CHAPTER 2

FRAMEWORK OF THE THEORY

In this chapter, the writer will explain the framework of the theory used to analyse the film of "The Bing Bang Theory". From those Pragmatics experts, the writer uses Paul Grice's theory which are "Cooperative Principle" and "Flouting Maxim"

2.1 Cooperative Principle

Pragmatics is primarily concerned with what people do with discourse rather than with the linguistic or cognitive processes involved in it. There are two types of meaning in a linguistic expression. The first type of meaning is intrinsic to a linguistic expression containing it, and it cannot be separated from that expression. The study of this kind of meaning is the domain of semantics. The second kind of meaning is one which is not intrinsic to the linguistic expression carrying it, but which rather results from the interaction of the linguistic expression with the context in which it is used. The study of this kind of meaning is the domain of pragmatics (Trask, 1994: 227). Moreover, Yule (1996: 3) explains that pragmatics is the study of how listeners can make inferences about what is said in order to arrive at an interpretation of speakers' intended meaning. This type of study explores how a great deal of what is unsaid is recognized as part of what is communicated. Through pragmatics, people can talk about other people's intended meanings, their assumptions, their purposes or goals, and the kinds of actions that they are performing when they speak. It is more concerned with the conversational strategies used by the speakers how to produce utterance types, and the external linguistic elements. That is how language is used to communicate.

One of the most important concepts in pragmatics is Cooperative Principle. Grice (1989: 24) suggests that communication is a process that requires interlocutors to be cooperative with each other, and he formalized the Cooperative Principle that guides speakers to make their contributions appropriate to the conversation. Grice believes that there is a set of assumptions guiding the conduct of conversation, and these assumptions may be formulated as guidelines for efficient and

effective use of language. The guidelines, according to Grice, are four basic maxims of conversation which together express a general Cooperative Principle. The principle is: making contribution as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or directions of the talk exchange in which people are engaged (Grice, 1989:26). Cutting (2002: 34- 35) explains the four maxims of Cooperative Principle as follows:

2.1.1 Maxim of Quantity

The speakers should be as informative as they required, that they should give neither too little information nor too much. Furthermore, Cutting 16 (2002: 35) says that people who give too little information risk their hearer to be unable to identify what they are talking about because they are not explicit enough; those who give more information than the hearer needs risk boredom.

2.1.2 Maxim of Quality

The speakers are expected to be sincere, to say something that they believe corresponds to reality. They assumed not to say anything that they believe to be false or anything for which they lack evidence. Some speakers like to draw their hearer's attention to the fact that they are only saying what they believe to be true, and that they lack adequate evidence.

2.1.3 Maxim of Relation

The speakers are assumed to be saying something that is relevant to what has been said before. You have to connect what you want to say (make it relevant) to what is already being talked about. For example; if, in an exam, you write an essay on a topic slightly different from the question asked you are likely to lose marks.

2.1.4 Maxim of Manner

People should be perspicuous, brief and orderly, and avoid obscurity and ambiguity.

In daily communication people are supposed to observe the maxims to obtain the right information, but it is interesting and important to note that conversation participants would not like to observe these maxims strictly all the time. It is believed that there are mainly four forms of non-observance: flouting, violating, infringing and opting out. When the speaker deliberately or indeliberately

adapts at least one way to break any of these maxims, his or her language becomes indirect and sometimes humorous.

Those maxims specified the rules that speakers have to follow in order to make conversation go on effectively. Whenever one or more of these maxims is violated, the necessity of reconstructing the meaning of the utterance arises in order to save the utterance from merely being a faulty conversational contribution. For example, self-evidently true or obviously false statements must be uttered for some purposes rather than for simply conveying their stated meanings. Several rhetorical strategies have been considered to flout Grice's maxims, i.e. metaphor, overstatements (exaggeration), understatement (euphemism), and sarcasm, which are regarded as examples of violating the maxim of quality or quantity (Black, 2006: 24).

While the rules for each of these maxims vary, some at least of the maxims should be obeyed. Black (2006: 24) says that maxim of manner is very much a matter of convention in such situations, but the maxims of quantity, quality and relation are supposed to be obeyed by cooperative speakers. Black (2006: 24-25) adds that the maxims are not always obeyed, and the failure to do so can take in a number of forms.

1) Opting out

It means making clear that one is aware of the maxim, but is prevented for some reasons from obeying it. Politicians and reporters obeying an embargo on the publication of news are in this situation.

2) Violating a maxim

Violating a maxim is often done with the intention to mislead. This is often a quiet act, also known as lying.

3) A clash

It arises when one cannot be fully co-operative. For instance, to fulfill one maxim might require one to break another, in a situation where one is not certain of the accuracy of some information, and hence uncertain whether to say something which may be helpful, but where one's evidence is

inadequate. One may therefore hedge one's contribution. Phrases such as I understand that, or it seems to me may indicate this.

4) Flouting

This is the most interesting way of breaking a maxim. One makes clear to the hearer that one is aware of the Cooperative Principle and the maxims, so that the audience is led to consider why the principle or a maxim was broken. The assumption, in other words, is not that communication has broken down, but that the speaker has chosen an indirect way of achieving it. It may be that something in the situation prevents a direct answer to a question; considerations of politeness may inhibit the speaker. This is one of the most crucial aspects of Grice's theory for the interpretation of literary texts. People assume that flouts generate implicatures, and it is up to the reader to pick up appropriate ones. Thus, the maxim of manner is flouted when the speaker uses a metaphor or irony, but the speaker assumes that it has communicative effects. The same maxim is involved when a non-chronological order is selected for telling a story.

