficiency. This diversity allows this research to obtain a more comprehensive description of students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers. The research was conducted during the academic year 2026/2027. Data were collected online through Google Forms, allowing respondents from different higher education institutions to participate. The online questionnaire enabled respondents to complete the survey at their convenience while maintaining the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses.

Google Forms was selected as the primary data collection platform because it provides an efficient and practical means of distributing questionnaires, automatically records responses, and exports the collected data into spreadsheet format for statistical analysis. Furthermore, online data collection reduces administrative costs, minimizes manual data entry errors, and allows respondents to participate regardless of their physical location. The questionnaire was distributed through online communication platforms commonly used by university students, including WhatsApp groups and other academic communication channels. Before completing the questionnaire, respondents were provided with an informed consent statement explaining the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, the confidentiality of the collected data, and the intended academic use of the research findings.

Only respondents who agreed to participate voluntarily were allowed to proceed with the questionnaire. Overall, the selected research setting was considered appropriate because it provided access to participants who regularly encounter authentic English communication in both academic and digital environments. This setting supports the objective of describing English Education students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers encountered in informal English media.

C. Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

1. Population

Population refers to the entire group of individuals possessing characteristics relevant to the objectives of a research study. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), a population is a group of individuals who share common characteristics from which researchers select participants for a study. Similarly, Ary et al. (2019) define a population as the complete set of individuals or elements that meet predetermined criteria established by the researcher.

The population of this study consisted of undergraduate students enrolled in English Education Departments at universities in Indonesia. This population was selected because English Education students regularly interact with English through formal instruction and informal digital media. As prospective English teachers, they are expected to possess adequate English proficiency while also being exposed to authentic English communication in various media, including movies, television series, video games, streaming platforms, and social media.

Because the exact number of undergraduate English Education students across Indonesian universities is unknown and continuously changing, this research focused on obtaining respondents who fulfilled the inclusion criteria established for this study.

2. Sample

A sample is a subset of the population selected to represent the characteristics of the larger population. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), a sample consists of participants selected from a population to provide information relevant to the research objectives. Sampling enables researchers to investigate a manageable number of participants while drawing conclusions about the target population.

The sample of this study consisted of active undergraduate students enrolled in English Education programs and other at several universities in Indonesia who voluntarily participated in the online questionnaire.

To ensure that the collected data were relevant to the objectives of the study, respondents were required to satisfy the following inclusion criteria:

- 1) Be an active undergraduate students.
- 2) Have experience consuming English-language media, such as movies, television series, video games, YouTube videos, podcasts, or social media.
- 3) Be willing to participate voluntarily by completing the informed consent section before answering the questionnaire.
- 4) Complete all sections of the questionnaire.

Responses that were incomplete, duplicated, or submitted by participants who did not satisfy these criteria were excluded from the final data analysis.

The number of respondents included in the study was determined by the availability of participants who met these criteria during the period of data collection.

3. Sampling Technique

This study employed purposive sampling combined with convenience sampling. According to Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (2016), purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique in which researchers intentionally select participants who possess characteristics relevant to the objectives of the study. In the present research, purposive sampling was applied because only undergraduate students enrolled in English Education programs and other programs were considered eligible to participate.

In addition, convenience sampling was employed because the questionnaire was distributed online through Google Forms using academic communication networks and social media platforms. Convenience sampling allows researchers to collect data from participants who are readily accessible and willing to participate (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This approach was considered appropriate because respondents were recruited from multiple universities located in different regions,

making probability sampling impractical within the available time and resources.

The combination of purposive and convenience sampling ensured that respondents possessed characteristics relevant to the research objectives while also allowing efficient data collection through online distribution.

4. Sample Size

The researcher distributed the questionnaire to undergraduate students enrolled in English Education and other programs at several universities in Indonesia. The minimum number of respondents targeted for this study was 30 participants, as this number is generally considered adequate for descriptive quantitative analysis and preliminary statistical procedures (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Nevertheless, obtaining a larger number of respondents was expected to improve the representativeness and reliability of the findings. Therefore, this research continued distributing the questionnaire throughout the data collection period until an adequate number of valid responses was obtained.

D. Data Collection Technique

A research variable is a characteristic or attribute that can be measured or observed in a study. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), variables are measurable characteristics that researchers investigate to answer research questions and achieve the objectives of a study. Variables enable researchers to collect data systematically and analyze relationships or describe specific phenomena. This study employed two research variables: an independent variable and a dependent variable.

1. Independent Variable (X)

The independent variable in this study is exposure to informal English media. Exposure refers to the frequency and extent to which students encounter authentic English communication through digital and entertainment media outside the formal classroom environment. Informal English media include movies, television series, video games, YouTube videos, podcasts, streaming platforms, and social media. These media frequently contain authentic English expressions such as slang, idioms, colloquial language, and profanity-based intensifiers. Continuous exposure to these media provides opportunities for students to encounter English vocabulary and expressions naturally through incidental learning.

In the present study, exposure to informal English media was measured using multiple-choice questions in Section 2 of the questionnaire. The questions gathered information regarding respondents' media consumption habits, frequency of exposure, sources of English profanity, and experiences in encountering profanity-based expressions.

2. Dependent Variable (Y)

The dependent variable in this study is students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers in informal English media.

Understanding refers to students' ability to recognize, interpret, and comprehend profanity-based intensifiers encountered in authentic English communication. Rather than merely recognizing swear words, students are expected to understand their meanings, grammatical roles, contextual interpretations, and communicative functions.

To obtain a comprehensive description of students' understanding, this variable was measured through two complementary forms of assessment.

The first assessment consisted of objective multiple-choice questions designed to

measure respondents' actual understanding of profanity-based intensifiers.

The second assessment consisted of Likert-scale statements measuring respondents' perceived understanding and confidence when interpreting profanity-based intensifiers encountered in informal English media.

The combination of objective comprehension items and self-report statements provides a more comprehensive measurement of students' understanding than relying on a single type of instrument.

E. Operational Definition of Variables

An operational definition explains how each variable is measured in practice. According to Ary et al. (2019), operational definitions translate theoretical concepts into measurable indicators that can be observed and analyzed through research instruments.

In this study, the variables were operationalized as follows.

1. Operational Definition of Exposure to Informal English Media

Exposure to informal English media refers to respondents' experiences in consuming English-language content outside formal classroom instruction. This includes movies, television series, video games, YouTube videos, podcasts, streaming platforms, and social media.

Exposure was measured using multiple-choice questions that asked respondents about:

- frequency of consuming English-language media
- types of media most frequently accessed
- average duration of media consumption
- frequency of encountering English profanity
- primary sources of profanity-based expressions

The responses provide descriptive information regarding respondents' exposure to authentic English communication.

2. Operational Definition of Students' Understanding of Profanity-Based Intensifiers

Students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers refers to respondents' ability to correctly interpret the meanings and communicative functions of profanity-based intensifiers encountered in authentic English communication.

In this study, understanding was operationalized through five indicators.

a. Lexical Interpretation

Lexical interpretation refers to students' ability to recognize and understand the meanings of profanity-based words and expressions. Students demonstrate lexical interpretation when they correctly identify the meaning of vocabulary items or idiomatic expressions containing profanity.

Example indicators include:

- identifying the meaning of profanity-based idioms
- recognizing the meaning of individual profanity-based expressions

This indicator was measured using objective multiple-choice questions.

b. Grammatical Interpretation

Grammatical interpretation refers to students' ability to identify the grammatical role of profanity-based intensifiers within sentences. Rather than focusing solely on vocabulary meaning, this indicator measures whether respondents recognize how profanity functions grammatically in authentic English communication.

Example indicators include:

- identifying profanity functioning as an adjective intensifier
- distinguishing profanity functioning as an interjection
- recognizing profanity functioning as a noun modifier

This indicator was measured using objective multiple-choice questions.

c. Contextual Interpretation

Contextual interpretation refers to students' ability to infer the intended meaning of profanity-based expressions according to the surrounding linguistic and situational context. Students are expected to consider the conversation, speaker, and situation before determining the meaning of an expression.

Example indicators include:

- interpreting profanity in dialogues
- identifying intended meanings from conversational contexts
- understanding emotional meaning based on context

This indicator was measured using dialogue-based multiple-choice questions.

d. Pragmatic Interpretation

Pragmatic interpretation refers to students' ability to recognize the communicative purpose of profanity-based intensifiers beyond their literal meanings. Students identify why speakers choose particular profanity-based expressions in authentic communication.

Example indicators include:

- expressing emphasis
- expressing surprise
- expressing frustration

- expressing admiration
- expressing emotional intensity

This indicator was measured using situational multiple-choice questions.

e. Perceived Understanding

Perceived understanding refers to respondents' self-reported confidence in understanding profanity-based intensifiers encountered in informal English media. This is different, from the things we looked at because it is just what the students think about their own understanding.

This indicator was measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

Variable	Indicator	Instrument	Data Type
Exposure to Informal English Media (X)	Frequency of exposure	Multiple-choice questionnaire	Ordinal
	Types of media	Multiple-choice questionnaire	Nominal
	Sources of profanity	Multiple-choice questionnaire	Nominal

F. Validity and Reliability

The questionnaire content is validated by an English lecturer or language expert to ensure relevance and clarity.

G. Ethical Consideration

This research will inform participants that:

- participation is voluntary

- responses remain anonymous
- the study contains mild profanity for educational purposes only

Participants have the right to stop participation at any time.

H. Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis is the process of organizing, summarizing, and interpreting the collected data to answer the research questions. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), quantitative data analysis involves preparing the data, coding responses, conducting statistical analyses, and interpreting the findings systematically. After the data collection process was completed, the researcher exported all questionnaire responses from Google Forms into Microsoft Excel. The data were then checked to identify incomplete responses, duplicate submissions, and responses that did not meet the inclusion criteria. Only valid responses were included in the final analysis.

The cleaned dataset was imported into IBM SPSS Statistics Version 30 to facilitate statistical analysis. The data analysis consisted of descriptive statistical techniques because the objective of the study was to describe students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers in informal English media.

1. Analysis of Demographic Data

The demographic information collected in Section 1 of the questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The variables included age, university, and academic semester.

The results were presented using frequency distribution tables and percentages to describe the characteristics of the respondents.

The percentage of respondents for each category was calculated using the following formula:

$$P = (f / N) \times 100\%$$

Where:

(P = Percentage) (f = Frequency) (N = Total number of respondents)

2. Analysis of Exposure to Informal English Media

Responses collected in Section 2 were analyzed descriptively to identify respondents' exposure to informal English media.

The analysis included:

- frequency of consuming English-language media
- types of media most frequently accessed
- average duration of media consumption
- frequency of encountering profanity-based expressions
- primary sources of exposure

The results were presented using frequencies, and percentages, generated from Microsoft Excel.

3. Analysis of Objective Understanding

Section 3 of the questionnaire consisted of objective multiple-choice questions designed to measure respondents' actual understanding of profanity-based intensifiers. Each correct answer received a score of one (1), while each incorrect answer received a score of zero (0).

The total score obtained by each respondent represented the respondent's objective understanding.

This research calculated:

- total score
- mean score
- percentage of correct answers
- standard deviation

The percentage of correct responses for each question was also calculated to identify which indicators were most and least understood by the respondents.

