CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the principal idea for studying violation of maxim in the conversation situation reflected on the main characters in Tate Taylor's movie *The Help*. It consists of background of the study, statement of the problems, objectives research, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

A lot of people use language to communicate, interact and exchange their ideas, thoughts, feelings, sciences and assumptions to the other people. Language is the most important thing as it is the chief means by which people communicate. They use language in many purposes, depending on the context of situation or condition in the time of speaking. Communicating is an activity of expressing ideas and giving information to the others. In a communication, many people use words or sentences to deliver their messages, and expect the hearers to understand what they intend to mean. It is important for the speakers to understand the language used that it can determine the success of communication. As Wardaugh (2006, p.2) argues that communication among people who speak the same language is possible because they share of each other such knowledge; even how it is shared or it is acquired, sometimes is not well understood. So, as a good people, we can give a lot of pleasure and respect to the other people.

This research describes about the study of violation of maxims used by the three main characters, they are Aibileen, Minny and Skeeter. These characters sometime use the words or sentences which are not related to what the exact meaning of what they literally say might have another meaning. It means that they do not always use a clear word or sentence in conveying their purpose. As Paltridge (2008: p. 53) states that in pragmatics, it concerns to the study of meaning in relation to the contexts in which a person is speaking or writing. This can be included social, situational, and textual context. Pragmatics assumes that when the people communicate with each other they normally follow some kinds of co-operative principle; that is, they have shared understanding of how they should co-operate in their communication.

In the spread technology of this era, most of people do not understand how it becomes threat for us to get a good communication. In order to communicate successfully, human beings are supposed to obey to a certain mode of interaction. For this reason, the linguist, Herbert Paul Grice, developed a mode of interaction for successful communication called the Cooperative Principle (CP) and its maxims. The CP has been mentioned in many pragmatics works such as Yule (1996) and Grundy (2000) for its influence on the field of pragmatics.

Yule (1996) points out: "Most of the time, our conversations take place in very specific contexts in which locally recognized inferences are assumed. Such inferences are required to work out the conveyed meanings which result from particularized conversational implicatures" (p.42). When somebody implicates the conversation as a tool to get the meaning, sometimes, they can violate the maxims

of conversation. In this maxim of conversation, there are some ways in which maxims may be unfulfilled, such as violation, opting out, being faced with a clash, and flouting. In this study, the writer attempts to explain what kinds of violation of maxims that violates by the three characters.

As Grice explains as cited in Brown and Yule (1983, p. 32), the first maxim is maxim of quantity (be brief) which concerns with the amount of information, it means people may not make their contribution less or more informative than is required. The second is maxim of quality (be true) which means that people may not say what they believe to be false. The third is maxim of relation (be relevant) which people should make relevant conversation. The last, is maxim of manner (be clear) which avoid ambiguity and unnecessary prolixity.

Hence, there are some aims of this research. The specific aims of this research, are, investigate the kinds of violation of maxim used by the three main characters in their conversation, then describe the relationship between violation of maxims and the characterization of the characters to know the inner characteristics of them. It states to understand how and why black and white people communications fail. The reason is:

"When blacks and whites interact in public meeting, their agenda does not typical include a discussion of the way they are interpreting each other's behavior, the reasons they are interpreting it as they do, or the way they are expecting the meeting to evolve." (Kochman, 1981:7)

This is contrary to the CP, which assumes that people in conversations should be co-operative by providing no more or less information. It is not easy to obey the CP because when some people obey the CP, they could be violated the maxim. Grice assumes that when the speaker does not fulfill or disobey the maxim, the

speaker said to violate them (Cutting, 2002, p. 40). It means that violation of maxim is the conditions where the speakers and the hearers do not give require contribution in their conversation. As Coulthard (1985, p. 31) argued, when a speakers decided to violate a maxim they may lie, they may not give as much of information as they could, or they may offer utterances which are seem to be ambiguous and they may have some reasons for violating a maxim.

