

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This Chapter elaborates reason of this research. It begins with background of the research, research questions, research objectives, research significances, and definition of key terms. The first chapter of this research contains general perspective of relation between humor and the object.

1.1 Background

There has been a lot of talking about humor since the Greek's age. But, there are less research about it. At that time, laughing and making people laugh are forbidden. Each person laugh, usually, because there is a mockery on other people jokes. So, philosopher and Greek people did not recommending to improve humor. Aristotle also agrees with Plato about the possible drawbacks of excessive indulgence in humor. In the *Nicomachean Ethics* he explains that the best life is lived when one is ruled by reason. He does consider "relaxation and amusement as a necessary element in life," but carrying humor to excess is vulgar and improper. "A joke is a kind of abuse," and only jokes that abuse what is itself improper (i.e., satirical humor directed at irrationality) gain Aristotle's acceptance. (Bardon, 2005: 2)

It was not only among Greek, humor existed in the most of Europe. The concept about humor is bad caused by the fact that society spent time to imagine of what they do not have. Humor considered as lies and gives a false hopes. The Royal Kingdom of England also thought that humor is a bad thing in character

building (Bardon, 2005: 3). Ridiculing or being humorous are drowning the ethic of human. This become a debate among author of literary work. At the same time in Middle-East, they also thought that continuous laughing or making a joke is an impolite action. As there has been said, humor become topic which are less talked in academic or literary research.

After that age, thinker then becomes more open themselves to humor and begin developing it. This is fundamentally an effect of Renaissance – where individual expression is appreciated. There are not many people developing humor before Renaissance. Usually for writing poetry, short stories, and novel. Humor become a substitute on writing, as entertainment. Even if humor become the main topic. There are no author make it on series and anthology or novel that time.

In relation to the semiotic analysis of humor, there have been many researchers analyze humor. The first previous study with semiotic approach which is quite helpful for structural and functional research, is a thesis by Hatice Celebi (2003), with the title *Structural and Functional Analysis of Henry James's Novel The Portrait of A Lady with A Comparison of Jane Campion's Adaptation of The Novel*. the aim of the research is revealing how meaning is made and to show how certain elements are transferred to the film version. The structural analysis of The Portrait will chiefly rely on Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan's scheme. The functional analysis relies on Roland Barthes's theory of "structural Analysis of narratives". The similarity between this research with my research is both of them use structural analysis narrative to find the meaning. But the difference is this analysis

compare the text and movie. The second previous study is conducted by Maria Asumta Reniminaryu (2009) a student of English Department Gunadarma University, with the title *Analysis on Roland Barthes Code in The Wizard of Oz: A Semiotic Approach*. The researcher analyzed the narrative codes based on Roland Barthes theory, then finding each similarities and meaning of each codes in the novel. The researcher divides the novel into lexias, then applies the codes in those lexias. The codes describe a comedy story through narrative codes in *The Wizard of Oz*. The researcher found conclusion about the difference and the meaning of each lexias. Different from previous studies above, the researcher analyze the humor that occurs in short stories, not novel. The analysis is focus on the structure of humor, while this previous studies is focus on lexias. The third previous studies is quite helpful for humor topic analysis. It is conducted by Ahmad Shadiqi (2014) a student of English Department Andalas University, with the title *Semiotic Analysis of South Park Cartoon Comedy Season I*. The study is aimed to analyze the signs in the show and to describe the codes in which those signs are organized. The similarities with this research is the use of humor object. The sign collection is about comedy topic. The conclusion is revealing the hidden meaning of the code. The difference is the object, it is a movie. The fourth previous studies is conducted by Agnes Marszalek (2012) entitled *Humorous worlds: a cognitive stylistic*. It is focus on the structure of humor conduct in comic narrative. It also analyze the humor topic, but the difference with this research is the object and the main theory. The fifth previous studies is conducted by Ulrike K. Gunther (2013) a student of Albert Ludwig University entitled *What's in A*

Laugh? Humor, Jokes and Laughter in Conversational Corpus of The NBC. It focus on humor structure and function. But, the difference is the object. This research use conversation as the object.

The less number of humor work, then, collected in 1930 by Hutchinson. Co as publisher. P. G. Wodehouse had been chosen to be the editor of this book. It contains more than a thousand pages, and more than twenty author which the work is collected. They are various author, obviously, they wrote differently from one to another. As they had different sense of humor, this book represent the kind of humor from England. All author are England's writer. The work choose and collect between 1830-1930 periods.