The objective questions measured four indicators of understanding:

- lexical interpretation
- grammatical interpretation
- contextual interpretation
- pragmatic interpretation

The results for each indicator were analyzed separately before calculating respondents' overall objective understanding.

4. Analysis of Perceived Understanding

Section 4 consisted of Likert-scale statements measuring respondents' perceived understanding of profanity-based intensifiers.

Each response was scored using a five-point Likert scale.

- Strongly Agree = 5
- Agree = 4
- Neutral = 3
- Disagree = 2
- Strongly Disagree = 1

The mean score for each statement was calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Mean} = \Sigma X / N$$

- ΣX = Total score
- N = Number of respondents

The overall mean score was interpreted according to the following criteria.

Table below here are the Interpretation of Mean Scores:

Mean Score	Interpretation
4.21 to 5.00	Very High
3.41 to 4.20	High
2.61 to 3.40	Moderate

1.81 to 2.60	Low
1.00 to 1.80	Very Low

The descriptive statistics calculated for the Likert-scale data included:

- mean
- standard deviation
- minimum score
- maximum score

The findings were presented in tables and interpreted according to the established criteria.

5. Integration of the Findings

To obtain a comprehensive description of students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers, the researcher compared the findings from the objective comprehension questions and the Likert-scale statements. The objective questions measured respondents' actual understanding, whereas the Likert-scale statements measured respondents' perceived understanding.

The comparison between these two forms of measurement enabled the researcher to determine whether respondents' self-reported understanding was consistent with their demonstrated ability to interpret profanity-based intensifiers in authentic English communication.

I. Research Ethics

Research ethics are essential for protecting the rights, dignity, and well-being of research participants. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), ethical principles should guide every stage of the research process, from participant recruitment to data reporting.

1. Voluntary Participation

Participation in this study was entirely voluntary. Respondents were free to decide

whether they wished to participate without any pressure or obligation. They also had the right to discontinue their participation before submitting the questionnaire.

2. Informed Consent

Before accessing the questionnaire, respondents were presented with an informed consent statement explaining:

- the purpose of the study
- the procedures involved
- the estimated time required to complete the questionnaire
- the voluntary nature of participation
- respondents' rights as research participants

Only respondents who agreed to participate voluntarily proceeded to complete the questionnaire.

3. Confidentiality

This research maintained the confidentiality of all respondents throughout the research process. Personal information collected during the study was used solely for academic purposes and was not disclosed to any third party.

The findings are reported in aggregate form so that no individual respondent can be identified.

4. Anonymity

The questionnaire did not require respondents to provide personally identifiable information such as student identification numbers or home addresses. Each questionnaire response was analyzed anonymously to protect respondents' privacy.

5. Academic Integrity

This research conducted this study honestly, objectively, and responsibly. All theories, concepts, and previous studies used in this research were properly acknowledged through APA Style citations. This research also ensured that the data analysis and interpretation accurately reflected the responses provided by the participants without fabrication, falsification, or manipulation.

CHAPTER IV

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Data Collection

This chapter shows the results of the study. It talks about the findings. How they connect to the research questions and the ideas from Chapter II. The data in this chapter came from a questionnaire. The questionnaire was shared online using Google Forms. It was made to get information about English Education students. The information was about their exposure to English media and how they understand profanity-based intensifiers in that media.

The data collection happened during the 2026/2027 year. The questionnaire link was shared through groups that university students use. These include WhatsApp groups and other academic channels. The people who answered the questionnaire were chosen from universities in Indonesia. They were chosen using purposive and convenience sampling as explained in Chapter III.

Before completing the questionnaire, all respondents were presented with an informed consent statement explaining the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of participation, the confidentiality of their responses, and the academic use of the collected data. Only respondents who agreed to participate voluntarily proceeded to answer the questionnaire. A total of 30 questionnaire responses were successfully collected. After the data screening process, all 30 responses were found to be complete and met the inclusion criteria established for this study. Therefore, all responses were included in the final data analysis. No responses were excluded because each questionnaire was completed in full and submitted by respondents who satisfied the predetermined participant requirements.

The questionnaire consisted of four sections. Section 1 collected respondents' demographic information, including age, university, and academic semester. Section 2 gathered information regarding respondents' exposure to informal English media. Section 3 consisted of objective multiple-choice questions designed to measure respondents' actual understanding of profanity-based intensifiers through lexical, grammatical, contextual, and pragmatic interpretation.

Section 4 consisted of Likert-scale statements that measured respondents' perceived understanding of profanity-based intensifiers in informal English media.

The collected data were exported from Google Forms into Microsoft Excel for data cleaning and coding before being analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques. The analysis included frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations. The results are presented in tables and figures to provide a comprehensive description of respondents' demographic characteristics, exposure to informal English media, objective understanding of profanity-based intensifiers, and perceived understanding of those expressions.

The presentation of the findings in this chapter follows the sequence of the research questions. The first section describes the demographic characteristics of the respondents, followed by an analysis of their exposure to informal English media, objective understanding of profanity-based intensifiers, perceived understanding based on the Likert-scale questionnaire, and finally a discussion of the findings in relation to previous studies and the theoretical framework.

1. Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents who participated in this study. The demographic information includes respondents' age, university, and academic semester. These characteristics provide an overview of the participants involved in the study and serve as supporting information for interpreting the findings presented in the following sections.

a. Distribution of Respondents by Age

Table 1.1 Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-20	8	26.7
20-25	22	73.3

Table 1.1 shows that most respondents were between 20 and 25 years of age,

representing 22 respondents (73.3%), while the remaining 8 respondents (26.7%) were between 18 and 20 years old. This distribution indicates that the participants were predominantly undergraduate students within the typical age range.

b. Distribution of Respondents by University

Table 1.2 Distribution of Respondents by University

University	Frequency	Percentage
Universitas Islam Nusantara	23	76.7
UNPAS	1	3.3
Universitas Pancasakti Tegal	2	6.7
UPI	1	3.3
Universitas Informatika dan Bisnis Indonesia	3	10.0

Table 1.2 indicates that respondents represented five universities in Indonesia. The majority of participants came from Universitas Islam Nusantara, accounting for 23 respondents (76.7%). The remaining respondents were from Universitas Informatika dan Bisnis Indonesia (10.0%), Universitas Pasundan (6.7%), Universitas Pancasakti Tegal (3.3%), and Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (3.3%). Although the respondents were predominantly from one institution, the inclusion of participants from several universities provides broader representation for this study.

c. Distribution of Respondents by Study Program

Table 1.3 presents the distribution of respondents based on their study program.

Study Program	Frequency	Percentage
English Education	23	76,7
Desain Komunikasi Visual	3	10,0
English Literature	1	3,3
Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia	1	3,3
Pendidikan Jasmani, Kesehatan, dan Rekreasi	1	3,3
No Response	1	3,3

Table 1.3 shows that the majority of respondents were enrolled in the English Education study program, accounting for 23 respondents (76.7%). The remaining respondents represented several other study programs, including Desain Komunikasi Visual with three respondents (10.0%), English Literature with one respondent (3.3%), PBSI with one respondent (3.3%), and PJKR with one respondent (3.3%). One respondent (3.3%) did not indicate their study program.

The predominance of respondents from the English Education study program indicates that the sample largely reflects students with formal academic backgrounds in English learning. Nevertheless, the inclusion of respondents from other academic disciplines provides additional perspectives regarding the understanding of profanity-based intensifiers encountered through informal English media.

d. Distribution of Respondents by Academic Semester

Table 1.4 Distribution of Respondents by Academic Semester

Semester	Frequency	Percentage
1-4	8	26.7
5-8	21	70.0
10	1	3.3

Table 1.3 shows that the majority of respondents were enrolled in Semesters 5 to 8, representing 21 respondents (70.0%). Eight respondents (26.7%) were in Semesters 1 to 4, while one respondent (3.3%) was in Semester 10. These findings indicate that the study primarily involved students in the middle and later stages of their undergraduate education, who were expected to have greater exposure to English-language media and learning experiences.

Overall, these demographic indicate that the respondents represented different age groups, universities, and academic semesters. These characteristics provide contextual information regarding the participants involved in the study and support the interpretation of the findings presented in the subsequent sections.

2. Students' Exposure to Informal English Media

This section presents the findings related to respondents' exposure to informal English media. The data were obtained from Section 2 of the questionnaire, which examined respondents' media preferences, familiarity with English profanity, frequency of using English-based profanity, primary sources of exposure, and strategies used when encountering unfamiliar profanity-based expressions. Since each question required respondents to select only one answer, the data were analyzed using frequency and percentage distributions.

a. Most Frequently Accessed English-Language Media

The second question asked respondents to identify the English-language media they access most frequently.

Table 2.1 Most Frequently Accessed English-Language Media

Media	Frequency	Percentage
TikTok	19	63.3
YouTube	5	16.7
Video Games	3	10.0
Instagram	3	10.0

Table 2.1 shows that TikTok was the most frequently used English-language media among the respondents, accounting for 19 respondents (63.3%). YouTube was selected by 5 respondents (16.7%), while Video Games and Instagram were each selected by 3 respondents (10.0%). These findings indicate that short-form social media content serves as the primary source of English-language exposure for most respondents.

b. Familiarity with English Profanity

Table 2.2 Respondents' Familiarity with English Profanity

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Familiar	28	93.3
Not Familiar	2	6.7

Table 2.2 indicates that the vast majority of respondents reported being familiar with English profanity. Twenty-eight respondents (93.3%) selected "Very Familiar," while only 2 respondents (6.7%) indicated that they were not familiar with English profanity. These findings suggest that most respondents have substantial prior exposure to profanity-based expressions in English.

c. Frequency of Using English-Based Profanity

Table 2.3 Frequency of Using English-Based Profanity

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Always	4	13.3
Sometimes	20	66.7
Never	6	20.0

Table 2.3 shows that most respondents reported using English-based profanity only occasionally. Twenty respondents (66.7%) selected "Sometimes," while 4 respondents (13.3%) reported always using English-based profanity. Six respondents (20.0%) indicated that they never used English-based profanity. These findings suggest that although respondents are generally familiar with profanity-based expressions, they do not necessarily use them regularly in everyday communication.

d. Primary Source of Exposure to English Profanity

Table 2.4 Primary Source of Exposure to English Profanity

Source	Frequency	Percentage
TikTok	22	73.3
YouTube	5	16.7
Movies	2	6.7
Video Games	1	3.3

Table 2.4 indicates that TikTok was the primary source through which respondents encountered English profanity, with 22 respondents (73.3%) selecting this platform. YouTube accounted for 5 respondents (16.7%), followed by Movies with 2 respondents (6.7%) and Video Games with 1 respondent (3.3%). These findings suggest that social media platforms play a dominant role in exposing students to profanity-based intensifiers in authentic English communication.

e. Respondents' Strategies When Encountering English Profanity

Table 2.5 Strategies Used When Encountering English Profanity

Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Guess its meaning from the context	9	30.0
Look up its meaning online	8	26.7
Ignore it	7	23.3
I already know its meaning	5	16.7
Ask someone else	1	3.3

Table 2.5 presents the strategies used by respondents when they encounter English profanity in informal media. The most common strategy was guessing the meaning from the surrounding context, selected by 9 respondents (30.0%). Eight respondents (26.7%) preferred looking up the meaning online, while 7 respondents (23.3%) chose to ignore unfamiliar profanity. Five respondents (16.7%) indicated that they already understood the meaning, and only one respondent (3.3%) reported asking someone else for clarification.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that respondents are highly exposed to English profanity through informal English media, particularly TikTok. Most respondents reported being familiar with English profanity and encountering it primarily through social media. When faced with unfamiliar profanity-based expressions, respondents generally relied on contextual clues or independent online searches to determine meaning, indicating active engagement with authentic English-language content.

