

Types of Swear Word Used in 2024 Formula 1 “Hungarian GP” Race

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Abstract: Swear words, which frequently contain taboo language, are a type of vocabulary found in everyday discourse, entertainment, and different forms of media. These words are commonly used to express strong emotions such as anger, exasperation, or annoyance, and they can also be used to curse or insult others. Despite being deemed unsuitable or unpleasant in many social or formal settings, they provide a raw and expressive outlet for emotional expression in more relaxed or heated situations. Sometimes if people find swear words in a movie where everything has been set up, people normally just accept it either because that is part of the story or the character. However, in a real time situation people usually found that offensive. This study analyzed swear words uttered in one of the Formula 1 race series “Hungarian GP” in 2024, and categorized them according to the types proposed by Hughes (2006). From the 19 swear words collected, there are four types, namely Sexual-types, Animal and Excretory-types, Excretory-types, Religious-types.

Key Terms: *Formula 1, Language, Sociolinguistics, Swear Word*

I. INTRODUCTION

Language, the most commonly used means of communication today, is also the most effective for expressing emotions and connecting people from different places, such as English, which is now an international language. Language is means of communicating ideas or feelings by the use of conventionalized sound and signs, thus, being the spoken and written language which can be received for people (Darma et al., 2017). The type of words that are often used to express such annoyance or cursing at someone are called swear words or profanity using some taboo languages. According to Hua (2020), “Profanity” comes from the Latin profanus, “outside the temple” and was specifically about insulting sacred and holy objects. They are commonly used to express powerful emotions like anger, irritation, anguish, or even surprise, and they can have both cathartic and social purposes.

Swear words are no longer limited to private or informal talks; they now pervade almost every area of everyday life, including prominent public media outlets such as television, film, music, and social media platforms. The prevalence of word taboo in the twenty-first century is startling (Fairman, 2009). These forms of media are accessible to a large audience, including younger viewers, prompting continuous arguments about the appropriateness and impact of such language.

In movies or literature where everything has been set up, people sometimes just accept swear words. This tolerance is often based on an understanding that such language has a specific narrative function, such as character development, conveying emotional intensity, or creating a sense of reality. When a character uses profanity in a dramatic or comic situation, viewers are more likely to interpret it as part of the tale than as a personal offense. Movies also have age restrictions for their audience. The use of fuck in R-rated movies intended for adult audiences is common (Fairman, 2009, p. 19). However, people typically found that disrespectful and quickly became big news in a real-time setting. It’s the fuck-ups—those little gaffes made by people in the public eye—that fascinate us (Fairman, 2009, p. 21).

Sociolinguistics studies have been done by many researchers. However, most of them discuss swear words from movies or literature. *Taboo Words Found in American Gangster Movie* by Serti (2022), analyzed the types of taboo utterances found in American Gangster movie, and the function of taboo utterances found in American Gangster movie. This study used a qualitative method with the theory proposed by Battistella (2005) and Wardhaugh (2006). This study has inspiration with similarities in discussing word types, but the source discussed comes from a movie or is a work of literature and not a real-life phenomenon.

This study focused on racing sport, Formula 1, which often has swearing words especially in each of their races where many tense moments between the drivers and being under pressure to push the car to speeds of up to 300km/h to fight for championship points and achieve maximum results. In one of the race series, the “Hungarian GP” Race of the 2024 season, some drivers were involved in several incidents with different contexts that triggered the use of swear words. Swearing, especially in high-pressure situations like racing, is an emotional release—a spontaneous reaction to annoyance, blunders, danger, or fierce competitiveness.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study adopts qualitative method to analyzed the data, particularly in classifying the swear words utterances by drivers during 2024 “Hungarian GP”. Qualitative methods, broadly construed, extend back to the very beginnings of social and political analysis (Gerring, 2017). Qualitative methods will provide a deeper understanding with descriptive data analysis.

Data Source and Analysis

The data sources were taken from the YouTube videos belonging to a YouTube channel called “Inside The Cockpit” (<https://youtube.com/@insidethecockpit1?si=3kO4Df qV3pBqj8w4>). The channel posts full videos of the radio team communication of the 20 drivers in the “Hungarian GP” Race. Those videos are chosen because the swear words are not censored or cut when being used in the conversation on the radio team between the drivers and their race engineer. The collated swear words data were categorized and annotated using Google Spreadsheets; supplementary materials containing these data are available at <https://github.com/complexico/fl-swear-word> (Nugraha et al., 2025/2025).