On the other hand, in conversation, some speakers sometime use sentences that can violate the CP, so that the hearers do not understand what the speaker's meaning. It can be found such the cases not only in people's textual interaction, but also in oral interaction. Oral interaction can be seen in literary works, such as movie. A movie can be called one of literary works. Literature outputs are not only prose, poetry and drama but also film or movie as a result of modernization and development of technology in which it is created by people to be enjoyed in a public. Most people usually call film as movie. It usually records cultural, socials or political issues and other aspects of society. Commonly, the movie created from a novel then it will be formed as movies to entertain human life. There comes a paragraph explains that:

The movie follows the technological development of the movie industry through the decades. As a result, the first films are in black and white but the later ones allow the player to utilize things such as special props, computer-generated imagery and digital sound. One way to gain an advantage over rival studio and to increase the quality of your films is to invest in a research and development facility with enough staff, and to invent significant novelties before others. (Sotamaa, 2007, p. 383-401)

A movie is usually reflection of our life, because it contains the values in a society. It can be called as a drama by spoken interaction. Moreover, the reason of choosing the movie of *The Help*, is mainly talks about the black and white people

reflected by the main characters. *The Help* is a 2011 American period drama film directed and written by Tate Taylor, and adapted from Kathryn Stockett's 2009 novel of the same name. The film was a critical and commercial success; reveiving positive reviews and grossing \$216 million in worldwide box office. It is about African-American maids working in white households in Jackson, Mississippi. It tells primarily from the first-person perspective of three women: Aibileen, Minny, and Skeeter. Aibileen and Minny are black maid people in Jackson. But Skeeter is white people who already graduated from college and she wants to be a writer. Aibileen is a maid who takes care of children. Minny is Aibileen's friend who frequently tells her employers what she thinks of them. Then, Skeeter is white person who works as journalist in one of media. She is interested with the life of black people, who is the mostly maid. So, this story is exploited "colored" helps who gathered with Skeeter as a writer in which to write a book of true stories about their experiences as help or maids to the white people of Jackson, Mississippi.

In recent years, there are some numerous studies in identify CP which is included the violation of maxim as a theory. This is proved by the high number of publishing in some journals that written by some scholars as their focus, (Hamadi and Muhammed, 2009; Jia, 2008; Tupan and Natalia, 2008; Khosravizadeh, Parvanehand Sadehvandi, 2011; Herawati, 2013). Besides, a series of researches has been done by some scholars who intend to conduct and develop its CP (Kartikasari, 2014; Raharja, 2015; Muzaim 2015). Here, the researcher defines some of the previous studies.

The first previous studied, is conducted by Kartikasari (2014), she described the violation of conversational maxims by salespersons of "Revlon" cosmetic. The aims of the study was to know the maxims that violated by salesperson of *Revlon* cosmetic while offering the product to customer. Then, she described the factors which caused the violation of certain maxims. The research used qualitative method. The result of his research is the maxim of quantity as the most often violated by the salesperson in Matahari Matos and Certer Poin MOG. The possible factors of violating a certain maxim are: to explain more or stress something, to hide the truth from the hearer, to make the hearers believe in what the speakers say, to expect in order to get more attention from the customer.

Furthermore, the second previous studied that is conducted by Raharja (2015), he focused on cooperative principle violation done by Dodit Mulyanto in Stand Up Comedy Indonesian Season 4 using Grice's theory. The aims of the study is to describe what is the violation of maxim used by Dodit Mulyanto in order to raise the humor and how he violated the maxim of cooperative principle. The research is conducted using qualitative method. The result of his studied is that appeared four maxims of cooperative principle during played the Stand Up Comedy, they are maxim of quantity, quality, relation and manner. The dominant maxim of the study is the maxim of relation.