3. Students' Objective Understanding of Profanity-Based Intensifiers

This section presents the findings obtained from Section 3 of the questionnaire, which examined respondents' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers through five interpretation-based multiple-choice questions. Each question presented a profanity-based expression taken from authentic English media and asked respondents to interpret its meaning, grammatical function, communicative intention, or emotional implication. The responses were analyzed using frequency and percentage distributions to identify the interpretation most frequently selected by the respondents. Rather than evaluating respondents based solely on correct or incorrect answers, the analysis focuses on the patterns of interpretation demonstrated by undergraduate English Education students.

a. Interpretation of the Function of "Goddamn"

Question 1 asked respondents to identify the function of the word "Goddamn" in the provided sentence.

Table 3.1 Distribution of Responses for Question 1

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Intensifier	20	66.7
Insult	7	23.3

Noun	2	6.7
Greetings	1	3.3

Table 3.1 shows that the majority of respondents (66.7%) interpreted the word "Goddamn" as an intensifier. Seven respondents (23.3%) interpreted it as an insult, while only a few respondents selected "Noun" (6.7%) or "Greetings" (3.3%). These findings indicate that most respondents recognized the emphatic function of the expression, although nearly one quarter associated it primarily with offensive language rather than emphasis.

b. Interpretation of the Expression "Shit Out of Luck"

Question 2 examined respondents' interpretation of the idiomatic expression "Shit out of luck."

Table 3.2 Distribution of Responses for Question 2

Response	Frequency	Percentage
He's luck turn into bad luck so bad	20	66.7
Shit gonna have a bad luck	6	20.0
Shit running out of luck	4	13.3

Table 3.2 indicates that 20 respondents (66.7%) selected the interpretation that best reflected the contextual meaning of the idiomatic expression. Meanwhile, 6 respondents (20.0%) and 4 respondents (13.3%) selected alternative interpretations. The findings suggest that most respondents were able to infer the intended meaning of the expression from its context, although some respondents appeared to interpret the expression more literally.

c. Interpretation of the Speaker's Intention

Question 3 asked respondents to identify why the speaker used the word "Goddamn."

Table 3.3 Distribution of Responses for Question 3

Response	Frequency	Percentage
To emphasize how angry he is	28	93.3
E	2	6.7

Table 3.3 shows that nearly all respondents (93.3%) interpreted the speaker's use of "Goddamn" as emphasizing anger. Only two respondents (6.7%) selected the alternative response "E", which respondents might not perceived it as a statement of the question, but they perceived it as a pop culture reference, of which they found humorous. This finding indicates that respondents had little difficulty identifying the communicative intention conveyed through the profanity-based intensifier when sufficient contextual information was available.

d. Interpretation of the Appropriate Intensifier

Question 4 required respondents to select the most appropriate word to complete a profanity-based expression.

Table 3.4 Distribution of Responses for Question 4

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Fucking	27	90.0
So much	2	6.7
The	1	3.3

Table 3.4 demonstrates that 27 respondents (90.0%) selected "Fucking" to complete the sentence, while only three respondents selected the remaining alternatives. These findings suggest that respondents were generally familiar with the natural use of profanity-based intensifiers in authentic English expressions.

e. Interpretation of the Speaker's Emotion

Question 5 asked respondents to identify the emotion expressed by the speaker after using a profanity-based intensifier.

Table 3.5 Distribution of Responses for Question 5

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Angry	21	70.0
Happy	4	13.3
Just fucking Peachy!	4	13.3
Sad	1	3.3

Table 4.13 indicates that most respondents (70.0%) interpreted the speaker's emotional state as anger. Four respondents (13.3%) selected "Happy," another four respondents (13.3%) selected "Just fucking Peachy!", this happened due to the statement perceived by these respondents as using Profanity-Based Intensifiers that had a more sarcastic intonation to it, and one respondent (3.3%) selected "Sad." These findings suggest that most respondents successfully recognized the emotional meaning conveyed through the profanity-based intensifier, although a minority interpreted the expression differently.

f. Summary of Respondents' Understanding

Overall, the findings indicate that undergraduate English Education students demonstrated a generally consistent understanding of profanity-based intensifiers encountered in informal English media. Across all five interpretation questions, the majority of respondents selected the same interpretation for each expression, suggesting that they were generally able to recognize the grammatical function, contextual meaning, communicative intention, and emotional implication of profanity-based intensifiers.

The highest level of agreement was observed in Question 3, where 93.3% of respondents interpreted the speaker's intention as emphasizing anger. Similarly, Question 4 showed that 90.0% of respondents recognized the appropriate profanity-based intensifier within its linguistic context. In comparison, Questions 1 and 2

produced greater variation in responses, indicating that identifying grammatical functions and interpreting idiomatic expressions remained more challenging than understanding communicative intention or emotional meaning.

These findings suggest that respondents' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers is influenced by contextual information as well as their familiarity with authentic English media. Overall, the results indicate that respondents were generally able to interpret profanity-based intensifiers appropriately, although some expressions generated multiple interpretations among participants.

4. Students' Perceived Understanding of Profanity-Based Intensifiers

This section presents the findings obtained from Section 4 of the questionnaire, which consisted of Likert-scale statements measuring respondents' perceived understanding of profanity-based intensifiers encountered in informal English media. Unlike the objective multiple-choice questions discussed in the previous section, these statements measured respondents' self-reported confidence, familiarity, and perceived ability to interpret profanity-based intensifiers.

The responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale consisting of Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean scores and standard deviations.

a. Results of the Perceived Understanding Questionnaire

Table 4.1 Mean Scores of Respondents' Perceived Understanding

No.	Statement	Mean	Interpretation
1	I understand that some English swear words function to emphasize meaning rather than insult someone.	3.80	High
2	I can distinguish between profanity used as an insult and profanity used as an intensifier	4.00	High
3	I understand the meaning of profanity-based	4.10	High

	intensifiers when I encounter them in movies or games.		
4	I can identify the emotional meaning conveyed by profanity-based intensifiers.	4.13	High
5	I understand that the same swear word may have different meanings depending on context.	4.00	High
6	I understand that some profanity-based expressions are acceptable among close friends but inappropriate in formal situations.	4.14	High
7	I can understand conversations containing profanity-based intensifiers without translating every word.	4.00	High
8	I feel confident interpreting profanity-based intensifiers in authentic English media.	3.62	High
9	I understand that not every use of profanity is intended to offend another person.	3.76	High
10	I understand why characters in movies or games use profanity-based intensifiers.	4.07	High

Overall Mean = 3.96

Table 4.1 shows that all ten statements obtained mean scores within the High category, indicating that respondents generally perceived themselves as having a good understanding of profanity-based intensifiers encountered in informal English media.

The highest mean score ($M = 4.14$) was obtained for Statement 6, which states, "I understand that some profanity-based expressions are acceptable among close friends but inappropriate in formal situations." This finding suggests that respondents possessed strong awareness of the sociolinguistic appropriateness of profanity-based expressions and were generally able to distinguish between informal and formal contexts of language use.

Similarly, Statement 4 obtained a high mean score ($M = 4.13$), indicating

that respondents believed they could identify the emotional meanings conveyed through profanity-based intensifiers. Statement 3 ($M = 4.10$) and Statement 10 ($M = 4.07$) also received relatively high ratings, suggesting that respondents were confident in understanding the meanings of profanity-based intensifiers and the reasons speakers use such expressions in authentic English media.

The lowest mean score was recorded for Statement 8 ($M = 3.62$), which examined respondents' confidence in interpreting profanity-based intensifiers in authentic English media. Although this statement received the lowest mean among all questionnaire items, it remained within the High category. This finding suggests that while respondents generally perceived themselves as capable of interpreting profanity-based intensifiers, some still expressed uncertainty when encountering such expressions in communication.

Overall, the results indicate that respondents demonstrated positive perceptions. The overall mean score of 3.96 reflects a high level of perceived understanding, suggesting that respondents believed they were able to recognize the meanings, communicative functions, emotional implications, and contextual uses of profanity-based intensifiers encountered in informal English media.

b. Summary of Perceived Understanding

The findings indicate that undergraduate English Education students generally possessed positive perceptions regarding their understanding of profanity-based intensifiers. High mean scores across all questionnaire statements suggest that respondents considered themselves capable of interpreting profanity-based expressions in a variety of communicative contexts. Respondents reported strong awareness of the contextual appropriateness of profanity, the emotional meanings conveyed through profanity-based intensifiers, and the communicative purposes behind their use. At the same time, the comparatively lower mean score related to confidence in interpreting authentic English media suggests that some respondents still experienced uncertainty when encountering unfamiliar expressions in naturally occurring conversations.

Taken together, these findings complement the interpretation-based results presented in Section 4.1. While Section 4.1 illustrates how respondents interpreted specific profanity-based expressions, the present reflects respondents' own perceptions of their understanding. The combination of these two forms of evidence provides a more comprehensive description of undergraduate English Education students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers in informal English media.

c. Comparison Between Students' Objective Understanding and Perceived Understanding

To provide a more comprehensive description of respondents' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers, the findings from the interpretation-based questionnaire (Section 3) were compared with the results of the perceived understanding questionnaire (Section 4).

Table 4.3 Comparison Between Objective and Perceived Understanding

Variable	Result	Interpretation
Objective Understanding	77.3%	High
Perceived Understanding	Mean = 3.96/5.00	High

Table 4.3 shows that both the objective understanding and perceived understanding of the respondents fall within the High category. The interpretation-based questionnaire produced an overall proportion of 77.3%, indicating that the majority of respondents selected the intended interpretation for the profanity-based expressions presented in the questionnaire. Meanwhile, the perceived understanding questionnaire produced an overall mean score of 3.96 out of 5.00, indicating that respondents generally believed they possessed a good understanding of profanity-based intensifiers encountered in informal English media.

Although both measurements indicate a high level of understanding, they assess different aspects of language competence. The interpretation-based

questionnaire reflects respondents' demonstrated understanding when interpreting authentic profanity-based expressions, whereas the Likert-scale questionnaire reflects respondents' self-perceptions of their own understanding. The comparison also shows a slight difference between demonstrated interpretation and self-perception. While respondents generally expressed high confidence in their understanding ($M = 3.96$), the interpretation-based questionnaire revealed greater variation in Questions 1 and 2 than in Questions 3 and 4. This finding suggests that respondents were more consistent in interpreting communicative intention and contextual meaning than grammatical function or idiomatic meaning. Therefore, respondents' confidence was generally supported by their interpretations, although confidence did not always result in completely consistent interpretations across all language features. Overall, combining the interpretation-based questionnaire and the perceived understanding questionnaire provides a more comprehensive picture of undergraduate English Education students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers than relying on only one form of measurement.

B. Discussion

This section discusses the findings of the study in relation to the research questions, the theoretical framework presented in Chapter II, and previous studies. The discussion focuses on respondents' objective understanding of profanity-based intensifiers, their perceived understanding, and the relationship between these two forms of measurement.

1. Students' Objective Understanding of Profanity-Based Intensifiers

The findings of the objective comprehension test indicate that undergraduate English Education students demonstrated varying levels of understanding across the four indicators measured in this study, namely lexical interpretation, grammatical interpretation, contextual interpretation, and pragmatic interpretation. Although the respondents generally showed an adequate understanding of profanity-based intensifiers, differences among the indicators suggest that some aspects of understanding were more challenging than others.

Lexical interpretation reflects respondents' ability to understand language is about how they can figure out what profanities and phrases mean. If they got a score in this area, it means the students knew what these profanities meant, which they probably saw a lot in informal English media like movies and TV shows. This finding supports the theory of incidental vocabulary acquisition proposed by Webb (2020), who argues that repeated exposure to authentic language input contributes to vocabulary development without explicit instruction. Through frequent exposure to movies, television series, video games, and social media, learners gradually acquire the meanings of unfamiliar words through repeated encounters.

Grammatical interpretation measured respondents' ability to identify the grammatical functions of profanity-based intensifiers within sentences. If this indicator obtained a lower score than the others, the finding suggests that although students recognized profanity as vocabulary, they experienced greater difficulty identifying its grammatical role in authentic communication. This finding is consistent with Allan (2021), who explains that profanity often performs multiple grammatical functions depending on the communicative context, making it more difficult for second-language learners to analyze than ordinary vocabulary.

Contextual interpretation assessed respondents' ability to infer meaning based on conversational situations. When profanity appears in authentic dialogue, contextual information often assists learners in identifying the intended meaning. This finding supports Nation's (2022) view that contextual clues play an important role in vocabulary comprehension because learners use surrounding linguistic information to infer unfamiliar expressions. It also aligns with pragmatic theories suggesting that language meaning is strongly influenced by situational context. Pragmatic interpretation measured respondents' ability to identify the communicative intention behind profanity-based intensifiers. Understanding why speakers use profanity requires learners to recognize emotions, interpersonal relationships, and communicative purposes rather than relying solely on dictionary meanings. According to Culpeper (2021), pragmatic competence involves interpreting speakers' intended meanings within social interaction. Therefore,

respondents who successfully identified communicative intentions demonstrated a higher level of pragmatic competence.

Overall, the objective comprehension results suggest that students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers extends beyond simple vocabulary recognition. Their performance reflects different levels of lexical, grammatical, contextual, and pragmatic competence developed through exposure to authentic English communication.

2. Students' Perceived Understanding of Profanity-Based Intensifiers

The findings from the Likert-scale questionnaire indicate respondents' perceptions regarding their own ability to understand profanity-based intensifiers. The overall mean score represents respondents' confidence in recognizing and interpreting profanity encountered in informal English media. Students generally reported positive perceptions of their own understanding. Frequent exposure to English-language media appears to increase learners' confidence when encountering profanity-based expressions. This finding supports the concept of self-efficacy proposed by Bandura (2021), which suggests that repeated successful experiences contribute to individuals' confidence in performing particular tasks.

However, perceived understanding should not be interpreted as evidence of actual language competence. Self-assessment reflects learners' beliefs about their abilities, which may differ from their demonstrated performance. Consequently, perceived understanding provides complementary information rather than replacing objective measurement.

3. Comparison Between Objective and Perceived Understanding

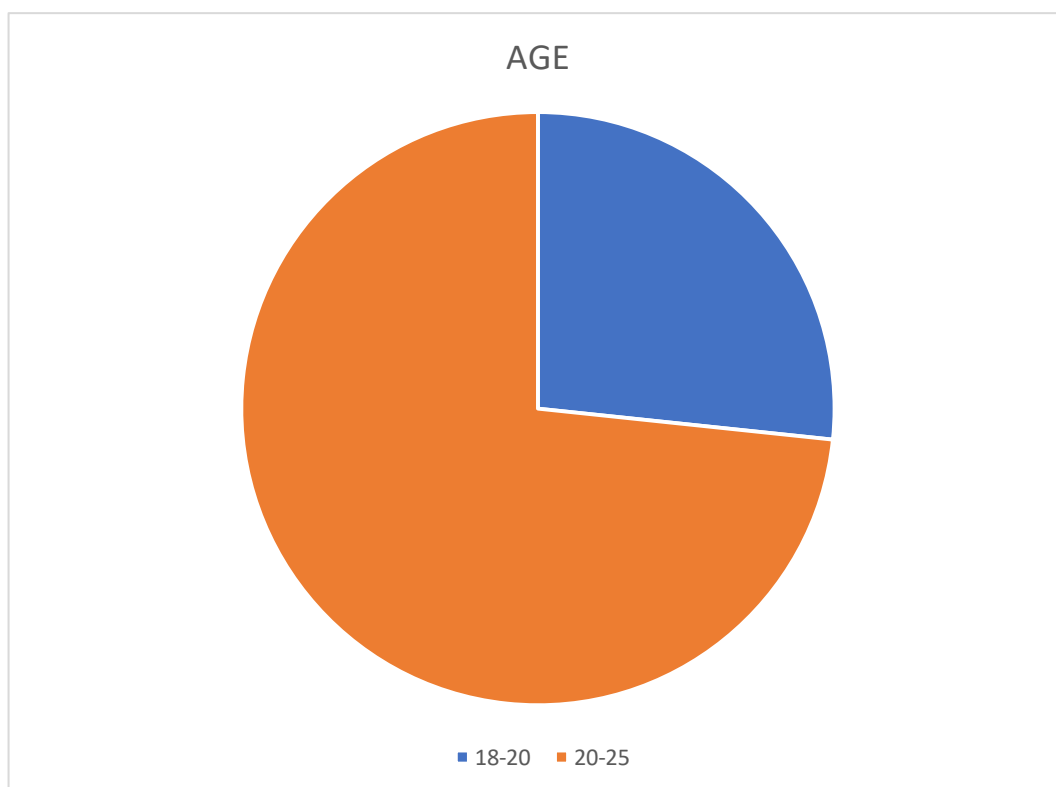
One of the most significant findings of this study is the comparison between respondents' objective understanding and their perceived understanding of profanity-based intensifiers. If the perceived understanding score exceeds the objective understanding score, the findings suggest that respondents tended to overestimate their comprehension. Conversely, if both measurements are relatively

similar, the findings indicate consistency between respondents' confidence and their demonstrated performance. This comparison supports the argument that objective assessment and self-assessment measure different aspects of language competence. While objective questions evaluate actual comprehension, self-report questionnaires capture respondents' confidence and personal beliefs regarding their own abilities.

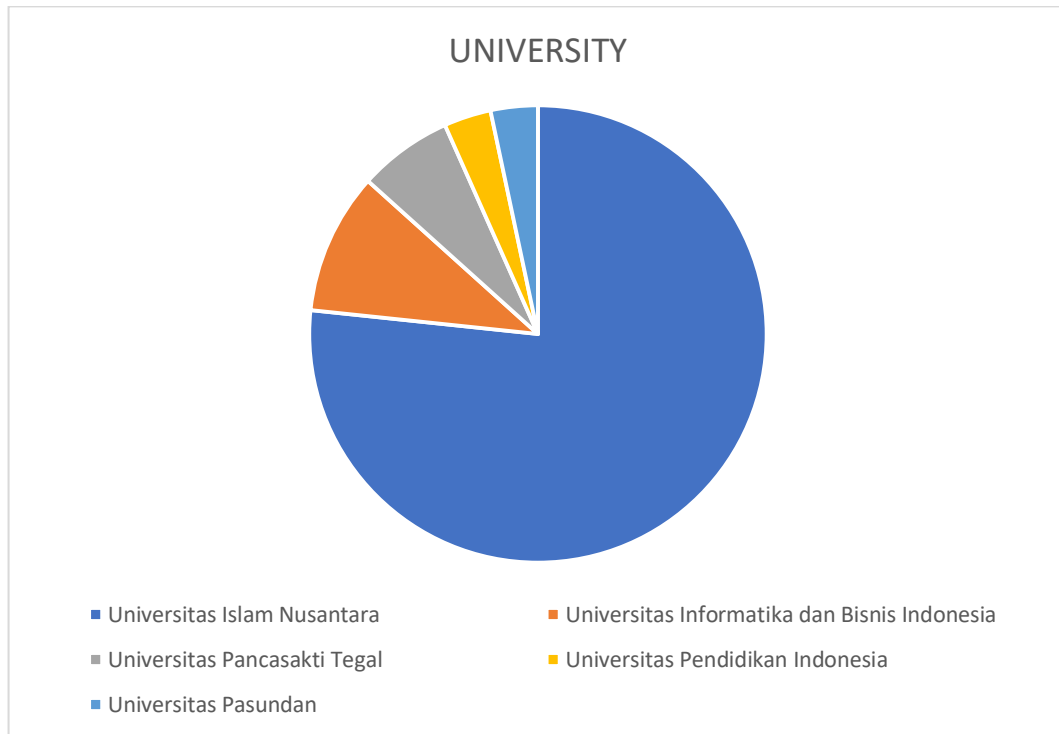
Therefore, combining both forms of assessment provides a more comprehensive understanding of English Education students' knowledge of profanity-based intensifiers than relying on only one measurement approach.

