CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Research

In the importance of communicative competence, humor should also play an important part in language learning (Raskin (1985) in Wu & Chen, 2010: 55). As stated by Anggraini (2014: 1) that humor plays an important role in everyday life as a tool that can be used to enhance informal communication and relationship among the language users. In addition, Attardo (1997) in Anggraini (2014: 1) also proposed that the primary functions of humor in conversation mostly to lighten some situation and to amuse people or to evoke a good mood.

In that case, humor itself is categorized as violation of principles of communication suggested by pragmatic principles, both textually and interpersonally (Raskin (1985) in Anggraini, 2014: 4). Thus, it can be said that in order to understand the pattern of communication in the humor, the study of pragmatic is needed. Later on, the writer believed that one of the pragmatic studies that can be used to analyze the mechanism of language in humor is by applying the theory from Sperber and Wilson that is Relevance Theory. Attardo (1997) in Wang (2016: 750) stated that relevance theory is the first pragmatic theory to introduce cognitive linguistics into pragmatics, which is considered as the foundation of cognitive pragmatics and it made and effective explanation about language phenomenon.

In short, the principle of this theory is that every act of ostensive communication communicates the presumption of optimal relevance (Sperber and Wilson (2012) in

Sazali, 2014: 15). Here, the ostensive communication means that the situation (in regular communication) where there is interaction communicator wants signaling something and create a common understanding and intention is understood by the listeners (Sperber and Wilson (2012) in Sazali, 2014: 15).

Hence, in this research, relevance theory will be employed in studying the creation and appreciation of humor. Since the theory is developed on the basis of communication and cognition. Thus, regarding to the explanation, the writer also noticed that there are so many television comedies that are showing humor and can be analyzed by using relevance theory, one of them is TV series namely *Family Guy*. *Family Guy* is an animated sitcom produced by Seth MacFarlane for the Fox Broadcasting Company in America. The reason why the writer chooses this sitcom is because the humor that is shown in each season are quite a lot and the topic of humor can be in various contexts (such as culture, race, or certain community, even religions).

Furthermore, the writer also noticed that by learning relevance theory, it can help those who still lack of cognitive communication in understanding the context of humor. Since humor itself is an inferential process that only gives people clues about the speaker's/writer's potential intentions in order to reach a humorous interpretation (Erguvan, 2015: 2), thus, relevance theory acts in producing stimulus to the communicator to enable the listeners draw their conclusions.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of research, the writer formulates the research questions into:

1. What are verbal humors found in the *Family Guy* TV series?

2. How are the mechanism of humors in the *Family Guy* TV series?

1.3 Research Objectives

Regarding to the research questions above, the objectives of this research are to describe the humors found in the *Family Guy* TV Series and the mechanism of humors in the *Family Guy* TV series from the perspective of communication and cognition in relevance theory.

1.4 Uses of Research

1.4.1 Theoretical Use

Theoretically, this research can be used as one of the references for the next researchers who interested in discussing the similar topic discussion that is about humor. Since this recent research provides information about pragmatical approach and relevance theory.

1.4.2 Practical Use

Practically, the results of this research are expected to be useful for the readers to obtain and enhance readers' knowledge about the perspectives of relevance theory. As well as in acknowledging the existence of verbal humor within a TV series.

1.5 Scope of Research

There are so many seasons in the TV series of *Family Guy*, thus, in this analysis, the writer chooses season sixteen as the object of analysis since this season has the complete 20 episodes. Further, in limiting the research, the writer in this research only focusing in describing the verbal humors and describing the mechanism of verbal humors in the *Family Guy* season sixteen from the perspective of communication and cognition by using relevance theory by Sperber and Wilson (2012).