

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

The American comedy movie, *Grown Ups*, is one of the most popular movies released in 2010, directed by Dennis Dugan. This movie successfully captured the attention of both general audiences and critics, receiving many reviews on various social media platforms and websites. Some audience reviews said that the humor in *Grown Ups* (2010) was engaging and enjoyable. For instance, one audience review on Rotten Tomatoes stated, "This movie is intended to be a lighthearted and entertaining watch. A smile never left my face throughout the film, among the laughter that was present from start to finish." (Troy S., 2024). Meanwhile, critic Matt Joseph said that although he has certain viewpoints, he admits that the film is very funny in some parts and made him laugh out loud several times (Joseph, 2010).

Its popularity comes from its relaxed and entertaining storyline, supported by a cast of well-known actors. The movie is about five childhood friends and past teammates on a basketball team who reunite after years apart to attend a memorial ceremony for their basketball coach, followed by a reunion that brings their own families. During the gathering, various humorous social interactions arise, particularly through spontaneous conversations, friendly jokes, and situations that

highlight incongruities with reality. The humor in this movie not only serves as entertainment but also represents the dynamics of friendship, making it an interesting object of analysis using a linguistic approach based on verbal humor theory.

Humor can be found in entertainment media such as TV Series, movies, TV shows, and others. Comedy movies are one of the media audiences use to relieve stress from real life; with a runtime of less than three hours, they are ideal for short-term entertainment. When creating humor, the speaker needs to know the strategies to convey it effectively. Hurley, et. al (2011, p. 382) explains that having a sense of humor doesn't simply mean being funny for the joke's sake, but rather having the ability to quickly detect logical absurdities and understanding the context.

In linguistics, the study of humor has progressed since the publication of Raskin's Semantic Script Theory of Humor (SSTH) in 1985, and the theory was revised by Attardo (1994) into the General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH). This theory has provided a framework for analyzing verbal humor because it not only describes the process of humor but also examines six knowledge resources (KR), including script opposition (SO), logical mechanisms (LM), situation (SI), target (TA), narrative strategy (NS), and language (LA). This study focuses on script opposition and logical mechanism as the primary parameters, considering that the other four parameters do not show any significant features that contribute to the creation of humor in this film. This is supported by prior studies that have identified these two parameters as the most structurally defining elements in verbal humor

(Sujono, 2017). While the remaining four parameters are not the primary focus of this study, they still serve a supporting role in the process of humor creation. Humor is an interesting topic to study, as it shows that humor is not simply a form of spontaneous speech or something that naturally generates laughter but contains more complex and diverse aspects that can be understood through Attardo's theory (1994). Previous studies have tended to use only one of these theories without integrating both into a deep analytical framework, such as semantic analysis using GTVH in stand-up comedy (Mulyadi, et. al, 2021) and the application of GTVH to two American sitcoms (Elwood, 2006).

An interesting point in understanding humor is knowing the social factor. The researcher adopted Holmes's (2022) social factors theory that includes participants, setting, topic, and function to identify how these factors contribute to creating and influencing the humor that appears in the dialogues of *Grown Ups* (2010). Previous studies that analyzed social factors by using Holmes' theory have been conducted by several researchers. The one that uses social factors as the mainstay of the study is the analysis of social factors and social dimensions in the film *Mean Girls* (Wahyuni & Rusyan, 2026). Other research uses social factors to analyze the social factors that influence Bertie's language and cognitive aspects (Sukardono & Damanhuri, 2014). Likewise, this research also integrates social factors as part of the analysis. However, this study uses General Theory of Verbal Humor by Attardo (1994) and social factors by Holmes (2022) as the mainstay of the analysis. Although GTVH includes parameters such as target and situation that partially overlap with social factors, Holmes (2022) provides a more structured and

comprehensive framework for analyzing social dimensions of humor. Therefore, Holmes's social factors are employed to complement GTVH in examining how social context contributes to the creation of humor in the film. This fills the gap, as there is no research that provides these two theoretical approaches to provide a deeper understanding of how humor is constructed and the social factors that support it.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the research background, there are several research questions as follows:

1. How is humor constructed in *Grown Ups* (2010) based on the General Theory of Verbal Humor?
2. What kind of social factors contribute to the humor in the movie *Grown Ups* (2010)?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the background of the study explicated above, the objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To examine the mechanisms of humor in the film *Grown Ups* (2010) through the application of script opposition and logical mechanism based on the General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH).
2. To identify the social factors that influence the creation of humor.