4. Pie Chart of the Result

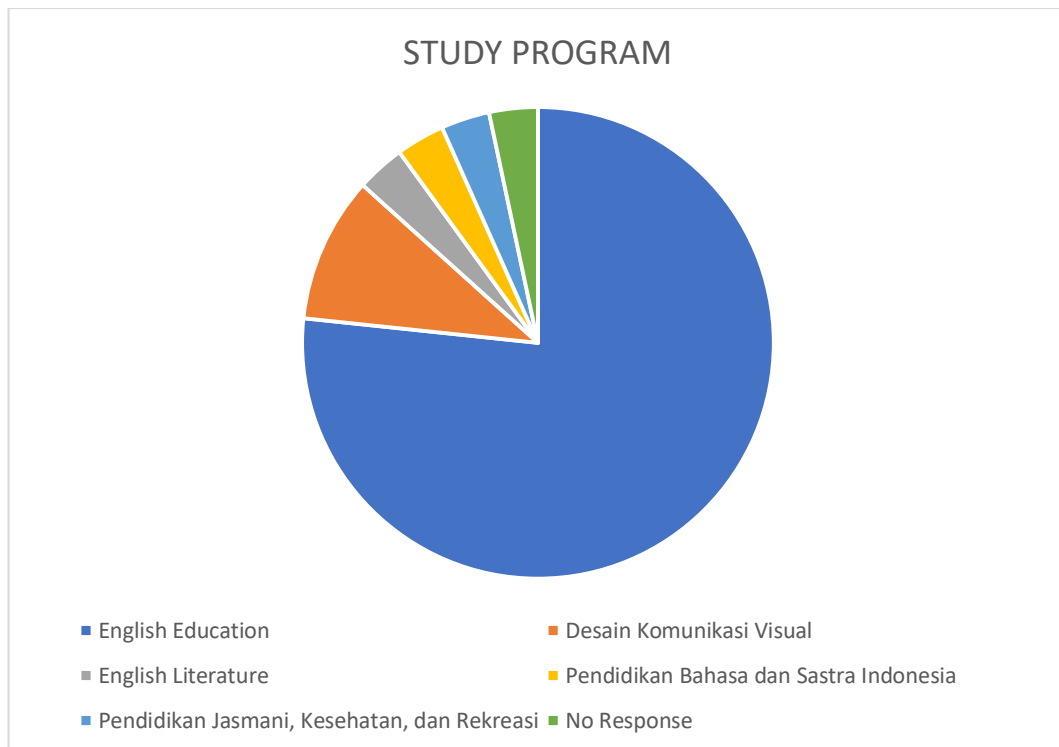
a. Distribution by Study Age



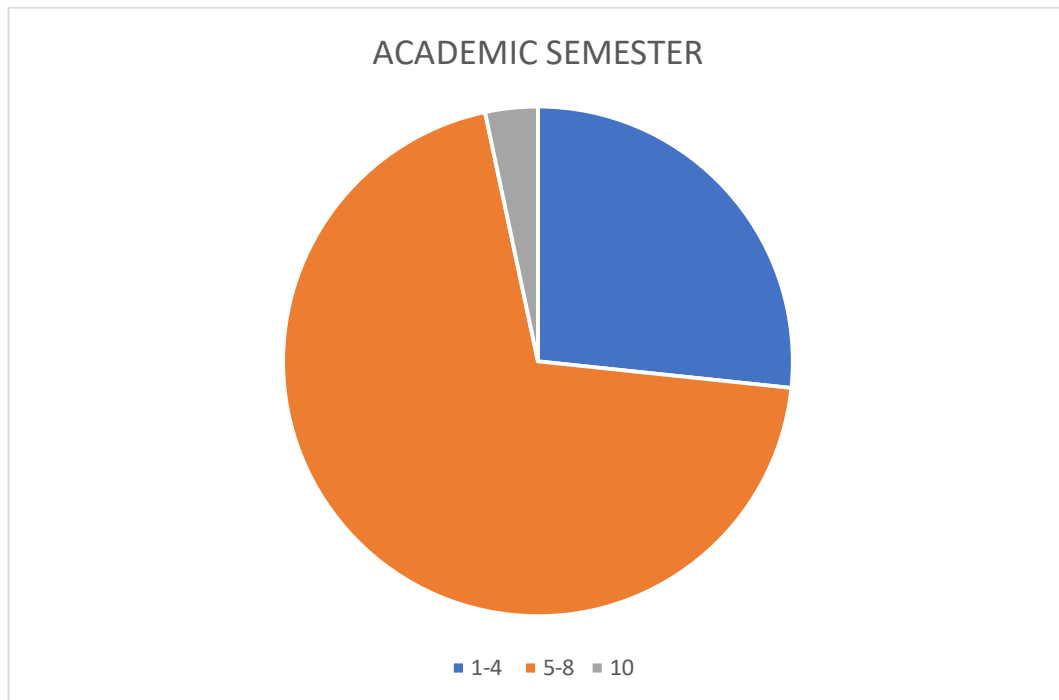
b. Distribution by University



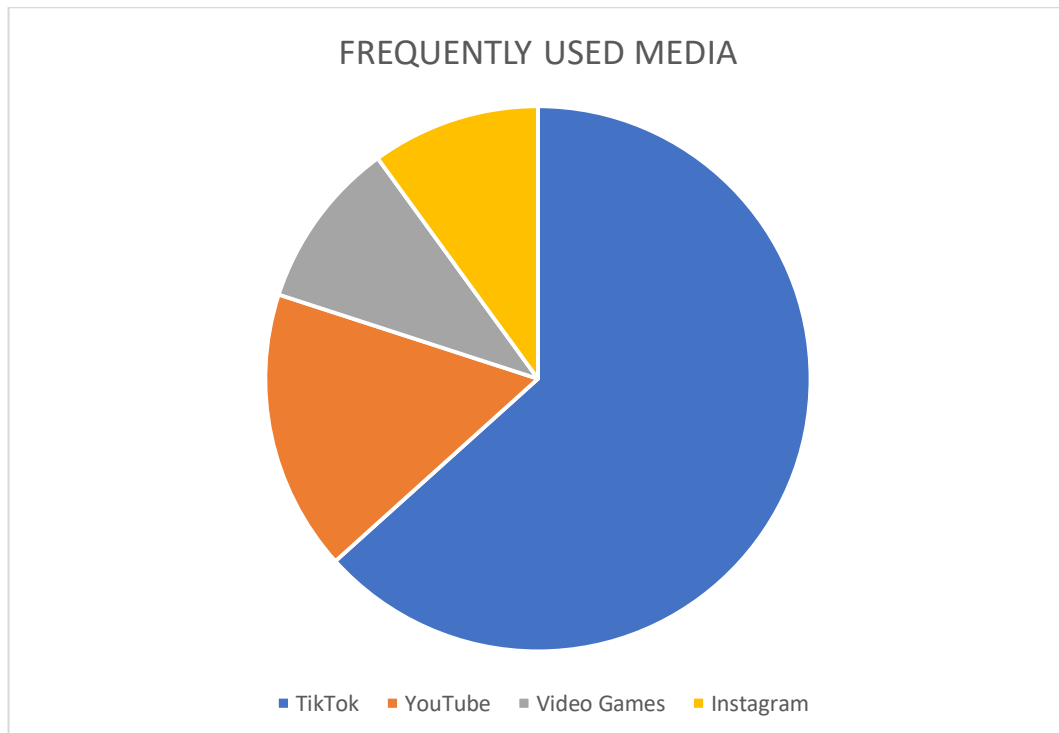
c. Distrubution by Study Program



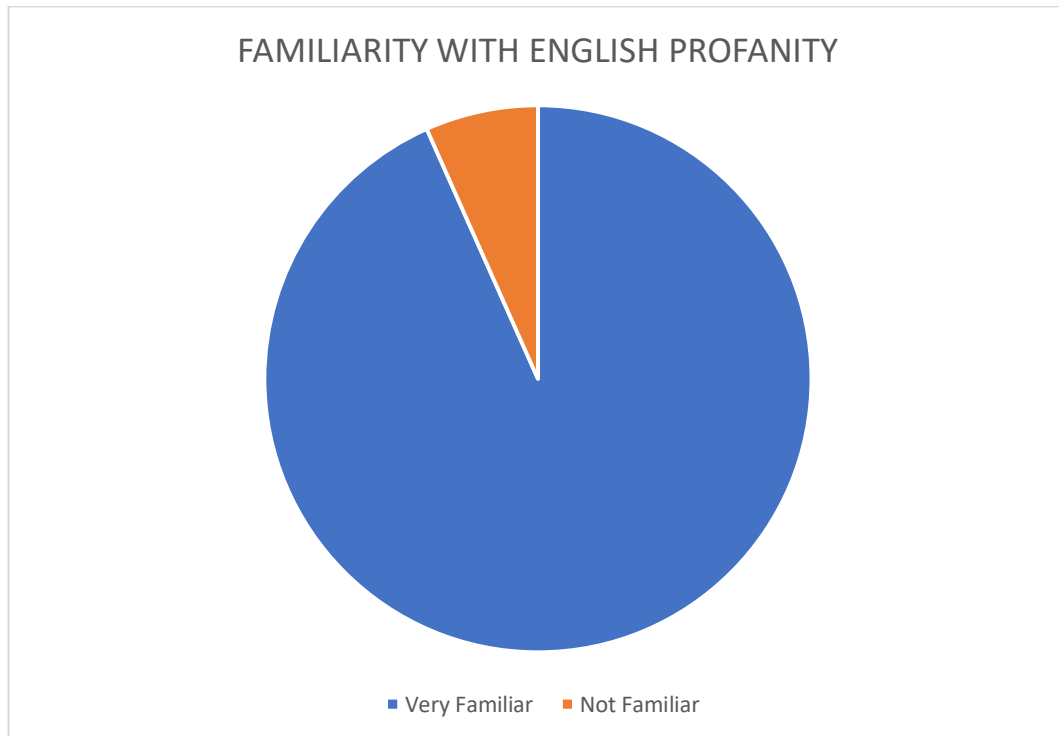
d. Distribution by Academic Semester



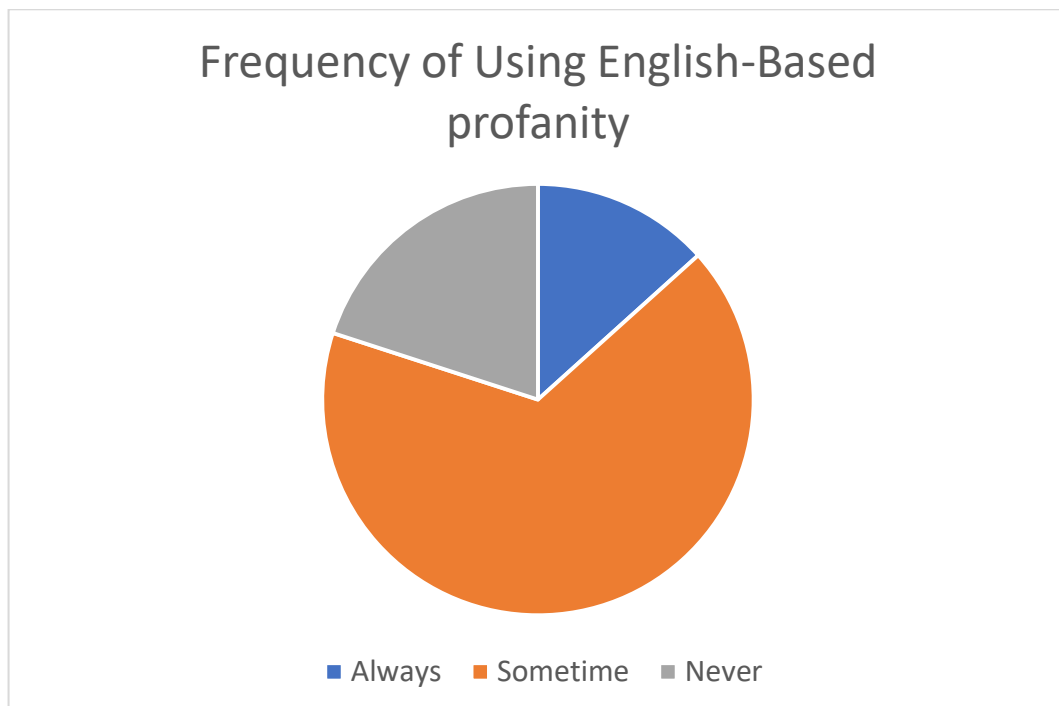
e. Most Frequently Accessed English-Language Media



