

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

All human beings have had their own ways of communicating with others since they were born. Communication is an important aspect in a person's life. By communicating, people can give and receive information. Communication is giving or exchanging of information, signals, or messages by talk, gestures, or writing ("What is communication").

In a communication, there is a meaning which is built. Meaning in interaction describes a meaning which is not only the meaning of the word itself. It is not simply the meaning of the speaker nor is it the meaning of the hearer alone. Meaning in interaction is a dynamic process since it deals with the meaning built between the speaker and hearer, the context of an utterance, and the potential meaning of an utterance (Thomas 22).

In communicating with others, sometimes our utterance may indicate a meaning that is different from what we actually mean. Therefore, it may lead to the occurrence of misunderstanding. Commonly, the situation and context of a conversation cause people to make an utterance that contains more or less information than is needed, or that is not simple to be said, is irrelevant, or has an unclear expression. In a conversation, sometimes the utterance produced has different or additional meanings. Therefore, we have to be more aware of interpreting the intention of people within their utterances. In order to be able to interpret someone's utterance appropriately, we need to pay attention to maxims. Maxim is a rule of conduct which is found in a conversation. In a conversation, some speakers might not interpret others' utterances appropriately. Thus, failure to observe a maxim is the topic that I would like to discuss for my thesis.

In this thesis, I would like to observe the utterances of the characters in a TV series. I am going to use a situational comedy series as my data source. The reason why I use a TV series entitled *How I Met Your Mother* as my data source is because the characters in the film often fail to observe a maxim, which creates a funny atmosphere among them.

I would like to analyze all of the five characters, as they are the central characters. One of the characters whose utterances I will analyze is Lily. She is rather slow in reacting to something and she often fails to observe the messages implied within her friends' utterances. The second is Barney. He is an expressive man who always tries to attract people's attention by his words and style of dressing, especially when he wants to ask a woman for a date. Apart from this, his

utterances are not usually connected to the context. The third is Marshall. He is the only character in this TV series who really cares about education and is faithful to his spouse. The fourth is Ted. This man is not really confident to have a date with a woman, because he is always unsuccessful in having good relationships with a woman. The last is Robin. She is a television reporter who is not easy to fall in love. She is also more serious than the other characters.

The theory that is used to observe the utterances of the characters in these data is the non-observance of Gricean maxims. Non-observance of Gricean maxims occurs when the maxims are not observed due to implication or tendencies to deceive, mislead, or an imperfect linguistic performance and ethic.

The topic of my thesis is the occurrence of humor due to the non-observance of Gricean maxims in *How I Met Your Mother* TV series Season 1. This topic belongs to the study of Pragmatics as the main field. "Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics which studies speaker's meaning and utterance interpretation, or it can be defined as meaning interaction" (Thomas 22). Specifically, I would like to focus on Gricean maxims as one of the subfields of pragmatics. The Gricean maxims are rule of conducts which was introduced by H. P. Grice and it is divided into the maxims of Quality, Quantity, Relation, and Manner (Thomas 63). According to H. P. Grice, there are five categories of non-observance of the conversational maxim which people usually fail to observe. They are flouting a maxim, violating a maxim, opting out of a maxim, suspending a maxim and infringing a maxim (Thomas 64).

This study is done to show that the non-observance of the Gricean maxims may result in humor, which is seen in the TV series called *How I Met Your Mother* Season 1, as one of the examples of daily life. This is significant as through this TV series, we can find that linguistic features have an important role to make the TV series interesting to watch. I want to make the readers know and understand that sometimes people do not always say what they actually mean. By analyzing this TV series, I will show them that sometimes the speaker has a different intended meaning when they utter an utterance. This analysis will also help readers understand that people often fail to observe Gricean maxims in conversation. Besides, this analysis will help them look at the other effect of failing to observe the Gricean maxims, which is the occurrence of the funny atmosphere.

(873 words)

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The problems which I am going to analyze are:

1. What types of non-observance of Gricean maxims are found in *How I Met Your Mother* Season 1?
2. What types of Gricean maxims are not observed in *How I Met Your Mother* Season 1?
3. What implicature is generated?
4. How does the non-observance of Gricean maxims result in humour?

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

This study is done:

1. To know what types of non-observance of Gricean maxims are found in *How I Met Your Mother* Season 1.
2. To know what types of Gricean maxims are not observed in *How I Met Your Mother* Season 1.
3. To know the generated implicature.
4. To know how the non-observance of Gricean maxims results in humour.

### **1.4 Method of Research**

In analyzing my topic, I watched the TV series *How I Met Your Mother* Season 1 and then I selected the data in which the utterances fail to observe the Gricean maxims. Then, I searched for the references from the Internet and some books which are related to my topic. Finally, I analyzed the non-observance of the maxims in *How I Met Your Mother* TV series Season 1. Finally, after I finished analyzing my data, I made a conclusion based on the analysis.

### **1.5 Organization of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of four chapters. Chapter One is the Introduction, Chapter Two is the Theoretical Framework, Chapter Three is the Discussion, and Chapter Four is the Conclusion. Chapter One consists of the Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Methods of Research, and

Organization of the Thesis. At the end of this thesis, there are the Bibliography and Appendix, which contains the data used in this thesis.