1.4 Previous Study

Several studies have explored similar topics but with different objects. The researcher found three studies that examined verbal humor using Attardo's (1994) theory, two studies that analyzed social factors in Holmes's (2022) theory, and two studies that analyzed the Grown Ups movie. Some studies analyzing the GTVH theory include "Verbal humor in selected Indonesian stand-up comedian's discourse: Semantic analysis using GVTH" by Mulyadi, et. al, (2021), which identified various logical mechanisms employed, narrative strategies combined with conversational style, and self-directed humor in Dodit Mulyanto's (DM) performances on the SUCI Season 4 program. The next study, "A Linguistic Verbal Humor Analysis of Pun Found in Tahilalats Comic Street on Webtoon" by Ramadhani (2017), concluded that the target (TA) component is not particularly significant in this comic. The researcher also found that Delabastita's linguistic structure theory of wordplay successfully supports the analysis of the language knowledge (LA) from Attardo's general theory of verbal humor. Another study, "Dissecting Humor in David Sedaris' Me Talk Pretty One Day by Applying the General Theory of Verbal Humor" by Sujono (2017), applied several parameters, identified 457 data of script opposition, and concluded that David Sedaris' Me Talk Pretty One Day is funny. Based on the six knowledge resources of GTVH, those three studies applied several parameters and produced different findings depending on the focus of each study.

The researchers who analyzed the social factors identified by Holmes (2022) were Wahyuni and Rusyan (2026) in their study titled "Social Factors and

Social Dimensions in The Movie Mean Girls (2004): A Sociolinguistic Study,” which found all types of social factors, including the participants, the setting, the topic, and the function. Another study by Sukardono and Damanhuri (2014), titled “Cognitive Sociolinguistics Analysis of The Stuttering Man in Tom Hooper’s Film ‘The King’s Speech,’” found that Bertie’s stuttering was not a permanent condition but one influenced by environmental factors. The analysis revealed that each subcomponent of the social factors and dimensions directly influenced Bertie’s speech. Thus, the study by Wahyuni and Rusyan (2026) emphasizes the use of language in social relationships, while the study by Sukardono and Damanhuri (2014) emphasizes the influence of social factors on the speech patterns of characters.

A study analyzing the film Grown Ups titled “The Analysis of Family Affection in the Movie Grown Ups” by Chen and Zheng (2018) identified four narrative techniques, including direct narration, flashback narration, hidden narration, and multi-signal narration to convey the film’s themes and comedic effects, highlighting the importance of family love as one grows up. Another study titled “An Analysis of Speech Acts in the Movie Grown Ups” by Marbun and Handayani (2020) identified three types of speech acts across 30 data and concluded that each type of speech act is based on different reasons or purposes. The two studies differ in their focus; Chen & Zheng’s study emphasizes narrative aspects, while Marbun & Handayani’s study emphasizes pragmatic aspects. Among these various studies, the researcher found neither studies that analyzed the mechanisms of humor created using GTVH theory nor those that identified its social factors.

This gap indicates a void in the literature on humor, as much of the previous research has focused on how humor is formed without examining the social factors involved. This opportunity became the basis for this comprehensive study, which focuses on the film *Grown Ups* (2010).

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the analysis of humorous dialogue in the comedy film *Grown Ups* (2010). This research applies a linguistic perspective using the General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH) framework developed by Attardo (1994) and social factors according to Holmes (2022). This analysis will identify how humor is constructed based on the six knowledge resources (KR) of GTVH by focusing on the script opposition and logical mechanism parameters and analyse the social factors that support the creation of such humor.