

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Humor is an important part of human life. Humans create humor to stimulate a response such as laughter. The response comes from the interaction between humans that is filled with amusing topics (Schwarz, 2010). It gives a great impact on humans' life to increase happiness. As a result, humor becomes taken as a serious field, and telling humor becomes a part of the profession. Stand-up comedy is one of the professions that use humor in their work. In the process, a comic -the man that delivers the jokes- will stand up in the middle of the stage and verbally tell the jokes to the audience to produce laughter. From this one-way of communication filled with amusing and funny topics, this written material was born from the talent of using a language to produce such funny punch lines. Stand-up comedy performance can be viewed as one way of communication that has varieties of linguistic features in its material (Schwarz, 2010). The talent of a comic will show when the laughter of the audience burst out in the room, the way they deliver their jokes and the certain way to use linguistic features in the materials will form their character.

There are a lot of talented comics across the world, one of them is Kevin Hart, an American famous and sensational stand-up comedian. He began his journey in this field at 18 years old and released four comedy albums. In 2016, he won the People's Choice Awards for favorite cable TV actors and favorite comedic movie actors. Those make him ranked as the highest-earning stand-up comedian

and one of the highest-paid entertainers by Forbes in 2019. His skill and technique in delivering jokes make him build his character and his comedy material comes naturally from his interaction with his family and the people around him.

Aside from the characteristics and talent of the comedian, the main components are the language used in its material. The main parts that support the performance on stage are the material and the style of the comic to deliver the materials. The materials are prepared using various linguistic features and one of the certain features that can be analyzed is discourse. Discourse deals with how language is used in a social context, distinctive with interaction or dialogue between two or more people. It is largely associated with a piece of language beyond a sentence (Schiffrin, 1987: 1). It is also associated with a stretch of language comprises of sentences or utterances. In the interaction of communication, there is a particular component of discourse that occurs in an utterance is a discourse marker.

A discourse marker is a word or phrase that helps to organize the flow and structure of a discourse. The particular function of discourse markers is to link words to the previous speech. Therefore, it will help the speaker to manage the speech flow. This is in line with Fraser's defined discourse markers as expressions that connect the primary word to the previous discourse (Ali, E. A, 2015). Furthermore, according to Brinton, discourse markers aside from initiating discourse also has pragmatic meaning in an utterance (Brinton, 1996). This can be viewed as a claim that discourse markers also function when put along in a sentence or utterance to contribute to discourse flow. Therefore, discourse markers make it easier for the audience to understand the flow of the speech in a context.

Various studies of stand-up comedy performances in written texts or speech analysis have been undertaken by previous researchers. Data from many aspects of language were analyzed by the researchers. Research on stand-up comedy material performed by Jerry Seinfeld and Steven Wright in 2010 discovered that stand-up comedy material contains a variety of linguistic elements such as ridicule, satire, politeness strategies, figurative language, and discourse markers (Schwarz, 2010). A study had previously been done in the field of discourse markers in stand-up comedy material (Yuniar, D, 2013), where she looked at how the discourse markers 'Ya' were used in Indonesian stand-up comedy to generate humor and laughter. Furthermore, research regarding the discourse markers of American stand-up comedy simply investigated the meaning of discourse markers contained in the stand-up comedy material (E. S. Priyono and Z. Roziq, 2021).

This study has similarities and differences with the previous research. Similar to the previous studies, the researcher will investigate the types and functions of discourse markers. Whereas different from all the research above, the researcher will use a stylistic approach, which is a study of style. As a result, this study will concentrate on one of the stand-up comedians, Kevin Hart. The goal of this research is to describe and explain the types and functions of discourse markers as one of the linguistic features of Kevin Hart's stand-up material.

1.2. Research Questions

According to the topic of this research, these are some of the research questions:

1. What are the forms of discourse markers found in Kevin Hart's stand-up comedy materials?
2. What is the function of discourse markers found in Kevin Hart's stand-up comedy materials?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are;

1. To identify the forms of discourse markers that are used in Kevin Hart's stand-up comedy materials.
2. To explain the function of the discourse markers found in Kevin Hart's stand-up comedy materials.

1.4. Significance of the Study

After conducting this research, the result will carry practical benefits:

- 1.) The result would help students who are interested in studying the linguistic field concerning the discourse markers and analysis of the style of research especially discourse markers in stand-up comedy.
- 2.) The result would help the comics or comedians in using discourse markers to create better speech flow for a stand-up performance.

1.5. Limitation of the Study

This research has some limitations. First, this research will use a stylistic analysis of particular stand-up comedy materials performed by Kevin Hart. Second, this research will only emphasize on forms and functions of discourse markers found in Kevin Hart's stand-up comedy, the utterances of Kevin Hart in his 2

selected stand-up comedy performances with the title *Seriously Funny* (2010) with the duration of 1:07:14, and *Laugh At My Pain* (2011) with the duration of 1:28:42. Third, this research will be based on the theoretical framework by (Schiffrin, 1987), she divided discourse markers into five functions; ideational structure, action structure, exchange structure, information state, and participant framework.

1.6. Definition of Key Terms

1. Humor: Humor is a stimulus that initiates a process of response for instance laughter and amusement indicating feelings of pleasure (Godkewitsch, 1976). In this study, Humor is a stimulus that triggers the laughter and amusement of the intended audience.

2. Discourse Markers: According to Schiffrin (1987: 33), a Discourse marker is ‘sequentially dependent elements that bracket units of talk’. In this study, A discourse marker is defined as a term or expression, in this case, words or phrases that can’t stand alone which facilitates the control of speech flow.

3. Stand-up comedy: Stand-up comedy is a performance done by a comic standing on a stage and telling humor to stimulate the response of the audience's laughter (Schwarz, 2010). In this study, stand-up comedy is a stage performance where a single comic stand-up in the middle and tells funny jokes.

4. Stylistic Analysis: According to Leech and Short (2015: 11), ‘Stylistic is the study of style’. In this study, Stylistic analysis is defined as the analysis of style using linguistic theoretical models to comprehend the author's intention through their way of conveying information to the listener.