

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **A. Background of the Study**

Humor gives several functions related to the emotion of people. Melinda states in *Health Benefits of Humor and Laughter* (2013) that psychologically, humor helps people to keep emotionally healthy because it can change moods by taking out stress and depression. Then socially, humor gives positive feelings in relationship to be closer and stronger.

Humor has an important role in daily life particularly during interaction or communication. To create positive atmosphere in communication, being able to tell funny things to others is needed. Understanding the right time to use humor is required since it can be employed to release tiresome, depression, and stress. Not only for laugh, but humor is also possible to be used to say the truth elegantly and softly, without disturbing someone's feeling.

The main aspect of humor is to entertain people, although it does not always mean laughter. Attardo (1994: 117) believes that the most common parameter of humor is laughter. However, humor does not always create laughter and laughter is not always the result of humor. There are still several possible reactions to humor.

A well-known medical drama, *Grey's Anatomy*, is chosen as the object of this research because it also belongs to a comedy TV series which has medical theme. This series portrays the life of a group of intern doctors working in the

Seattle hospital. It focuses on the fictional lives of surgical interns and residents while trying to maintain their personal lives, career, and relationships. There are a lot of humorous utterances said by the characters in having conversation since the genre is romance comedy medical drama.

However, the humor appearing here is a contextual humor which are mostly employs the medical terminology since the characters are doctors and physicians. The humor has the same intention such as to provoke laughter, insult, teasing, and other purposes. Humor in medical situation here has possibilities to relieve stress in patients and medical professionals. When doctors share humor with patients, humor gives patients the opportunity to forget about their anxiety and pain and also makes the doctors emotionally close to their patients. Medical professionals also use humor to release the tension among them while working in the medical environment and to mock each other in insulting way or even just teasing.

The humor using medical terms in this drama mostly employ medical jargon, a type of medical language that is used in a particular context which may not be well understood outside the people who works in the hospital. Moreover, the intention might be different from the real use of medical terms or somehow the humor sounds too serious because during conversation, people encounter many different forms of humor communicated by different means and for different purposes.

Humor is a very subjective concept because the topic might be funny for some people and might be considered outrageous for others. To say whether a

humor is funny or not depends on many factors including age, culture, personal experience, level of education, and location. The kind of humor in *Grey's Anatomy* is contextual and somehow hard to understand or sounds outrageous for common people without medical background knowledge. Therefore, in dealing with the humor using medical terms as a language phenomenon, pragmatic approach which is needed to be applied since it analyzes the use and meaning of language in social contexts.

Humor has been studied quite extensively over the years with linguistic approaches. There are several approaches that are possible to use, e.g. sociolinguistic approach, stylistic approach, discourse analysis and pragmatic approach. In pragmatic field, humor is considered as a violation of Grice's Cooperative Principle. Humor is not seen as a bad model of communication, but rather as a part of daily communication. Speakers do violate the maxims of Cooperative Principle to trigger the hearers' laughter.

Then, the researcher chooses the second season of this drama because according to Nielsen Ratings, from all seasons of *Grey's Anatomy* which are ranked in the top ten among all viewers, it reaches its peak in the second season attracting an average of 19.44 million viewers per episode. Then, the researcher expects that there will be a lot of humorous conversations happens in this season since it becomes the favorite of viewers due to the interesting plot and which happens mostly in the hospital setting. However, the researcher would only take 5 episodes because with the duration of 40 minutes per episode, she expects that those would be enough.

## B. Research Focus

In order to understand the use and meaning of humor using medical terms, there are some appropriate approaches that can be employed. The first one is pragmatics as one of the approaches which is concerned with the use of language in social contexts. However, the phenomenon of humor is also a part of sociolinguistics as the study of language and society that sees humor as a social phenomenon. Then, discourse analysis is also the other possible approach to analyze humor seeing language use beyond the boundaries of utterances.

The researcher is interested to apply pragmatics as the approach to analyze humor using medical terms in this research. The medical terms as the remark and characteristics of humor creation happens in *Grey's Anatomy Season 2* since the genre of the drama is medical drama. This research focuses on the context of humor such as the types, the intentions of the humor, and the medical terms used to create humor performed by the characters in *Grey's Anatomy* as the portray of the conversation especially humor in medical situation among doctors and/or between patients and doctors, therefore the reader can understand the meanings and intentions.

There are three research questions to be answered in this research.

1. What medical terms are used to create humor in *Grey's Anatomy Season 2* TV series?
2. What types of humor using medical terms are presented in *Grey's Anatomy Season 2* TV series?

3. What are the functions of humor using medical terms in *Grey's Anatomy Season 2* TV series?

### **C. Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this research are:

1. to find out the medical terms used to create humor in *Grey's Anatomy Season 2* TV series,
2. to identify the types of humor using medical terms in *Grey's Anatomy Season 2* TV series, and
3. to explain the functions of humor using medical terms in *Grey's Anatomy Season 2* TV series.

### **D. Significance of the Study**

This research offers some benefits as follows:

1. For students of linguistics

This research can be a reference for linguistics students who are about to conduct similar research in the areas of pragmatics, particularly humor using medical terms.

2. For readers in common

This research is expected to stimulate the readers to understand the use and meaning of humor especially in the real medical case. Hopefully it will help the readers because this humor is difficult to be understood by people in general.

### 3. For future researchers

This research can be the reference for them to enrich their knowledge about humor using medical terms, therefore there may be a further and deeper research in this topic.