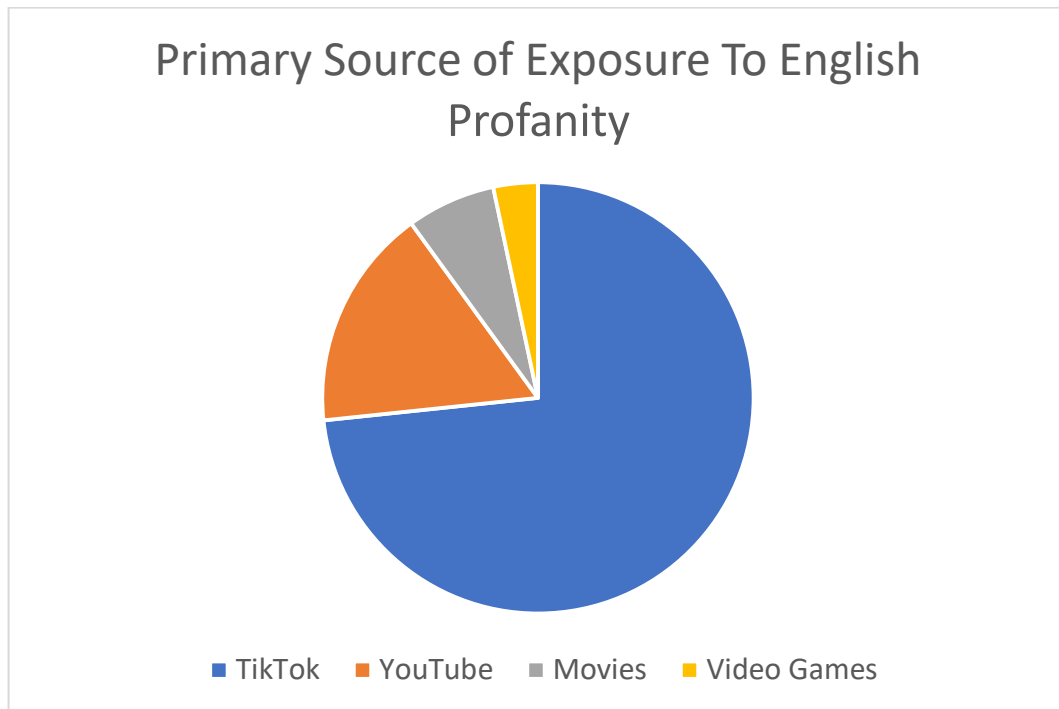
f. Familiarity with English Profanity



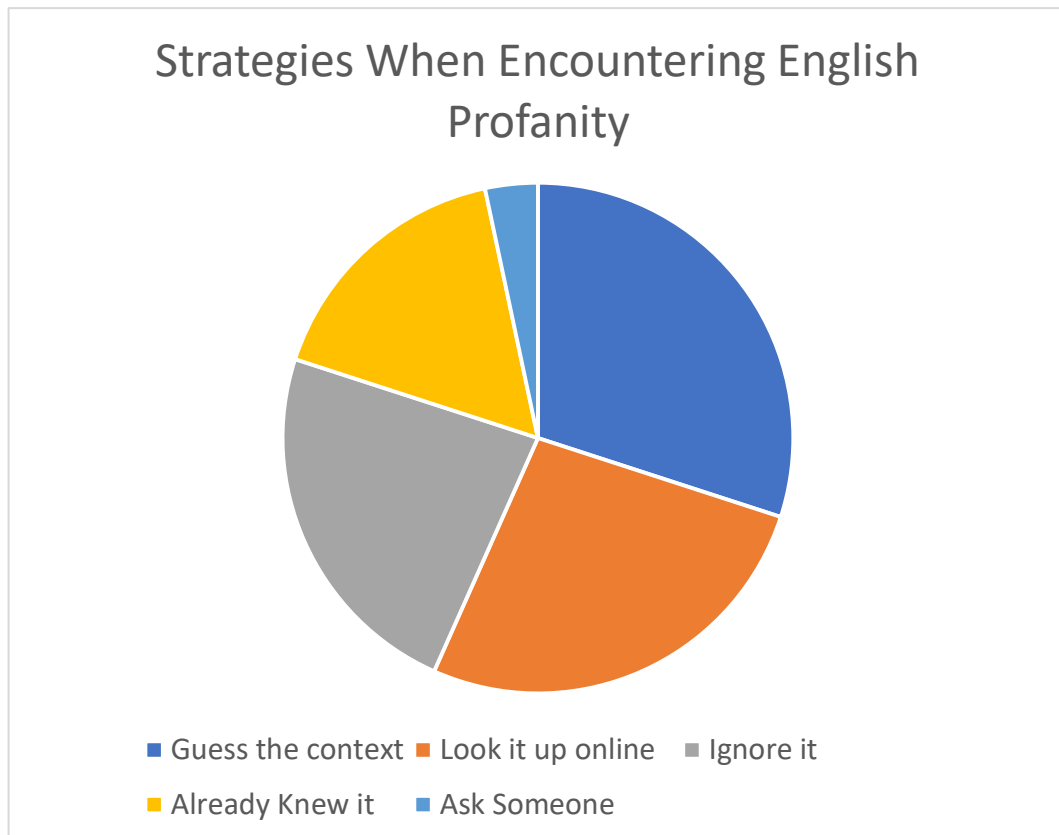
g. Frequency of Using English-Based profanity



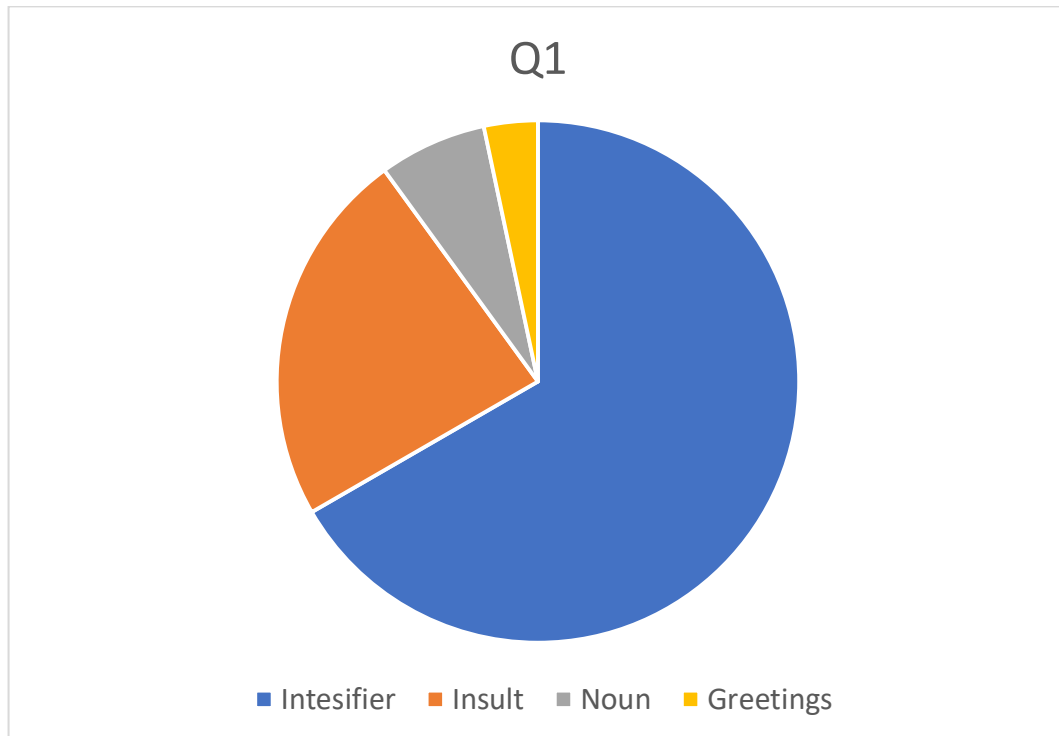
h.Primary Source of Exposure To English Profanity



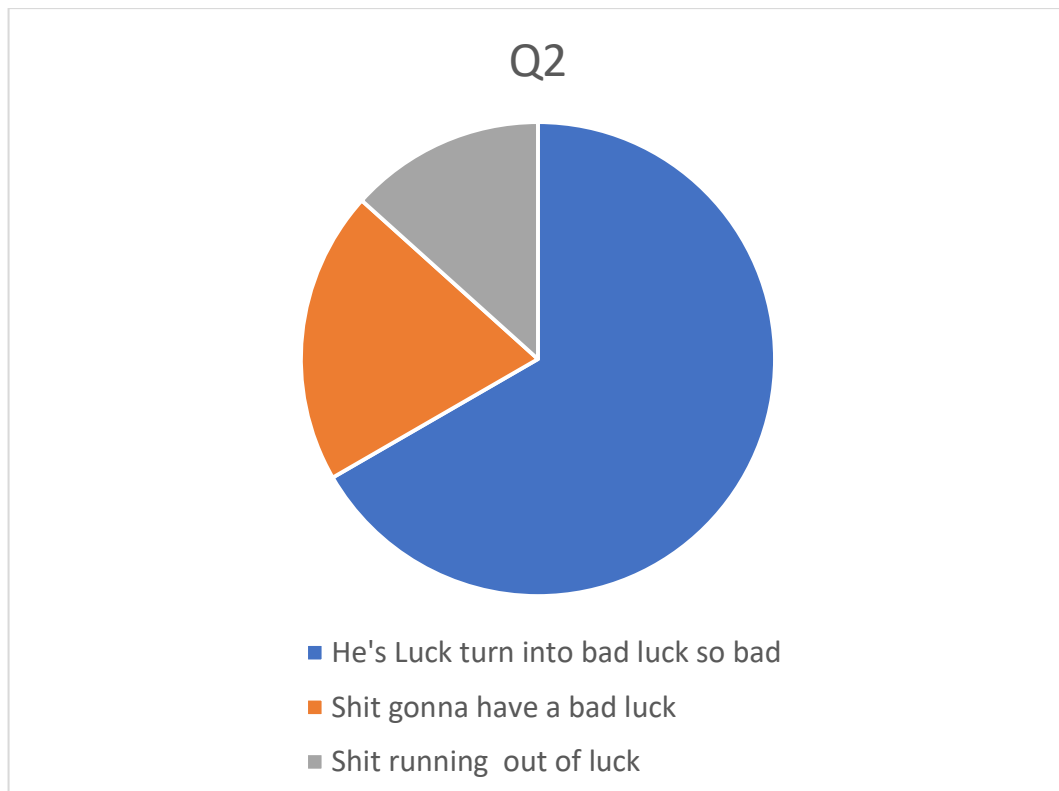
i. Respondents' Strategies When Encountering English Profanity



