

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Humour could be real discourse. Reviewing from Kapogianni's (2014) it can be achieved, "...real discourse is guided by communication principles with spontaneity which entails the lack of elaborate forward planning in the choice and formulation of irony strategies." It implies that spontaneous communication is able to formulate the strategy of irony in real discourse, which this strategy is one of typical ironies that dominantly correspond to the meaning reversal type. In contrast, Kapogianni also states that another type of irony, meaning replacement type, primarily correlate to the strategies which applied in fictional discourse. It argues that the crucial division into the two types of verbal irony is still in need of further investigation from multiple perspectives. In this case, humour is concerned with the real discourse. Accordingly, the analysis is going to continue the study of irony in humour, focused on types of irony reflected from humour in the real discourse, whether meaning reversal type only appeared, or meaning replacement also occurred; although humour in this case is real discourse. Moreover, because of the analysis of irony still need further investigation like Kapogianni said above, the focus is investigated from another perspective, in this case—gender.

Irony and humour are two related. The two are independent, and include pragmatic phenomena. As Gricean theory alleged, "these have been the object of well-grounded research during the last 20 years. It is proved by some researchers have been studied about the two above; Alvarado (2013) elaborates, "humour appears in the utterance without listener expecting it, even it is not humorous

genre; it will become evident in many of these cases that humour becomes a narrative or social strategy, exactly the same as irony and politeness.” Beside that, Attardo (2001) states, “irony is generally seen as distinct from humour, but the same definitional problems exist with its close neighbour.” From these statements, it can be perceived that irony can be connected with humour. Furthermore, irony and humour are assumed as the two different terms, and these terms can appear in the same problems; however, irony and humour are closely related each other because both of them can be used as narrative and or social strategy. In addition, the academic study of humour have decided to adopt the generic term humour as an umbrella term encompassing programmatically all the semantic field of humour and humorous forms.

Irony is progressively developed. Irony has ever been traditionally studied as a figure of speech or thought in which the speaker utters just the opposite of what he wants to convey. Since ancient times, irony has been conceived as a mechanism which leads people to understand the opposite of what is actually said. For instance, irony is a kind of indirect negation; in other words, a negation without an explicit negative mark. Similarly, in the definition offered by Marion (1998) insists on describing, “negation as the most representative feature of irony.” Also, Wilson (2006: 1723) explains, “in metaphor, the figurative meaning is a simile or comparison based on the literal meaning; in irony, it is the opposite of the literal meaning.” As well, in the past times, irony is assumed as a conversational mechanism applied with indirect negation and/or opposite of literal meaning, without providing explicit negative mark. Yet, as further development of the times, the study of irony will be more developed.

Related to statements described above, irony has various uses for people interaction. According to Tselika (2015), "Irony is used for humorous purposes, fun, demonstration of wittiness, as also to make criticism which many times result in the interlocutor's discomfort, lack of confidence, insult, and several other negative physiological states." Humour benefited to increase and maintain the solidarity, turning up the energy of the employees, to reduce stress and enhance leadership, group cohesiveness, communication, creativity, and organizational culture; however, the using of irony can show up the other cases, as Ritchie (2005) and Garmendia (2010) imply, "There are preconceived ideas about irony and humour as forms used in the interaction of showing the speaker's superiority over the listener." Related to these statements, Alvarado (2012) indicates, "Irony and humour are pragmatic events which can coexist in interaction without their purpose necessarily being to attack the interlocutor." In contrast with that statement, there is an hypothesis said that humour—along with other effects such as irony and politeness—is used in conversation for a positive purpose as could be, for instance, like Alvarado (2013) said, "It can be strengthening ties between speaker and listener." Indefinitely, using irony of humour in the interaction is not only having effect psychologically, but also the power and prestige among interlocutors. On the other hand, it can expose both positive and negative purposes.