The last previous studied that is conducted by Muzaim (2015), he emphasized cooperative principle in his research which is found a case of violation maxim in humor. He focused on *Vampire Suck* movie that is a parody of Twilight Saga New Moon. To supporting his study, he used the qualitative method. There is some

aims of this studied is to describe what kinds of violation of maxim used by Becca in the movie and the reasons of violate the maxim. Later, the result is shown that maxim of quantity and relevance is the most violation in the conversation. Furthermore, the reason of violate the maxim are save face, hide the truth, avoid hurt, cheer the hearer, convince the hearer and satisfy the hearer.

Based on previous studied above, there are some similarities and differences between those researches and this research. The similarities are we have same discussion of cooperative principle theory, especially in violation of maxims. So, do the using of the method, is conducting the qualitative approach. Moreover, the difference of those previous studies is used the conversation at salesperson of *Revlon* and its customers, the conversation in Stand Up Comedy with the audience, and the conversation of the character in the movie. Thus, in this study, the writer focuses of the kinds of violation of maxims are used by the main characters of *The Help* movie which is happened between black and white people in Jackson, Mississippi. Therefore, based on this background, the writer is interesting in investigating about the kinds of violation of maxims found in Tate Taylor's Movie *The Help* by the basic principle of pragmatic – the H.P Grice's cooperative principle.

1.2 Statement of Problems

Based on the background of the study above, this analyzing is conducted to answer the following question:

1. What kinds of conversational maxims are violated by the main characters in Tate Taylor's Movie *The Help*? 2. What is the relationship between violation of maxims and character's characterization in Tate Taylor's Movie *The Help*?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the statements of the problems, objectives of the study are formulated as follows:

- 1. To describe the kinds of conversational maxims are violated by the main characters in Tate Taylor's Movie *The Help*.
- 2. To know the relationship between violation of conversational maxim and character's characterization founding Tate Taylor's Movie *The Help*.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Practically, this study is expected to give contribution to help the readers understand in the field of cooperative principle, particularly the violation of maxim which is appeared the existence of drama in this movie. Further, it can give contribution to know what kind of violation maxims, such; maxim of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner.

Theoretically, it is expected that this study could be used and given beneficial information as a reference for the readers, especially the students of Faculty of Humanities, who are interested in studying the part of pragmatics which cooperative principle, especially one that are related of violation of maxim. Thus, the writer hopes this study will be broaden the knowledge of students in linguistics development.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

Based on the background above, the writer thought that it is interesting to discuss the violation of maxims which is included of cooperative principle found in Tate Taylor's Movie "The Help". It is necessary to limit the discussion because of the limited time, cost and energy. So, it is impossible to analyze them all. In this case, the writer limits the discussion and focuses on the violation of four maxims; they are maxim of quality, maxim of quantity, maxim of relevance, and maxim of manner which is occurred in the main characters utterances in the movie, such Aibileen, Minny, and Sketeer to be analyzed.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

The writer attempts to clearly several terms that is needed to define in order to help the readers understand what is being discussed as the topic in this research, such:

- 1. **Maxim of Conversation**: general principle which is thought to underlie the efficient use of a language, and which to identify a general Cooperative Principle. (Crystal, 1997, p. 236). The conversational maxim is a study of how we assume unstated meaning of the utterance of some speakers in ordinary conversation and apply to a conversation itself. The purpose of the maxims is to understand that conversation rules must be obeyed.
- 2. **Cooperative Principle**: Make your conversation contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or

- direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged. (Grice. 1989, p. 26)
- 3. **Violation of Maxim**: Violating a maxim of cooperative principle that a speaker will be liable to mislead the hearer. (Grice, 1989, p. 49)
- 4. Character: It means between letter or sign, a mark of writing, and the 'essential' qualities of a 'person'. (Bennett and Royle, 2004, p. 63). The character is a part of intrinsic element in literary works. It includes mental or moral nature; it is qualities that make one person, attitude, utterance, and the way they think is different from other people. So, when main character is a preferred character telling, it is the most telling figure in stories or events.
- 5. The Help movie is a 2011 which mainly talk about African-American people. This film is American drama film directed and written by Tate Taylor, and adapted from Kathryn Stockett's 2009 novel of the same name.