The swear words was categorized follows the type of swear word proposed by Hughes (2006). The categories are divided based on the literal meaning of the word or the description of the word. The data set in the supplementary materials include full sentences in which swear words are found and qualitative identification of the context of the situation for a more detailed understanding. The timestamp of the utterances are also noted as well as the nationalities of the drivers.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the study. It is divided into sub-sections following the types of the swear word categories. This section, presented the

data and situational context in which they are uttered. The discussions elaborate the concerning the link between the literal meaning of the swear words or their origin and their use in the data.

A. Sexual

Data 1:

“I’m minus five brake bias and the thing just doesn’t **fucking** turn” (Max Verstappen; 6:44, Dutch).

For the context in data 1, Max Verstappen had a problem with his car, precisely in the braking section where he had tried to tinker with the brake settings but still had problems so that his car could not turn well.

Data 2:

“It’s quite impressive how we let ourselves get undercut and just completely **fucked** my race” (Max Verstappen; 7:38, Dutch).

In data 2, Max Verstappen pits later than some drivers so he gets undercut, which means the drivers who pit before him will have the advantage of still optimal tires and the opportunity to overtake him on pit exit.

Data 3:

“You guys gave me this **fucking** strategy, okay?” (Max Verstappen; 9:35, Dutch).

For data 3, Max Verstappen set the fastest lap after he went into the pits to change to new tires, after which his Race Engineer made some kind of sarcastic comment on it, but Max Verstappen didn’t like the comment because he was struggling with the strategy they gave to him.

Data 4:

“I’m trying to rescue what’s left. **Fuck** sake” (Max Verstappen; 9:38, Dutch).

Same as data 3. In data 4, Max Verstappen set the fastest lap after he went into the pits to change to new tires, after which his Race Engineer made some kind of sarcastic comment on it, but Max Verstappen didn’t like the comment because he was struggling with the strategy they gave to him.

Data 5:

“**Fuck** sake” (Nico Hulkenberg; 0:47, Germans).

As a context in data 5, Nico Hulkenberg got a terrible start to the race. He was upset because it destroyed his start, which was critical to the outcome of the race.

Data 6:

“Oh **fuck** Gary, come on not in the braking” (Nico Hulkenberg; 5:20, Germans).

From the data 6, Nico Hulkenberg was told by his race engineer over the team radio that one of the drivers who might be a threat to him was making an overtake, but Nico was not happy with the information because not only was it not really important to him, but he was focused on turning the corner and it interrupted his concentration.

Data 7:

“**Fucking** well done man.” (Yuki Tsunoda; 5:33, Japanese).

For the situation in data 7, Yuki Tsunoda managed to finish in position 9th at the end of the race or the points zone, which means he is entitled to 2 championship points.

Data 8:

“**Fucking** well done guys.” (Yuki Tsunoda; 5:34, Japanese).

Same as situation in data 7. In data 8, Yuki Tsunoda managed to finish position 9th at the end of the race or the points zone, which means he is entitled to 2 championship points.

Data 9:

“Oh **fuck** sake, he slow me down I didn't get the DRS” (Charles Leclerc; 10:48, Monegasque).

In data 9, Charles Leclerc had an overlapped car ahead of him that was one lap behind and needed to let him pass. He was unhappy that the overlap car was slowing him down and causing him to lose time to the car in front of him. The term "overlapped car" refers to a car that is one lap or more behind many other cars. This car has a duty to give up its position to cars several laps ahead of it. These cars sometimes slow down the cars that are going to pass them, which irritates the drivers.

Data 10:

“I **fucked** up multifunction on the turbo and on the DX, give me the correct one here” (Kevin Magnussen; 4:28, Danish).

For the situation in data 10, Kevin Magnussen had a problem with his car, more precisely on the power unit or engine, he tried to fix it by changing some settings on the car but found it difficult to fix.

Data 11:

“These tires are **suck** so it's not very good” (Lewis Hamilton; 11:41, British).

Clearly seen in data 11, Lewis Hamilton had a problem with the tires on his car that was not good enough, which resulted in him losing a lot of time because he could not push his car faster.

B. Animal and Excretory

Data 12:

“Why can't they not just say what they think and then we decide that's just **bullshit**.” (Max Verstappen; 1:19, Dutch).

In the situation of data 12, Max Verstappen was involved in an incident at the start of the race with one of the drivers (Lando Norris), after which the race stewards investigated the incident, his team gave directions to give back his position to Lando Norris to avoid the penalty that might be given to him.

Data 13:

“No it's absolutely **dogshit** there” (Max Verstappen; 5:55, Dutch).

In the situation of data 13, Max Verstappen was told by his team to use some gear options during the race, but Max rejected that because he felt that were not good option.

Data 14:

“No mate don't give me that **bullshit** now.” (Max Verstappen; 9:32, Dutch).

Same as data 3 and 4. In data 14, Max Verstappen set the fastest lap after he went into the pits to change to new tires, after which his Race Engineer made some kind of sarcastic comment on it, but Max Verstappen didn't like the comment because he was struggling with the strategy they gave to him.

Data 15:

“**Dogshit** of a start.” (Nico Hulkenberg; 0:45, Germans).

Same as data 5. In data 15, Nico Hulkenberg got a terrible start to the race. He was upset because it destroyed his start, which was critical to the outcome of the race.

C. Excretory

Data 16:

“Why? Why mode 9? It's **shit**” (Max Verstappen; 7:23), Dutch).

As a context in data 16, Max Verstappen was instructed by his race engineer to use a certain engine mode during the race. He disagreed with the advice provided by his race engineer since those engine modes were not good.

Data 17:

“Guys we really need to solve this shit out because this is not acceptable” (Pierre Gasly; 8:59, French).

In data 17, Pierre Gasly had a problem with his car in the middle of the race and unfortunately it could not be fixed, causing him to retire from the race.

Data 18:

“Yeah these tires **crap** so I think I will change it” (Lewis Hamilton; 13:59, British).

For data 18, Lewis Hamilton had a problem with his tires that were not in optimal condition, so he thought he should replace them with new tires and enter the pit.

D. Religious

Data 19:

“It's a long way to go on that **damn** tires” (Lewis Hamilton; 9:18, British).

In data 19, Lewis Hamilton was instructed by his team to enter the pits and change to fresh tires. Lewis refused because he felt that the tires were still usable and it was not time to change.

The sexual-type swear words, namely “*fuck*”, “*fucking*”, “*fucked*”, and “*suck*”, are presented in Findings Section. The word “*fuck*” literally means ‘to copulate’. Fuck is all about sex and nothing about sex all at the same time (Fairman, 2009, p. 8). This word has many uses in various situations to express emotions and is sometimes accompanied by affixes, for example “**Fucking** well done man” in Data 7. The word “*fucking*” here does not refer literally to a

sexual activity, but rather a word that has the intention of expressing an emotion, in this case, an emotion of happiness about something the speaker is experiencing. Similarly, the word “*suck...*” in Data 11 is often used as a term in sexual activity, referring to sucking certain parts of the body in sexualized activities. In the context of Data 11, “*suck*” is used to express resentment towards people or things. Swear words in the sexual type, such as “*fuck*”, also tend to be used to express emotional outbursts with a higher level of intensity because it has a greater expressive load. According to Hua (2020), sex-related obscenities are now far more offensive (and common) in English. Regarding the participants (fucker, bugger, cocksucker, whore), the organs (cock, cunt, etc.), or the sex actions (fucking, wank). This tendency demonstrates a deeper understanding of how language is used in ordinary communication. Swear words that originated in sexual contexts are frequently employed metaphorically to communicate strong emotions like wrath, admiration, or sarcasm. The emotional effect of terms like “*fuck*” stems from their perceived taboo, making their use stronger and more visible in everyday conversation.

The next swear-word type found is the combination of animal and excretory, for example “*bullshit*” and “*dogshit*”; these literally mean a depiction of an ‘animal’s feces or digestion’, which is why it is considered as animal and excretory. In the sentence “Why can’t they not just say what they think and then we decide that’s just *bullshit*.” (see Data 12), “*bullshit*” does not literally refer to animal feces but to express an exasperation with nonsense, with a high emotional load. “Bull” meaning nonsense, dates from the 17th century and is possibly borrowed from Old French *boul*, *boule*, *bole* (“fraud, deceit, trickery”) (Hua, 2020). Even though it is not used as much as “*bullshit*”, the word “*dogshit*” has a similar meaning. It is usually used to condemn something’s low quality or repulsiveness, whether it be an idea, circumstance, or object. This hybrid classification reflects the frequent use of animal imagery in combination with excretory references to enhance the derogatory or expressive power of the utterance. Such usage illustrates the symbolic association of animal waste with worthlessness or absurdity, thereby amplifying the speaker’s emotional stance in communication.

Excretory-type means a ‘feces’ or ‘digestive product from the body’. According to Hua (2020), “Shit”, a word once mild enough to appear as part of medieval street names (for instance, Sherborne Lane in London was formerly known as Shitteborwelane, “Shit Borough Lane” in the 13th Century - where presumably excrement used to be dumped. In Data 17 “Guys we really need to solve this *shit* out because this is not acceptable.”, this sentence does not refer to the literal meaning described earlier, but rather refers to the annoyance of the problem that occurs to the speaker. As for the word “*crap*”, it

doesn’t literally mean ‘poop’. Instead, “*crap*” refers to something that is undesirable or wants to get rid of which has a figurative meaning of poop. It goes like this: *crap* comes from the surname of Thomas Crapper, the inventor of the flush toilet (Hua, 2020). In Data 18 “Yeah these tires *crap* so I think I will change it”, It refers to an object that is bad or unwanted by someone and wants to be discarded or replaced.

Religious-type which only have one example “*Damn*” in Data 19, has an implied meaning of cursed which is why it is considered as religious type. Today, curses with “God” or “damn” would probably not even raise an eyebrow but up to Victorian times swearing by God and damning people to hell was taken very, very seriously (Hua, 2020). For example “It’s a long way to go on that *damn* tires.” in Data 19. This sentence, the word “*Damn*” is used to emphasize an object that is figuratively considered cursed or doesn’t make any sense. This kind of swearing expression demonstrates how words borrowed from religious contexts have also evolved into secular usage, acting as expressive tools in daily conversation. Even though religious swearing may not carry the same emotional impact as sexual or excretory phrases in modern usage, it nonetheless contributes significantly to the sense of urgency or emotional emphasis.

Although each category of swear word has a unique literal meaning—ranging from sexual references to religious or excretory terms—their metaphorical usage demonstrates a common function across categories: to increase emotional expressiveness and emphasis on the speaker’s message. Despite their differences in origin and context, these words frequently go beyond their strict definitions to serve as potent linguistic tools for conveying intense emotional emotions. Words change their meanings and their sounds over time (Watson, 2022). Such statements frequently serve as emotional amplifiers in both spoken and written language, helping speakers to communicate thoughts that would otherwise be difficult to convey using neutral or conventional word or vocabulary.

In addition, swear words also can be linked to bilingualism, where the use of swear words can also be due to the environment in which the person grows up or lives. Bilingualism is the term for speaking one or more languages (Myers-Scotton, 2005). Formula 1, as a world-class motorsport, has people from all over the world participating in it. The same case in Data 11, 18, and 19 where out of all the drivers who use swear words in English, only 1 person is British (Lewis Hamilton), and the rest are people who came from countries where English is not their first language. While almost everyone knows at least a few words in other languages, we generally require a little more competence than that before we are willing to acknowledge bilingual or multilingual ability (Bhatia & Ritchie, 2012). Formula 1 drivers

are continually engaged in an English-speaking environment. Team radios, media interviews, debriefings, engineering conversations, and even social media contacts take place predominantly in English. As a result, drivers, regardless of their native language, are exposed to and frequently acquire common English idioms, including swear words. These swear words become part of their active vocabulary as a result of frequent exposure and the necessity to function well in a fast-paced, emotionally charged, and highly communicative setting, rather than official training.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study analyzed the types of swear words found in Formula 1 during the 2024 Formula 1 "Hungarian Grand Prix" based on theory proposed by Hughes (2006). The analysis found 19 words of swear words through qualitative analysis of team radio communications, and were divided into four primary categories: sexual, animal and excretory, excretory, and religious. The most common category among these was found to be sexual, with drivers commonly using versions of the term "fuck". These statements had a variety of purposes, including praise, joy, and the expression of rage, frustration, and disappointment. This study highlights how swear words in Formula 1 as a motorsport are often used spontaneously and emotionally in real-time situations, reflecting the high-pressure environment of competitive racing. Especially, the drivers' use of swear words that is sexual in nature, such "fuck", "fucking", and "fucked" frequently served as emotional enhancers that were not always connected to their literal meanings. This emphasizes how swearing is a language phenomenon that is dynamic and context dependent.

This study also adds to the subject of sociolinguistics by offering real-world examples of how swear words are used outside of scripted media and literature. Unlike earlier studies, which frequently focused on rehearsed speech in movies, TV shows, or literary works, this study examines unscripted, spontaneous communication. The study of spontaneous speech, particularly in high-stress or competitive contexts, provides a more in-depth understanding of the psychological and social roles of cursing. It demonstrates how swear words may be used not just to communicate raw feelings, but also to regulate emotions, bond with others, relieve tension, and emphasize points. These remarks, which are frequently delivered impulsively, represent genuine emotional responses and are not sculpted or filtered by editorial standards or artistic intents, which are common in scripted content.

Future research could extend this topic by broadening the scope of study to include a larger number of races from different seasons, or by comparing swearing trends in Formula 1 to those in

other professional sports. It would also be useful to investigate how such language is received and perceived by various audiences, including ardent fans, casual viewers, media critics, and team members. Furthermore, investigating the effect of cultural background in determining the frequency, severity, and acceptability of swearing among drivers could provide more insight into cross-cultural communication in global sports.

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