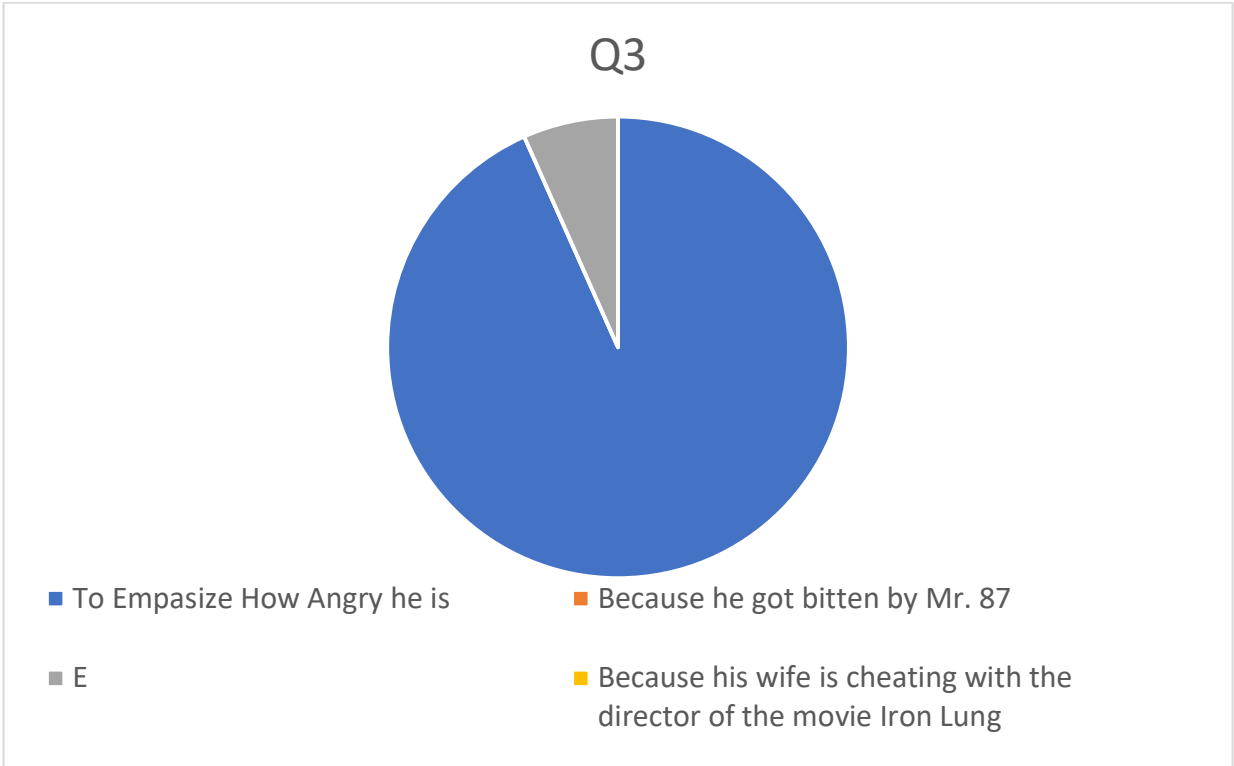
j. Question 1



k. Question 2



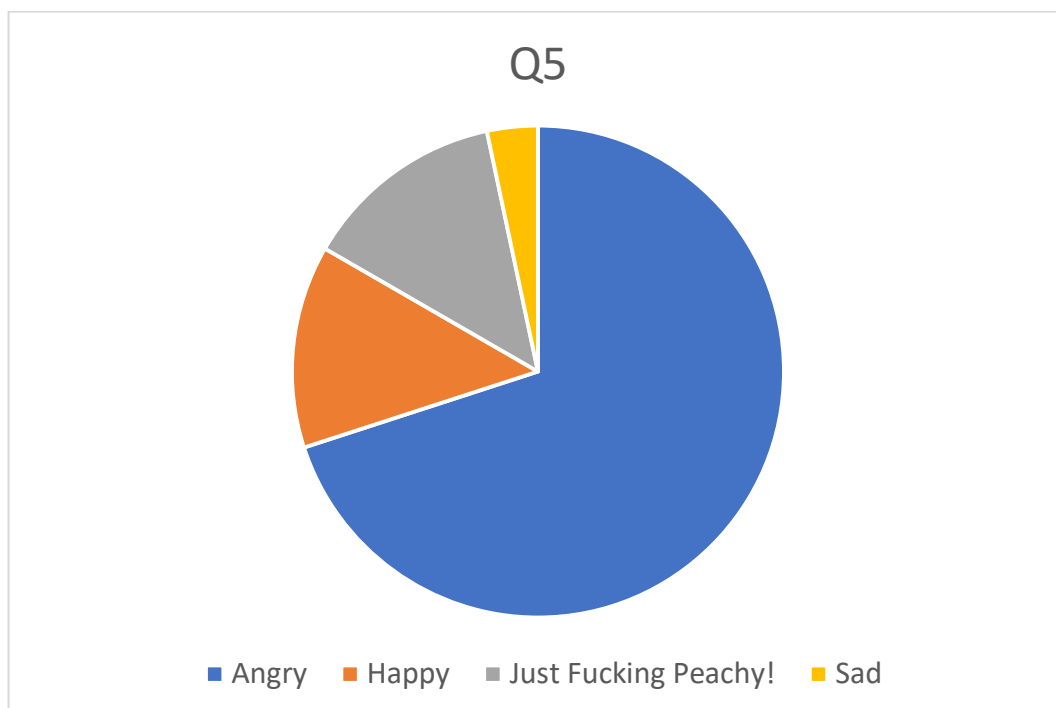
l. Question 3



m. Question 4



n. Question 5



4. Relationship with Previous Studies

The findings of this study are generally consistent with previous research on profanity, intensifiers, and pragmatic language use. The first finding showed that most respondents were frequently exposed to profanity-based intensifiers through informal English media, with TikTok identified as the primary source of exposure by 73.3% of respondents. This finding supports the theory of incidental vocabulary learning proposed by Webb and Nation (2017), who argued that repeated exposure to authentic language input facilitates vocabulary acquisition. Although their study focused on vocabulary development in general, the present findings suggest that profanity-based intensifiers are also acquired incidentally through repeated encounters with authentic English media.

This finding is further supported by Wirtz (2025), who reported that learners develop their understanding of intensifiers through authentic spoken interaction and continuous exposure to natural language. Wirtz emphasized that socio-pragmatic

competence develops alongside language exposure, indicating that learners gradually understand not only vocabulary meanings but also their communicative functions. The present study extends this perspective by demonstrating that undergraduate students become familiar with profanity-based intensifiers through their regular engagement with informal English media such as TikTok, YouTube, movies, and video games.

The second finding revealed that respondents demonstrated a relatively high level of familiarity with the selected profanity-based intensifiers. Most respondents correctly interpreted expressions such as "Goddamn," "Fucking," and "Shit out of luck" within their respective contexts. These findings are consistent with Jay (2009), who explained that profanity serves multiple communicative functions beyond expressing offense, including emphasis, emotional expression, and interpersonal communication. Rather than interpreting profanity solely as offensive language, respondents generally recognized its role as a linguistic intensifier.

Recent research by Stapleton and Beers Fägersten (2023) further supports these findings. They argued that swearing performs various interpersonal and pragmatic functions, including expressing emotion, creating solidarity, conveying humor, and emphasizing meaning. Their study also highlighted that the interpretation of swear words depends largely on contextual information and speaker intention rather than on the lexical meaning of the words themselves. Similarly, respondents in the present study demonstrated stronger performance when interpreting communicative intention and contextual meaning than when identifying grammatical functions, indicating that they relied primarily on pragmatic understanding.

The third finding showed that respondents generally interpreted profanity-based intensifiers through contextual and pragmatic cues. For example, 93.3% of respondents correctly identified the speaker's intention in the contextual interpretation tasks, while 70.0% correctly recognized the speaker's emotional state. These findings support Levinson's (1983) theory of Pragmatics, which states that

meaning is constructed through context, speaker intention, and shared communicative knowledge rather than through literal lexical meaning alone.

The findings also align with Adrefiza et al. (2025), who concluded that intensifiers derive their communicative value primarily from pragmatic context and cultural interpretation rather than from dictionary definitions. Their research demonstrated that speakers rely heavily on contextual information when interpreting intensifiers during interaction. Likewise, respondents in the present study interpreted profanity-based intensifiers by considering the communicative situation instead of relying solely on literal meanings.

Finally, the overall Likert-scale mean score of 3.96 indicates that respondents generally perceived themselves as having a high level of understanding of profanity-based intensifiers. This finding is consistent with Nation (2001), who suggested that repeated encounters with vocabulary strengthen learners' depth of lexical knowledge, and with Webb (2007), who found that vocabulary knowledge develops gradually through multiple exposures to authentic language. Together, these studies support the conclusion that continuous interaction with informal English media contributes to learners' confidence and understanding of profanity-based intensifiers.

Overall, the present study supports previous findings regarding the importance of authentic language exposure and pragmatic interpretation in understanding profanity. At the same time, it contributes to the existing literature by specifically examining undergraduate students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers encountered in informal English media, a topic that has received relatively limited attention in previous research.

C. Answers to the Research Questions

This section presents direct answers to the research questions based on the findings obtained from the questionnaire.

1. Research Question 1

How frequently are English Education students exposed to profanity-based intensifiers through informal English media?

The findings indicate that English Education students are frequently exposed to profanity-based intensifiers through informal English media. Most respondents reported that TikTok was their primary source of exposure (73.3%), followed by YouTube (16.7%), movies (6.7%), and video games (3.3%). Furthermore, 93.3% of the respondents stated that they were familiar with English profanity, while 66.7% reported that they sometimes used English-based profanity in daily communication. These findings suggest that profanity-based intensifiers are commonly encountered by English Education students through various forms of authentic English media, particularly social media platforms.

2. Research Question 2

Which profanity-based intensifiers are most familiar to students?

The findings indicate that respondents demonstrated the greatest familiarity with profanity-based intensifiers presented in authentic English expressions, particularly the expressions "Goddamn," "Fucking," and the idiomatic expression "Shit out of luck." Most respondents interpreted these expressions consistently within their contextual meanings. For example, 66.7% identified "Goddamn" as an intensifier, 90.0% selected "Fucking" as the appropriate intensifier in a contextual sentence, and 66.7% correctly interpreted the contextual meaning of "Shit out of luck." These findings suggest that respondents were generally familiar with profanity-based intensifiers commonly encountered in informal English media.

3. Research Question 3

How do students interpret the functions of profanity-based intensifiers in English expressions?

The findings demonstrate that students generally interpret profanity-based intensifiers according to their communicative functions rather than their literal meanings. Most respondents recognized that profanity-based expressions function to emphasize emotions, strengthen meaning, and convey speakers' intentions within specific contexts. This is reflected in the interpretation task, where 93.3% of respondents identified the speaker's intention behind the use of "Goddamn," while 70.0% successfully interpreted the speaker's emotional state. The findings also show that students relied heavily on contextual information when interpreting profanity-based intensifiers, although some variation remained in interpreting grammatical functions and idiomatic expressions. Overall, the results indicate that respondents understood profanity-based intensifiers primarily as contextual and pragmatic devices used to intensify meaning in informal English communication.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study aimed to investigate English Education students' exposure to and understanding of profanity-based intensifiers in informal English media. Based on the findings presented in Chapter IV, the following conclusions can be drawn.

A. Conclusion

First, the findings indicate that English Education students are frequently exposed to profanity-based intensifiers through informal English media. Among the 30 respondents who participated in this study, TikTok was identified as both the primary English-language media platform (63.3%) and the primary source through which respondents encountered English profanity (73.3%). In addition, 93.3% of the respondents reported being familiar with English profanity, while 66.7% stated that they sometimes used English-based profanity in everyday communication. These findings suggest that profanity-based intensifiers are commonly encountered through authentic English media, particularly social media platforms.

Second, the findings show that respondents demonstrated familiarity with the selected profanity-based intensifiers presented in this study. A total of 66.7% of respondents interpreted "Goddamn" as functioning as an intensifier, while 66.7% interpreted the idiomatic expression "Shit out of luck" according to its contextual meaning. Furthermore, 90.0% selected "Fucking" as the most appropriate intensifier in a contextual sentence. These findings indicate that respondents were generally familiar with profanity-based intensifiers commonly encountered in informal English communication.

Third, the findings demonstrate that respondents generally interpreted profanity-based intensifiers according to their communicative functions rather than their literal meanings. A total of 93.3% of respondents recognized that the use of "Goddamn" emphasized the speaker's anger, while 70.0% correctly interpreted the speaker's emotional state as anger. These findings indicate that respondents relied primarily on contextual and pragmatic information when interpreting profanity-

based intensifiers. Nevertheless, greater variation in responses to the grammatical and idiomatic interpretation questions suggests that these aspects remain more challenging than interpreting communicative intention and emotional meaning.

Finally, the perceived understanding questionnaire revealed that respondents generally possessed positive perceptions of their own understanding of profanity-based intensifiers. The overall mean score of 3.96 was categorized as High, indicating that respondents believed they were able to understand the meanings, communicative functions, emotional implications, and contextual uses of profanity-based intensifiers encountered in informal English media. When compared with the interpretation-based findings, respondents' self-perceptions were generally consistent with their demonstrated interpretations, although some variation remained in questions involving grammatical function and idiomatic meaning.

Overall, this study concludes that English Education students are frequently exposed to profanity-based intensifiers through informal English media and generally demonstrate a good understanding of their functions and meanings. The findings suggest that students primarily interpret profanity-based intensifiers through contextual and pragmatic cues rather than literal word meanings. Furthermore, the combination of interpretation-based analysis and perceived understanding provides a more comprehensive picture of students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers in authentic English communication.

B. Implications

The findings of this study provide several implications for English language teaching, language learning, and future research concerning informal English expressions.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the growing body of research on informal English language acquisition by demonstrating that students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers extends beyond vocabulary recognition. The findings indicate that understanding these expressions involves lexical, grammatical, contextual, and pragmatic interpretation. By examining these

four dimensions simultaneously, this study offers a broader framework for investigating learners' comprehension of informal English expressions encountered in authentic communication.

From a pedagogical perspective, the findings suggest that English language educators should recognize the increasing role of authentic English media in students' language development. Movies, television series, video games, social media, and other digital platforms expose learners to language varieties that are rarely discussed in formal classroom instruction. Rather than ignoring the existence of profanity-based intensifiers, educators should guide students in understanding their meanings, grammatical functions, communicative purposes, and appropriate contexts of use. Such an approach promotes students' pragmatic competence and sociolinguistic awareness while reinforcing the importance of using language appropriately according to context.

From a methodological perspective, this study demonstrates the value of combining objective assessment with self-reported perception when investigating language understanding. The comparison between respondents' objective comprehension and perceived understanding provides a more comprehensive evaluation of learners' abilities than relying on only one measurement approach.

C. Suggestions

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, this research proposes the following suggestions.

1. Suggestions for Students

Students are encouraged to continue engaging with authentic English-language media as a supplementary source of language learning. Exposure to movies, television series, video games, podcasts, and social media provides opportunities to encounter natural language used by native and proficient English speakers.

However, students should focus not only on understanding the literal meanings of profanity-based intensifiers but also on recognizing their grammatical functions, contextual meanings, pragmatic purposes, and levels of appropriateness in different communicative situations.

Students should also develop greater awareness of language register. Although profanity-based intensifiers are common in many forms of informal English media, they are generally inappropriate in formal academic, professional, and institutional settings. Understanding such expressions should therefore contribute to students' communicative competence rather than encourage their indiscriminate use.

2. Suggestions for English Lecturers

English lecturers are encouraged to incorporate authentic English materials into language instruction to enhance students' vocabulary knowledge, pragmatic competence, and sociolinguistic awareness. Carefully selected examples from movies, television series, video games, or digital media provide valuable opportunities to discuss how informal English expressions function in real communication.

Lecturers should also encourage critical discussions regarding language appropriateness by helping students distinguish between informal and formal language varieties. Teaching students why speakers use profanity-based intensifiers and when such expressions are socially acceptable contributes to learners' overall communicative competence and prepares them to interact effectively in diverse English-speaking environments.

3. Suggestions for Future Researchers

Future researchers are encouraged to expand this study by involving a larger number of participants representing universities from different regions of Indonesia. A broader sample would improve the generalizability of the findings and provide a more comprehensive understanding of Indonesian learners' comprehension of profanity-based intensifiers.

Future studies may also employ mixed-methods or qualitative approaches, such as interviews, classroom observations, or think-aloud protocols, to explore how learners interpret profanity-based intensifiers during authentic communication. Such methods would complement quantitative findings by providing deeper insights into learners' thought processes and language interpretation strategies. In addition, future research may investigate other forms of informal English expressions, including slang, idioms, internet language, euphemisms, or culturally specific expressions. Comparative studies involving learners with different English proficiency levels, academic disciplines, or cultural backgrounds may also provide valuable contributions to the field of English language education.

Finally, future researchers are encouraged to examine the relationship between exposure to authentic English media and actual language production. While this study focused on students' understanding of profanity-based intensifiers, further research may investigate whether comprehension of such expressions influences learners' spoken or written English in real communicative contexts.

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APPENDIXES

Appendixes 1 Supervisor Appointment Letter



UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NUSANTARA
FAKULTAS KEGURUAN DAN ILMU PENDIDIKAN
Kampus : 2, Sialitarna - Jalan No. 530 Bandung 40132 Tlp./Fax : 022 7505708
 Website : www.uin-sialitarna.ac.id Email : keg@uin-sialitarna.ac.id

KEPENTINGAN BAKU
FAKULTAS KEGURUAN DAN ILMU PENDIDIKAN
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NUSANTARA
Nomer/C/ /Keg-Fak-FKIP-UINUS/0000

TENTANG
PENETAPAN DOSEN PEMBIMBING TUGAS AKHIR MAHASISWA

MEMERANG :

1. Bahwa tugas akhir ialah karya ilmiah yang dibuat oleh mahasiswa sebagai prasyarat untuk mencapai derajat gelar sarjana yang memuat beberapa masalah baik penelitian dan pengujian tentang implikasi penerapan atau implementasi dari pengetahuan dan teknologi yang memperhatikan dan memperhatikan nilai humaniora, etika, dengan keahliannya, kefarmasian, kesehatan, atau cara dan atau lain-lain yang dapat menghasilkan artikel, laporan, dan bentuk media;
2. Bahwa dalam upaya penyusunan artikel, diperlukan dosen pembimbing yang profesional dan memiliki kompetensi yang relevan dengan topik permasalahan sehingga artikel hasil tersebut dapat dipertanggungjawabkan secara akademik;
3. Bahwa tugas akhir dibuat oleh mahasiswa dengan bimbingan dosen yang selama hidup keahliannya atau keahliannya dengan program studi, serta ditetapkan melalui Surat Keputusan Dekan.

MEMANGGAT :

1. Undang-undang No. 20 Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional;
2. Undang-undang No. 12 Tahun 2012 tentang Pendidikan Tinggi;
3. Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 4 Tahun 2014 tentang Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan Tinggi dan Pengelolaan Perguruan Tinggi;
4. Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset dan Teknologi No. 3 Tahun 2020 tentang Standar Nasional Pendidikan Tinggi;
5. Peraturan Rektor Universitas Islam Nusantara No. 1 Tahun 2022 Perubahan atas Peraturan Rektor No. 3 Tahun 2020 tentang Pedoman Akademik Universitas Islam Nusantara;
6. Peraturan Rektor Universitas Islam Nusantara Nomor 1 Tahun 2023 tentang Tugas Akhir Mahasiswa Universitas Islam Nusantara

MEMPERHATIKAN :

1. Pedoman Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan Akademik Program Sarjana FKIP Uninus;
2. Standar Prosedur Operasional FKIP Uninus tentang Prosedur dan Bimbingan Penelitian Artikel Ilmiah;
3. Unduh penetapan Dosen Pembimbing Tugas Akhir pada Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris FKIP Uninus.

MEMUTUSKAN :

MEMUTAKHIRAN

PERTAMA

Menzekatkan dan menetapkan nama di bawah ini:

Paulina Novaria, M.Hum Sebagai Pembimbing I

Siti Supiah, M.Pd Sebagai Pembimbing II

untuk membimbing penulisan Tugas Akhir atau nama mahasiswa:

Nama : Kim Mochamad Syahrizal

NIM : 4103212221004

Program Studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris

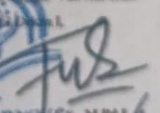
Judul Penelitian : *Students' Understanding of Profanity-Based Intertextuality in Informal English Media*

KEPUTUSAN

KEPUTUSAN

Prosedur pembimbingan menajuk pada Petunjuk Teknis Penyelenggaraan Tugas Akhir Program Sarjana (Peraturan Rektor Uninus Nomor 01 Tahun 2023 tentang Tugas Akhir Mahasiswa)

Keputusan ini berlaku selama 1 (satu) semester terhitung mulai tanggal ditetapkan. Apabila dikemudian hari terdapat kekhilafan, maka akan diperbaiki sebagaimana mestinya.

Ditetapkan di : Bandung
 Pada tanggal : 20 Juli 2023
 Dekan I

FKIP UNINUS/ SN, M.Pd, I, A
FAKULTAS KEGURUAN DAN ILMU PENDIDIKAN

Lampiran disampaikan kepada:

1. YB. Pimpinan Program Studi di lingkungan FKIP
2. YB. Pimpinan Uninus, sebagai acuan untuk ditindaklanjuti;
3. YB. Dosen Pembimbing Skripsi, sebagai dasar pelaksanaan kegiatan bimbingan;
4. YB. Mahasiswa yang bersangkutan, sebagai dasar pelaksanaan kegiatan bimbingan;
5. Arsip.

UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NUSANTARA
FAKULTAS KEGURUAN DAN ILMU PENDIDIKAN

SEKRETARIAT KAMPUS JL. SOEKARNO-HATTA NO. 530 TELP/FAXE 75087088 KOTA BANDUNG 40288

KARTU BIMBINGAN PENULISAN SKRIPSI

Nama Lengkap : Riza Mochamad Syahrizal
Jenis kelamin : Laki-laki
No. Induk Mahasiswa : 1632122221004
Program Studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
Pembimbing : Prof. Dr. Novaria N. Hum
Siti Sepiah, M.Pd
Judul Skripsi : Students Understanding of
Priority-based Interference
in informal media.
Nomor Formulir :
Pengajuan Judul/
Pembimbing : _____

NOMOR URUT	TANGGAL PERTEMUAN	CATATAN PEMBIMBING	PARAF PEMBIMBING	
			I	II
1	10/06 2026	Bim Bingan	Lw	
2	15/06 2026	BIMBINGAN	Lw	
3	24/06 2026	BIMBINGAN	Lw	
4	15/07 2026	BIMBINGAN	Lw	
5	27/07 2026	BIMBINGAN		Lw

NOMOR URUT	TANGGAL PERTEMUAN	CATATAN PEMBIMBING	PARAF PEMBIMBING	
			I	II
6.	27/07 2020	Bimbingan		M

Appendix 3 Expert Judgement

Application Letter

Name: Riza Mochamad Syahrizal

NIM: 41032122221004

Study Program: English Education

Faculty: Faculty of Teacher Training and Education

Address: Kp. Gandasoli Kidul RT.04 RW. 08 Ds.Gandasari

I respectfully request your willingness to provide expert judgment for the research instrument of my study entitled:

"Students' Understanding Of Profanity-Based Intensifiers In Informal English Media"

I sincerely hope that you will be willing to review and evaluate the research instrument to ensure its validity and appropriateness for this study. Thank you for your time, attention, and valuable assistance. I greatly appreciate your support.

Bandung, July 28 2026

Acknowledge By,

Advisor,

Applicant,

Paulina Novarita M. Hum

NIDN: 0415118606

Riza Mochamad Syahrizal

NIM: 41032122221004

Appendix 4 Documentation