Humor became an important topic in developing literary work on the 20th century. The structure of humor literary work is rare to examine, since there are less data about it. As humor spreading a lot after Victorian age, people seems to share their individual expression – most of them are desire to having fun. So, people start communicate their interest on humor. Incongruity theory essentially posits that people feel amused when they have an experience that violates the normal order of things according to their own subjective understanding of what the normal order of things is. (Straus, 2014: 7)

Humor is a general term that refers either to something intended to cause amusement or to whatever quality makes something amusing. Bardon (2005: 1) states the (intended) presence of humorous content explains what makes a literary or theatrical presentation a comedy; humor is the quality that is the common

element in farces, satires, absurdities, jokes, witticisms, and anything else that may be found to be amusing. Humor and laughter is universal to human cultures.

Semiotics is a branch of linguistics. It is concerned with finding meaning. Semiotic in the development become a tools which use for examine human life. Barthes uses semiotic of sign as he improve Saussure theory. He use the term as an effort to explain “human life were dominated by context”. His essay *Myth Today* as the beginning of a new phase of work focused on the idea of a science of criticism, more precisely sturturalism and semiology. (Allen, 2003: 39).

Structure is something lies within a thing. The “structure” taken from the building which has fundament. Structure in semiotic were developed by Ferdinand De Saussure, known as signification process. This process is an early discussion which improve by other linguist. Those who learn and study about this term are Roland Barthes, and Jacques Derrida. They believe that everything has structure. On their sight, it appear in any cultural events. Text is something that contain structure as a whole. This is understood as an idea on language term. In human mind, these structure work to build some comprehension. Meaning in the story made by many supporting components, they are: plot, character, point of view, setting, etc. on this case, understanding will be gain after reading whole story. Reader will be entertained, made laugh, scared, or made curious.

In the study of meaning, sometime different perception creates humor. Humor aspect are superiority, incongruity, and relief. It usually talks concern on habits, it is worth to do in any situation. Humor in the current situations is

extremely required since it can be used to release tiresome, fatigue, and stress. Humor is possible to speaker to express the truth elegantly and softly.

Then, after giving some explanation and discussion above, researcher interested to expose about humor structure. The object which has been chosen is a book of short story collection entitled *A Century of Humour*, structure theory in semiotic as analysis tools, and researcher decided to use the title *Humor Structure in A Century of Humour from 1830-1930 Edited by P.G, Woodhouse* for this research.

1.2 Research Problem

According to the background, humor was expressed through gesture, intonation, expression, and act (performance in Greek's Age). Later, humor appear in form of text. In order to find humor aspects on text, this research attempted to answer the following problems:

1. What is the structure of humor in *A Century of Humour*?
2. What is the function of humor in *A Century of Humour*?

1.3 Research Objective

The purpose of this study is to answer the questions above. This research has to give some beneficiary for academic world. Researcher purpose is as follows:

1. To analyze the structure of Humor in *A Century of Humour*
2. To find out the function of humor structure in *A Century of Humour*

1.4 Research Significance

There are points of purpose on this research. As researcher thinks that such academic writing share some significances, as follows: This research enrich the knowledge about humor. The purpose of this study is giving an explanation about humor structure in short story. Semiotic term which applied in this research use the consistent topic about structure. Humor as an abstract thing. It means that only semiotic approach that able to examine the object. Besides semiotic, structure is exist in human cognition. This research will give the explanation about how structure can be understand in human cognition, through short stories.

This research gives an information about how humor constructed in a short story. There will be an explanation about how humor accepted among those who read literary work. At least, there are three convention that create the same understanding on humor, which are: the knowledge about language, culture, and literary work. These are very useful for reader who wants to get know about humor, deeper. Especially in written text, because there are differences between verbal humor and written humor. For those who read humor stories, it can help them to understand humor from England country that are problematic because sometimes the humor is not transferable.

Especially for those whom take major in linguistics, it can gives additional knowledge in Semiotic. Linguistics students can use this research as a reference to

make another humor research with a Semiotic approach or other linguistic approaches, such as semantic and pragmatic. For those who are interested in making humor stories, this research gives some information on the techniques that are used by famous writer to make successful humorous, so that they also can make outstanding humor stories.

1.5 Definiton of Key Terms

Humor : humor is the quality that is the common element in farces, satires, absurdities, jokes, witticisms, and anything else that may be found to be amusing. Humor and laughter is universal to human cultures (Bardon, 2005: 1)

Structure : Something lies behind a thing, the word is taken from the building which has fundament.

Semiotic : Able to give an explanation about the hidden meaning. Then, meaning has to be uncover.