

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the study

Humor is one form of human interactions and its contribution to life is larger than what we realize. It is the most important contribution of entertainment and education to people in gaining higher quality of life. Its presence nowadays, seems to be more expected in order to relieve people's tension and to ease sadness that such common problems exist in life. Human being can also use humor as the right tool or weapon to criticize people without frustrating them, and achieving the intended goal is more possible than doing the rough way (protesting for an example). Easter Blumenfeld and Lynne Alpern (33) mention that humor has many advantages, such as, to abandon the cycle of unproductive thinking when someone is too close to his problems, to ease excessive fear, to remind indisciplinary behavior without being heavy-handed, to make a new comer feel part of the group, and to loosen barrier of age, social, economic, educational background at work.

Two important techniques to create humor are pre-planned or structured and unintentional use of language. Both of them are created in order to make people laugh. The examples of the first alternative, pre-planned or structured, are caricature, cartoon, parody, and satire literature. The second alternative in making it is unintentional use of language and the examples are misprint, slips of the tongue, and accidental puns.

Conversational Maxims, as one of the topics discussed in Discourse Analysis, can be used to analyze humor because it is often found that humor arises from the flouting of the maxims. In other words, some discourse humor flout the pragmatic rules of conversation. Conversational Maxims were first introduced by Paul Grice in 1975. He proposed it as the principal agreement for participants of the conversation to achieve a successful conversation, remembering that the conversation itself is a medium of communication in which people use to exchange messages.

Good conversation will be achieved if Conversational Maxims are followed by both of the participants, the speaker and the hearer, further the comic writer will be called as the sender and the readers as the receiver in this study. They should follow the brevity, the truth, the relevance, and the clarity of what they say. Each of them is called, as Grice proposed, Quality Maxim, Quantity Maxim, Relation Maxim, and Manner Maxim. The deviation of the Conversational Maxims happens when someone is flouting or violating the maxims. In this study, the writer prefers to choose the term 'flouting' than 'violating' because when someone or a sender flouts or breaks one maxim of Conversational Maxims that does not necessarily mean that he fails to communicate with his receiver. The speaker may also have reasons to flout the maxims. The examples of flouting are shown below:

A: I got a terrible accident this morning. My tires became eight-shaped. Can't you believe that?

B: That's nothing ...I once got a more terrible accident than you had. My tires became an eleven. How 'bout that?

Though the response is literary true, those who hear or notice it will recognize such remark as hyperbole, a way of making a point more forcefully rather than as lies. Most of speakers will interpret the words uttered above as deliberate flouting of Quality Maxim rather than telling untruth facts.

A: You said a couple of hours ago that you would go to the zoo, but how come your car like a wrecked ship now.

B: Hmm..., no Sir. The elephant just stepped on it.

B's utterance is flouting since he means to explain why his car has broken down without fulfilling the Relation Maxim. But the conversation will run well because the receiver can receive the message intended. This kind of deliberate flouting is uncommon and only occurs in such special cases like humor or sarcasm.

The flouting is different from the violation of the Conversational Maxims. When someone is violating the maxim, he may quietly and unostentatiously does not fulfill certain maxim and this means he will be liable to mislead communication. Examples of violation itself are shown below:

A: Teheran is on Turkey, isn't it teacher?

B: And London is in Armenia I suppose (Levinson 100)

In this case, B's utterance serves to suggest that A is absolutely incorrect and B clearly violates the Quality Maxim.

A: Where is my box of chocolates?

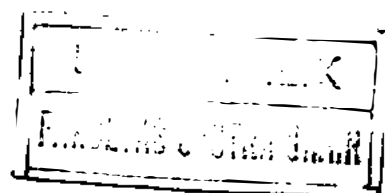
B: The children were in your room this morning.(Smith and Wilson, qtd. in Leech 175)

B's answer is not relevant to A's question. He says something else although he knows the answer.

An important reason why speaker is flouting the maxim is that he wants to make pre-planned or structured humor. One kind of structured humor chosen by the writer is the comic in book performance commonly called comic book. The humorous effect of the comic in making someone laugh is another reason why she chose it. She saw that many comics contain humor besides the story itself.

In her study, the writer chose an adventure comic that contains many humorous texts entitled *The Adventures of Tintin*. Those texts are considered funny with the flouting of the Conversational Maxims and they consist of conversations in which the characters' turns and exchanges have the humorous sense and can make the readers laugh. The texts are created to cause humor; therefore, when the characters flout the maxims, the readers may have understood the implicature and then laugh at it. This kind of discourse will involve the comic writer and the reader as the participants of the conversation. The comic writer is the sender, and the reader is the receiver.

Tintin comic book is also interesting because of its adventure story which involves many settings, characters, and the genius of the writer to maintain the curiosity of the reader on how the story will end.



B. Statement of the problem

The writer aims to analyze the flouting of Conversational Maxims that causes humor in the comic book *The Adventures of Tintin*.

The problems that are going to be discussed concerning these floutings are :

1. Which maxim is mostly flouted in the dialogues among characters?
2. In what way can the flouting of the maxim cause humorous effect?

C. Objective of the study

Based on the statement of the problem, this study is intended to find out:

1. Which Conversational Maxims is flouted the most and may make the readers laugh.
2. The way the flouting can cause humorous effect.