Related to the description above, irony may be used to intensify the communicative functions of a certain interaction. In workplace interaction, it can be functioned in building communication. Although the context that usually applied in the office is formal enough, irony inside humour really appeared in

daily conversation. Humour nowadays is commonly occurred in the interaction, including in the workplace. Humour in the workplace interaction not only has beneficial effects as described above, but also has 'worse side'. As Mullany (2004) insisted, "Workplace humour could be used manipulatively, as a control mechanism, for example, by the chair in white-collar business meetings." Even, Rodrigues and Collinson (1995) demonstrated, "Telecom employees in Brazil not only used humour as a safety valve for channeling emotions and expressing dissatisfaction, but also as a weapon of contestation and a means to effect change." Consequently, humour is presumed as a strategy for expressing resistance, also controlling mechanism of expression.

Concerning with mechanism of expression, it can be examined that people talk at work as one of their ways to express. As Janet Holmes (2006) mentioned, "The ways in which women and men make use of humour in negotiating their gender identities alongside their professional identities at work, illustrating in particular how humour serves as a valuable discursive resource for integrating the conflict that some experience between power and gender identity in workplace interaction." The statement above is one of the different aspects of interaction in humour and gender. In workplace interaction, females and males have their own way and style to interact and negotiate, consciously or not, they maintain their power and present their gender and professional identities at work.

Talking about gender identities, it is linked with gender styles. Each gender is estimated having own style on showing their identity. As Richard (2006) illustrated, "A more affiliative and collaborative style of humour in meetings, contrasting with different styles in different communities of practice in less formal

contexts.” Moreover, humour can be applied either in meeting (formal context) or small talk (informal context), because it is utilized in daily conversation. In daily talk at workplace, people interact and speak among colleagues—between males and females. So, in the interaction, it formulates gender styles. The styles can be appeared when females and males humorously talk each other by using irony. In this study, it analyzes whether female and male relevantly talk with their gender styles or not when using irony in humorous interaction; and whether females talk more feminine and males interact more masculine or females can be masculine and males can be feminine.

In this case, the sample of humorous utterances in the workplace interaction—by considering the gender—is transcribed in the conversation below:

INTERACTION I

Female (HG) : “Pulang kita?”

(Shall we go home?)

Female (NN) : *(tidying up the belongings, ready to go home)*

Male (TH) : “Yah, Mau mana, Nun? Tadi katanya mau pulang malam.”

(Yah, Where do you want to go? You said you want to come back at night.)

Female (NN) : “Hhh..(laugh) pande kali lah ayah ini memang kalo soal mengarang bebas.”

(hhh..you are an expert to be an ”author”)

Male (TH) : “Lah, kau nya tadi yang bilang kau mau piket.”

(Lah, you said that you want to stay.)

All : *(laugh)*

Female (NN) : “Ayah ni pokoknya soal mengarang nomor satu, lah. Ponten 9 dulu pas sekolah ya pas pelajaran Bhs Indonesia.”

(You are number 1 in writing ‘story’. You might have got point 9 when you studied Bahasa Indonesia.)

Male (TH) : *(laugh)*

Based on the utterances above, it can be examined that irony appeared in the conversation, uttered by male (TH). He said, “*Yah, Mau mana, Nun? Tadi katanya mau pulang malam.*” Also by female (NN), she said, “*Hhh..(laugh) pande kali lah ayah ini memang kalo soal mengarang bebas.*” The situation is considered as humorous interaction. It can be proved that all participants who get involve in the workplace, have laughed at what he said. It is built by male, and female is challenging. It has been displayed when she said above and added, “*Ayah ni pokoknya soal mengarang nomor satu, lah. Ponten 9 dulu pas sekolah ya pas pelajaran Bahasa Indonesia.*” From the samples above, it can be observed that male and female talk challengingly, they use the same style : challenging style. In this case, different gender may have same gender styles. On the other hand, irony occurred inside humour, and gender styles showed in these utterances, and this case need have further investigation.

