CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

It is known that nowadays people are busy with their daily activities. For that reason, they find many ways to refresh their mind. One of the popular ways is to watch TV series or comedy films. One example of this is the TV series *Friends.* *Friends* was made in 1994 and was created in 10 seasons. *Friends* is a situation comedy about six best friends having their time together and their interactions with other people that take place mostly in New York. Just like in real life, these best friends share about love, sex and careers in life and they always support one another whenever things get rough in their lives. It is about how friends become a family. The story is quite simple, in which the setting of place is mostly in their apartment rooms or in the coffee house, Central Perk.

Friends is undoubtedly a great success. Its success can also be seen from the awards that the TV series has got from its debut season (1994-1995): Golden Globe

and another 55 wins & 145 nominations <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0108778> including the categories of Outstanding Comedy, Best Television Series, and Favourite Comedy Series. Based on an American survey, the show has become the number-one comedy on television among adults aged 18-49 for five years in a row. <http://www.filmaffinity.com/en/film745443.html> All the facts here show that people love watching it and this is mainly because the show is a comedy which tells about everyday life. The story can happen to anyone, moreover to the US people who have similar lifestyles with the characters in *Friends*: living together with people from different races in a flat, and struggling to survive in the real world and supporting one another through the pressures of life. Besides, all the major and minor characters have unique characteristics that make the audience interested in each of them. They have their special characteristics so that the story is not boring. One of the things that make their style of speech funny is the use of language play and that explains why I choose the film to be the source of my analysis for my thesis, entitled *Language Play Found in the TV Series <u>Friends</u>.*

By 'language play', I mean to analyze the new terms used by the main characters. This includes words that are already used in daily conversations but here, in *Friends*, more variations are added, for example the process of adding a suffix or the use of mimes. There are also some newly invented terms that have never been created before.

As it is mentioned before, the reason why I choose this topic is that, like many people, I love the TV series *Friends*, and I am very interested in the language play that *Friends* has created. The script writer's creativity to play with the language, to

make the usual words and terms become more interesting, to make the audience laugh, is one of the things that make me eager to analyze this TV series. I am curious because the script writer's ideas are brilliant, for they are always original, outstanding, and the most important thing is, they can be well delivered to the audience. All these qualities make me put high interest in *Friends*.

Language play is manipulation of language (Crystal, 1998: 1). Language play is language used for fun and it usually arises rather spontaneously. <http://www.enc.edu/org/teacher-ed/literacy/languageplayactivities.htm> In order to find out the meaning of language play, someone has to pay attention to the context of communication; therefore, I use Pragmatics as the linguistic area which deals with meaning, context, and communication (Schriffrin, 1994: 190). Using this approach, I will analyze the intended speaker's meaning of saying or using the new terms based on the context of the situation that the characters are in.

I use Semantics as an approach in analyzing the data. Semantics is the study of language meaning (Heasley, 1983: 1). To be more specific, the aspects of Semantics I focus on are mimes and associations. Mimes are '…phonetic similitude, usually rhymes, with the appeal of homophones' (Nash, 1994:139). Associations are 'a connection made in the mind between different things, ideas, etc' (Longman Dictionary: 1978: 54). Allusion is 'a reference to a well-known or familiar person, geographical place, event, literary work, author, work of art, or historical idea' <http://www.lovetolearnplace.com/Curriculum/Literary/Allusion.html>.

Another approach that I am going to use is Morphology. Morphology is the study of word formation.

<http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/dictionary/DictionaryResults.aspx?refid=186 1631275> The analysis of my data includes the morphological process of blending, that is how to join two different words becoming one word that has one meaning from both words; compounding, the joining of two roots; affixation, which includes the adding of suffixes and clipping, a reduction of words into a shorter form (Yule, 1985:66).

I analyze the forms of the language play in *Friends* through morphological processes and I analyze the meanings of the words using semantic processes. Through these two processes, it is shown that the words which are just common words with common meanings and common word formation processes will become uncommon and funny after knowing how such words or terms are used in the context. That is why this analysis cannot be separated from the pragmatic aspects.

Statement of the Problem

In the thesis I would like to discuss the following problems:

1. What are the words containing language play found in the TV series *Friends?*
2. What linguistic processes form the words?
3. What are the contextual meanings of the words?
4. How do the words create a funny atmosphere in the TV Series?

Purpose of the Study

In the thesis I would like to show:

1. The words containing language play found in the TV series *Friends.*

2. The linguistic processes forming the words.

3. The contextual meanings of the words.

4. How the words create a funny atmosphere in the TV Series.

Methods of Research

In analyzing the data, I first watch several episodes of *Friends* TV series. Then I collect the words containing language play as the data. After that, I select and classify the data into several categories. Then I analyze them, focusing on the pragmatic, semantic and morphological aspects.

Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I is the Introduction. It consists of the Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Methods of Research, and Organization of the Thesis. Chapter II is the Theoretical Framework, which describes the theories used to discuss the language play found in the TV Series *Friends*. Chapter III is the Discussion on the language play in the TV Series *Friends*. Chapter IV is the Conclusion, which provides my personal comments and opinions of my findings. At the end of the thesis, the Bibliography and the Appendices are provided.