

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Humor is a complex phenomenon that covers many details to be decoded by people well. As a form of communication, humor is used to deliver any messages that the speaker wants to say to the addressee. The messages could be said explicitly or implicitly depending on the situation that the communication occurs. The meaning of the humor also depends on the addressee in how the addressee would interpret the messages conveyed in the interaction.

The production and the interpretation of humor depend mainly on the culture which envelopes the jokes. Even though humor is universal, there are some moments where jokes can only be enjoyed by people who are in the same social community that shares the same knowledge. Humor can be used to uncover the pattern of life within a community and identify the universal patterns of human nature that are shown, conveyed, appreciated differently in different cultures (Attardo, *Encyclopedia of Humor Studies* 2014).

It is also a common thing in our society to use humor to point out the wrongdoing of certain individuals or organizations. This humor is usually categorized as satire. The purpose of satire is to expose moral, social, and intellectual failings in order to reform and to proclaim the implicit values in "making someone a laughingstock" (Attardo, *Encyclopedia of Humor Studies* 2014). Even though satirical humor has become popular and widely acceptable, some groups find the jokes offensive and threatening. Some sensitive topics are

taboo to be used as the subject of humor because it might draw uneasiness and resentment for the audience depending on the culture and the beliefs of the particular society. Satire can be recognized from the use of irony and sarcastic remarks in the humor.

Being one of the mediums of communication, the delivery of humor needs to be unique and interesting in order to successfully evoke the amusing effect so that the audiences get the message that the performer wanted to convey. One of the many ways to achieve it is to create the element of surprise in the humor. In the case of verbal humor, the way to give the element of surprise is keeping some of the information in the joke implicit which can be achieved by being uncooperative in the conversation.

This matter caught the attention of researchers to look deeper into the creation of an amusing effect in humor, especially from the linguistics perspective. In researching humor from the linguistics perspective, the Semantic-Script Theory of Humor (SSTH) and the General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH) were based on the relation between humor and its pragmatics. The idea of script opposition in Raskin's SSTH is based on his conclusion of two ways in conducting communication: *bonafide* and *non-bonafide* which means serious way and humorous way respectively (Raskin 1985 in Zysko 2017). Non-bonafide communication happens because there is a failed fulfillment of maxims either intentional or unintentional (Zysko 2017). These maxims mentioned before are the conversational maxims of the cooperative principle proposed by H. Paul Grice

(Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams 2011). The Gricean Maxims are also used to find the implied meaning of utterances which is usually called implicature.

Even though humor and jokes are considered as non-bonafide communication, it does not mean that humor and jokes cannot be used as a tool to address any bonafide message. Jokes have a communicative function to convey any bonafide information despite the nature of non-bonafide communication the jokes have under certain circumstances (Attardo, Linguistic Theories of Humor 1994). Jokes can communicate any bonafide information in two ways: by presupposing the knowledge of some cultural script the hearer does not know, or by presupposing the knowledge of some stereotypical script (Attardo, Linguistic Theories of Humor 1994).

In the modern-day, humor does not only take the form of the live conversation between two individuals. The rapid growth of technology, which influenced every part of human life, also affects how humor is delivered through various media in many forms for example newspapers, radio, television, and social media. At the beginning of 1990, humor has been the major communication mode on the internet, even though it is not visualized as now (Attardo, Encyclopedia of Humor Studies 2014). Nowadays, social media platforms offer various media which could be used in delivering humor for example using pictures, videos, etc. (Attardo, Encyclopedia of Humor Studies 2014).

This also marks that satirical comedy, as one of the subtypes of humor, has taken over the media, especially television, from the beginning of the twenty-first century. In the post-network era, satirical comedy has become the main star which

is as popular as other genres of television shows, such as reality shows and variety shows. The reason for this particular case is that satire tv is proven to be influential in attracting numerous audiences to watch the show as satire tv is considered as “being funny and smart” and can be more interesting to be a topic in public’s conversation than a show with ten times the broadcast audiences (Gray, et al. 2009). Because of this, the spread of satire tv, even only the short clip of the show, is now skyrocketing not only limited on television but also on other media platforms especially on social media and streaming media such as YouTube and Netflix.

YouTube and Netflix are two of the major entertainment sources in this modern era. YouTube offers many facilities in publishing videos, sharing videos, and giving responses through comments without needing high-technology skill proficiency in using the website (Burgess and Green 2009). YouTube has no limitation on the number of videos users can upload on the platform and the number of videos users can enjoy free of charge. On the other hand, Netflix is a streaming media platform that offers movies and television shows from around the world. Netflix became a production company after it started to release and distribute its own series which is branded as Netflix Original. The existence of Netflix and its original programs become remarkable as the popularity of subscription video on demand (SVOD) rises, and it started to become a nemesis to cable television and linear television because of the assumption that people will no longer use their services (Wayne 2018).

Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj is one of the comedy contents that can be considered as a satirical television show. Originally aired on Netflix as its original

series, *Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj* is a weekly comedy show which scrutinizes modern culture and politics “with depth and sincerity (de Moraes 2018). Hasan Minhaj, the host and the co-producer of the said comedy show, expresses his ‘incisive and nuanced perspective’ towards global news, politics, and culture in his unique and comedic way (Netflix, Inc. 2018). Minhaj also explained that he wanted *Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj* to be upgraded from the usual late-night comedy show to have topics that matter to the audiences, and the topics must be timely and timeless (Rami 2018). The show aired every Sunday for two years with six seasons before ending on June 28, 2020, due to its cancellation (Rivera 2020).

Hasan Minhaj is a son of a Moslem Indian descendant who was born and raised in the United States (Rao 2017). As a minority in the United States, Minhaj expresses most of his experience as an immigrant which is heavily related to the racism and discrimination in his humor (Rao 2017). Before hosting his own comedy show, Hasan Minhaj is popular in people's eyes as a stand-up comedian. Minhaj also played a minor role and made an appearance in several television shows before he landed a permanent position as a correspondent in a satirical news program *The Daily Show* alongside Trevor Noah in 2014 (Newman 2010, Snlerson 2014).

By conducting this study, it shows that the writer has an interest in choosing humor as a research topic, especially in analyzing the jokes in the *Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj*. The reason for choosing *Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj* as the object of this study is that the verbal humor phenomena produced in the show give an interesting insight in the explanation of the topic, which shows that even though it is delivered in the sense of satire, the jokes Minhaj made in the series give *bonafide*

information regarding the important topics he brought in the show without making the audience feel uncomfortable nor offended by the jokes.

Several studies have analyzed the non-observance of maxims in humor which are also related to this research. Liu, Qian, and Zhou (2018) had conducted research on verbal humor in the situational comedy *Two Broke Girls*. Pribadi (2018) had also researched violations of the maxim in a humorous sense in the movie entitled *Deadpool* (2016). Many studies focus on the implicature in humor, for instance, Rolesta (2016) analyzed the implicature used in the stand-up comedy conducted by Fajar Ardiansyah. Another example is Nastiti's research on the use of implicature as a form of maxim violation in the humorous advertisement (Nastiti 2018). All of the studies use Grice's Cooperative Principle as the main theory.

This study seems to be similar to the previous research that has been mentioned because most of the studies use Grice's Cooperative Principle as the main theory in analyzing any humorous remarks produced in the objects of each study. Different from the previous studies, this study uses the term "non-observance of the maxim" instead of "violation of maxim" to avoid misunderstanding. In addition, this study has a different object from the previous study which is a satirical comedy show.

In this study, the writer investigated the utterances that were produced by Hasan Minhaj in his comedy show *Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj*. The utterances were identified and analyzed using the cooperative principle proposed by Grice (1975) in the utterances made by Hasan Minhaj. Then, in order to know the meaning that is implied in the utterances, the writer tried to elaborate the implicature generate

in the utterances using the test of implicature theory by Thomas (1995) and categorized it using conversational implicature theory proposed by Yule (1996).

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Based on the background of the study written above, several problems have been formulated:

1. What is the non-observance maxim found in the utterances on *Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj*?
2. What is the implicature generated through the use of non-observance maxim in the utterances on the *Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj*?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

According to the statement of the problem, the study aims:

1. To determine the kind of non-observance of maxim Hasan Minhaj does in his utterances on *Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj*.
2. To elaborate the implicature generated through the non-observances of maxims in the utterances produced by Hasan Minhaj in *Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj*.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The results of this study hopefully contribute to the linguistics study, particularly to the pragmatic field in the correlation to humor research. Theoretically, this study is expected to give a further explanation in understanding humor from the linguistic perspective, especially in the non-observance of Gricean maxims in the jokes and their implicatures.

Practically, the result of this study can be helpful for people who are interested in studying verbal humor in the sense of satire further. This study also can help people in interpreting and understanding the message the humorists want to address in their jokes.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

- Cooperative Principle** : The speakers' assumption of cooperation in conducting an interaction (Yule 1996).
- Non-observance of Maxims** : An occasion where the speaker 'fails to observe' the maxims in a conversation (Thomas 1995).
- Implicature** : The additional or different meaning of a discourse (Thomas 1995).