INTERACTION II

- Male (TH) : “*Kau tadi berdiri dimana, Ln, pas apel tadi pagi?*”
(Where did you stand when we had assembly this morning?)
- Male (H) : “*Oo..di depan buk Ln tadi, Yah..(laugh)*”
(Oo..She was in front of the line, Yah..)
- Female (EB) : “*Hmm..iya..di depan tadi Ln, Yah..*”
(Hmm, Of course, I was in front of line, Yah..)
- Male (TH) : “*Tak nampakku tadi..(laugh)*”
(I didn't see)
- Female (EB) : “*Hhh..di belakang Ln loh, Yah..ngejek kali ayh ini..*”
(Hhh..I was in the back, Yah. You are kidding me.)

Based on the utterances above, it can be examined that irony appeared in the conversation, uttered by male (H). He said, “*Oo..di depan buk Ln tadi, Yah..(laugh)*” Also by female (EB), she said, “*Hmm..iya..di depan tadi Ln, Yah..*” The

situation is considered as humorous interaction. It can be proved that the participants who get involve in the workplace, have laughed at what he and she said. It is built by male, but female is cooperative. It has been diplayed when she said above and added, “Hhh..di belakang Ln loh, Yah..ngejek kali ayh ini.” From the samples above, it can be observed that males talk challengingly, and female responds cooperatively. They use the different styles: challenging and cooperative style. In this case, different gender may appear different gender styles. On the other hand, irony occurred inside humour, and gender styles showed in these utterances in contrast with the previous sample, and this case also need have further investigation.

Based on the samples of the conversation in the workplace above, it can be concerned with the previous statements, that any relation between irony and humour appeared in real discourse—in the workplace, that involve females and males talking each other who use their gender styles in the interaction. In addition, it found out the cases that should need more analyzed, the researcher decides to build up the study entitled *Irony and Gender Styles of Humour in the Workplace*.

1.2 The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study described above, the problems are formulated as 3 (three) problems mentoned below:

1. What types of irony are occurred in humour in the workplace?
2. How are gender styles of humour appeared inside ironical expressions in the workplace?
3. Why does the irony happen the way it does?

1.3 The Objective of the Study

In line with the problems of the study, the study is proposed to:

1. To describe the types of irony are occurred in humour in the workplace
2. To describe how gender styles of humour are appeared inside irony in the workplace
3. To describe why the irony happens the way it does

1.4 The Scope of the Study

In daily conversation, both irony and metaphor often be appeared. Yet, in this study, it is more focused on the irony which is uttered by the interlocutors. Irony can be assumed as an event aimed for humorous and or critical interaction; in this case, the study emphasizes on the humorous interaction. Humorous interaction also can be existed as one of strategies in the interaction, but, the study analyzes only in the workplace interaction. In this case, among 3 (three) subdivisions of financial department, the subdivision of public funds has employees that mostly interact using humour, and doing humour becomes the 'common thing' of interaction among colleagues. The study decides to determine the office of public funds subdivision (*Subbag Dana Masyarakat, Bagian Keuangan, Biro Rektor*), in State University of Medan. Humour also can be applied either in meeting (formal context) or small talk (informal context); so, it is utilized in small talk (daily conversation) in order to make it easier to get the data. Because of the study concentrates in the workplace, it analyzes around 16 employees of the subdivision itself, related to their gender styles during they do humorous interaction amongst them.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

In theoretical perspective, the study is purposed to increase the understanding about theories of irony in real discourse—in this case, colleague's interaction. It is also aimed at raising the understanding about the theories of humour that focused on the gender styles. However, through the analysis of the humorous utterances in the workplace, the study is expected to be able to increase the more understanding of the existing literature about Linguistic Study, emphasized on Sociolinguistics, specifically irony, humour, also language and gender.

In practical perspective, the study is purposed to make room for the further researcher—who is interested in studying the irony and gender styles of humour. In this case, the study is expected to be one of references for the other researchers who will analyze and develop the study related to irony, humour, and gender, with another perspective. Also, the study is supposed to increase and encourage the number of analysis about humour, especially for English Applied Linguistics in State University of Medan.