2.2 Maxim flouting

People do not always follow the four maxims as they communicate. The speaker of a conversation is free to choose whether they will follow the Cooperative Principle or not. Black (2006: 24) says that there is a time when people do not employ the Cooperative Principles in doing their communication with their own purposes or reasons. If speakers give a non-cooperative response in their communication, they have two choices whether to violate or to flout the maxims. Flouting is different from violating the maxims. According to Finch (2000: 160), violating maxim involves some elements of communication failure, whereas flouting is readily understood rather than real violation. Violating maxim is unintentionally done by the speakers, whereas flouting maxim is done by the speakers on purpose to make the hearers understand the meaning behind the flouted maxims. In other words, maxim flouting happens when the speakers appear not to follow the maxims but expect the hearers to appreciate the meaning implied. All the four maxims of Cooperative Principle may also be flouted. Thus, there will be a reason behind the maxim flouting which is done by the speaker of a conversation and the speaker himself or herself has already had a belief in their mind that the hearer will understand the implicature of his or her flouting. Cutting (2002: 37-39) explains the maxim flouting as follow:

2.2.1 Maxim of Quantity Flouting

The speaker who flouts the maxim of quality seems to give too little information or too much information. For example:

A   : Well, How do I look?

B   : Your shoes are nice.

<div align="right">(Cutting, 2002: 37)</div>

B does not say that the sweatshirt and jeans do not look nice, but he knows that A will understand that implication because A asks about his whole appearance and only gets told about part of it.

2.2.2 Maxim of Quality Flouting

Such flouts occur when the Speakers says something which is and needs to be perceived as blatantly untrue.

– On Christmas, an ambulance picks up a collapsed drunkard who collapsed on the sidewalk. Soon the drunkard vomits all over the paramedic. The paramedic says:

– 'Great, that's really great! That's made my Christmas!'

Inferencing in the Gricean framework unfolds as follows:

1. The paramedic expressed pleasure at having somebody vomit over him.

2. There is no example in recorded history of people being delighted at   having somebody vomit over them.

3. I have no reason to believe that the paramedic is trying to deceive us.

4. Unless the paramedic's utterance is entirely pointless, he must be trying to convey some other proposition.

5. The most obviously related proposition is the exact opposite of the one he has expressed.

6. The paramedic is extremely annoyed at having the drunkard vomit over him.

2.2.3 Maxim of Relation Flouting

The speakers flout maxims of relation when they expect that the hearers will be able to imagine what the speakers do not say and to make the connection between the speakers' utterance and the preceding ones. If a speaker flouts the maxim of relation, it means that he or she gives irrelevant information. Example:

A   : So what do you think of Mark?

B   : His flatmate's a wonderful cook.

(Cutting, 2002: 39)

B does not say that she was not very impressed with Mark, but by not mentioning him in the reply and apparently saying something irrelevant, she implies it.

2.2.4 Maxim of Manner Flouting

It occurs when a speaker gives ambiguous response. It means that there is more than one meaning in the conversation. Cutting (2002: 39) says those who flout the maxim of manner, appearing to be obscure, are often trying to exclude a third party, as in:

A   : Where are you off to?

B   : I was thinking of going out to get some of that **funny white stuff** for **somebody.**

A   : OK, but don't be long, diner's nearly ready.

(Cutting, 2002: 39)

B speaks in an ambiguous way, saying "that funny white stuff" and "somebody", because he is avoiding saying "ice cream" and "Michelle", so that his little daughter does not become excited and ask for the ice cream before her meal. If you are vague or ambiguous (i.e. not clear) you can lose marks; if you are over-wordy you can lose marks. Sometimes, writers also play with words to heighten the ambiguity, in order to make a point.

2.3   Humor

The creation of humor is an impulse shared by all human beings. Humor is a phenomenon which is influenced by culture. Humor produced by one culture is different from that produced by

another. It is because those cultures differ in their histories, values and geography (Walker, 1998: 2). Humor, like all forms of communication, requires context to find it amusing. The audience must have certain knowledge, understanding, and values.

American humor is different from another Countries; even British that has the same language. The differences are due to several factors, especially culture. According to Walker (1998: 4), America, from its earliest years, has been largely a nation of immigrants, which brings former residents of many countries together. This circumstance gave rise to humor dealing with ethnic groups, highlighting customs, accents, and other characteristics which served to distinguish one group of settlers from another.

It is nonetheless true that many of America's prominent writers have found the various techniques of humor quite genial to their purpose. Mark Twain's novel The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, for example, achieves much of its effect through Twain's use of many major techniques of American humor, including slapstick, satire, mistaken identity, wordplay, and exaggeration. Those techniques of humor are being most of humor that Americans use (Walker, 1998: 6).

The purposive and embattled state of American humor comes into focus as soon as it attends to conflicts between the attempt to amuse and resistance to it, between ridicule and resentment, satire and outrage (Lewis, 2006: 3). Certain American comedies have gained huge success in television. They are enjoyed not only by Americans, but also by people from all over the world. In America, one of the huge success forms of humor is presented in television sitcoms.

2.4 Pragmatic Aspects of Humor

Wijana (1995: 8) explains that humor can be analyzed through linguistics; this is because humor involves incongruity and conflict. Aspects of incongruity and conflict are explained in linguistics through the norms of pragmatics both textual and interpersonal. Textually, the incongruity is done by violating Cooperative Principle, whereas the interpersonal incongruity is done by violating Politeness Principle. Several linguists have been trying to make a general pragmatic explanation on humor with reference to Grice's theory concerning Cooperative Principle and conversational implicature. Raskin and Attardo 15 (1991:35) claim that humor, on the one hand, involves some degrees of violation of the Cooperative Principle, but, on the other hand, humor is also a cooperative act because it can convey information. Raskin (1985:87) suggests that joke-telling

mode of communication is still governed by the Cooperative Principle because he believed that humor carries communicative functions.