D. Significance of the study

This study is expected to help the readers understand the flouting of Conversational Maxims, especially those that can produce humor easily, and to provide references concerning discourse analysis. In addition, this study may give new ideas to those who wish to analyze comic dialogues.

E. Scope and limitation

This study is focused on the flouting of maxims based on the Discourse Analysis theory. The analysis is limited to two editions of the comic book *The*

Adventures of Tintin. Those two editions chosen to be the objects of the study are *The Secret of the Unicorn* and *The Red Rackham's Treasure*. They were chosen because of their continual story in which *The Red Rackham's Treasure* is the sequel edition of *The Secret of the Unicorn*.

The dialogues were selected from all dialogues and they should contain humorous effect.

F. Theoretical framework

There are some theories and related study that the writer reviews in this study. The review itself is important since it is used as the basis of the analysis of this study. The most used theory is Conversational Maxims proposed by Grice. He proposed it as a set of conversation guidelines in which the participants of communication are hoped to obey and achieve a successful information exchange. The set is known as Cooperative Principle and introduced its four Conversational Maxims. Those maxims are:

1. **Quantity Maxim**, which relates to the quantity of information to be provided.
2. **Quality Maxim**, which relates to the truth and adequacy of information.
3. **Relation Maxim**, which relates to the relevance of information.
4. **Manner Maxim**, which relates to how what is said to be said.

(Grice 45)

In fact, however, the participants of conversation will not always follow Grice's proposal. Sometimes they are breaking the maxims with many reasons. One

of those reasons discussed in this study is flouting of Conversational Maxims which means participants purposely fail to fulfill a maxim and this action sometimes can arouse humor. This phenomenon is applied to analyze humor in *The Adventures of Tintin* comic book.

The other theory used here is humor. As the humor experts say, to give a closest satisfying definition for what humor is, found out to be difficult thing to do. It is so since humor itself is abstract, but the result not.

G. Methods of the study

The method used in this study is qualitative since it provides description and explanation about the phenomenon found in the data, which are not in numbers.

1. Definitions of key terms

- a. **Comic** is a serial of caricatures that tells a story with one or more characters.
- b. **Comic book** is an extension of comic strips (comic which is usually found in daily newspapers) into a book. Each book is about one set of characters, and the pictures tell a complete story (The New Book of Knowledge 423).
- c. **Grice's maxims** are the maxims proposed by Grice that describe how a conversation can run successfully. Four basic maxims have been proposed in 1975 and they are:

Quantity: Make your contribution as informative as is required. Do not make your contribution more informative than what is required.

Be brief.

Quality: Do not say what you believe to be false. Do not say something that you lack adequate evidence. Be honest.

Relation: Be relevant

Manner: Avoid ambiguity. Be brief. Be orderly. Be perspicuous.

- d. **Humor** is one kind of communications that people use in order to get a light entertainment to relieve tension by making laughter.
- e. **Flouting** the maxims occurs when the speaker blatantly fail to fulfill one or more maxims, on the assumption that he is able to fulfill the maxim and is not, in view of the blatancy of his performance, trying to mislead. So that, the hearer knows that the flouting is done on purpose.
- f. **Violating** the maxims is the condition where the speaker may quietly and unostentatiously fail to fulfill a certain maxim and this results in misleading communication.

2. Technique of data collection

Data in this study are in the form of a single utterance and sometimes they are described as 'performance data,' and may contain features such as hesitation, slips, and non-standard form of language. The writer chose *Tintin* comic book as the source of data for her study and examined all of the editions of *Tintin* which had been published since 1929. The editions chosen by the writer are *The Secret of the Unicorn* and *The Red Rackham's Treasure*. Both of them are a sequel edition contributing to the writer's decision to choose them as the data of

the study. The last reason is in the two titles the writer discovered the largest amount of humorous effect.

The actual data of the study are the conversation texts among the characters.. The texts chosen contain the flouting of the four Conversational Maxims. The procedures of data collection are briefly stated below:

- a. Examining all conversation texts contained in the chosen comic books.
- b. Selecting dialogues contain humor effect from the two editions.

3. Technique of data analysis

The analysis of this study is meant to discover the answers to the problems, and they are maxims that are most often flouted and ways in which the flouting can produce humor. The analysis process proceeds in the following steps:

- a. Stating the conversations containing humorous effect.
- b. Identifying the flouting of the maxim based on the reader laughter. Moreover in deciding whether the conversation contains the flouting or not, she used the criteria mentioned in the definition of flouting in the definition of key terms, that is, when the characters blatantly disobeying some maxims, they are still at the same time fulfilling the other maxims, from which the reader can interpret the implication.
- c. Examining whether the humor is caused by the flouting of the maxims or not.

The writer needed to examine once again to confirm the findings because

there are some humorous remarks which are caused by other factors, i.e. the characters' gestures, besides the flouting of the maxims.

- d. Determining the reason of the flouting. In this case she had to find out why the characters flout the maxims, so that she could clarify of her analysis.
- e. Putting the above findings in the names of the flouting of maxims table.
- f. Counting the flouting of the maxims to find out which maxim is flouted the most by the characters, and putting the number into percentage by the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{The number of the flouting of each maxim}}{\text{The number of all flouted maxims}} \times 100\%$$

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW