

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of Study

Language is used to share, discuss, and give information. So, language plays a crucial role as a means of communication in society. It is in line with the idea of Mey saying that communication in society happens chiefly by means of language (2001:6). It means language is learned and used as media for sharing ideas; whether it is spoken or written. Language may have deep and surface structure. The deep structure is also known as message. Sometimes correlation between message and utterance is not easy to understand. Therefore, this correlation should be sought in order to understand the message clearly.

Written language has its manner to convey message. For example, a discourse must be creative instead of the mere use of real terms. This happens because the authors or the writers of the discourse want to share something in their own style. Conversation in comics use certain words to imply the meaning pragmatically. Hence, the theory of meaning in pragmatics needs to be applied to clarify the message of the conversation.

The study about meaning in linguistics belongs to semantics and pragmatics. As a matter of fact, semantics is different from pragmatics. Semantics discusses only word and sentence meaning in general. Meanwhile, pragmatics studies meaning related to external factors, such as context, speakers' knowledge, and specific events.

Comics frequently apply pragmatics meanings in the conversation. In order to understand the conversation, the pragmatic meanings should be interpreted. Next, comics are books or stories which contain conversations and funny pictures. Most of the stories are interesting and they aim to amuse the readers. In this study, the comics which are analyzed are taken from websites *Meme Comics*. Comics in the website are written in many languages. However, this study discusses the comics in English only. Further, comics have their own topics, message, and purpose. The following conversation taken from the comics may clarify the discussion above.



The comic shows disparagement of the new employee to his boss. In interview, there must be some questions offered by the employer. The conversation above clarifies that the employer wants to know the way how to figure out or survive of the situation. Unfortunately, the answer is unpredictable. The new laborer's answer seems to underestimate the question of the employer.

The utterances of both speakers imply that the purpose of the conversation is to command someone. It is classified as directive because the boss commands the new employee to imagine a tight situation. Meanwhile, the worker is not willing to imagine the situation. It shows that the new laborer does

not want to be commanded. Besides, the laborer begs the boss not to ask such a question.

1.2 The Statement of Problem

This research deals with pragmatic study on *Meme Comics*. It discusses two main problems. They are as the following:

1. What is the kind of speech acts found in the conversations of *Meme Comics*?
2. What is the function of speech acts in the comics?

1.3 The Objective of Study

This study focuses on answering the two questions as stated above:

1. To explain the kind of speech acts found in the conversations of *Meme Comics*.
2. To describe function of speech acts in the comics.

1.4 The Scope of Problem

In order to get the detailed understanding of the discussion, limitation of problem is needed. As presented earlier, this research is a study on pragmatics. Pragmatics is concerned with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader). Pragmatics in this study focuses only on the conversation of *Meme Comics*. The comics are analyzed in terms of speech acts and the functions of speech acts.

1.5 The Source of Data

The data of this research are taken from *Meme Comics* available in *Facebook*. There are two websites that contain so many comics which are interesting to discuss in this research. They are accessed from:

<http://m.facebook.com/YourMemeComics>

and <http://www.facebook.com/memecomic/timeline>

These websites are chosen as the source of the data because they contain the newest *Meme Comics*. In addition, *Meme Comics* in these websites are always up to date. Moreover, *Meme Comics* intended in the websites are accessed by a lot of Facebook users. Hence, they can be the valid source of data in this research.

1.6 The Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the result of this research may contribute something valuable not only for the researchers but also for the readers. Further, by reading the result of this research, namely a pragmatic study on *Meme Comics*, the readers may have better understanding about it. Theoretically, this research is expected to improve the readers' understanding and competence on the study of pragmatics, especially about speech acts on *Meme Comics*. Practically, the result of the study may motivate other researchers to do some others researches on the same topic seen from different point of view.