CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter gives the theoretical description of the research. The purpose of theoretical description is to give direction to what extent the research will be conducted. This chapter covers theoretical description, previous studies, and conceptual framework.

2.1 Theoretical Description

This part discusses prominent part of the research. Semantics is the root of the research while type and casual factor of ambiguity as for the research problem. In order to make the accurate and reliable result, the researcher has read some reference books and reliable sources that support the theory applied in this research.

2.1.1 Semantics

Learning about linguistics, this research recognize the term of semantics. Semantics is a branch of linguistics that studies the meaning contained in language. Understanding about semantics it can lead the reader know the meaning or content of words and the difference with other word. (Patrick Griffiths) states, semantics is the study of context-independent knowledge that users of a language have of word and sentence meaning (2006: 21). He also states that semantics is descriptive and not centrally concerned with how words can historically have the meanings they do. Nor do semantics aim to write encyclopaedic to have the summaries of all human knowledge. An explicative utterance (base on a declarative sentence) expresses a proposition which can be true or false.

Semantics is the study of the relationship between linguistics form and entities in the world; that is, how words literally connect to things (George Yule, 1996: 5). He also says that, semantics analysis also attempts to establish the relationships between verbal descriptions and states of affairs in the world as accurate (true) or not, regardless of who produce that description. Semantics is also concerned with the truth conditions of propositions expressed in sentences (George Yule, 1996: 7).

Semantics is an attempt to explicate the knowledge of any speaker of a language which allows that speaker to communicate facts, feeling, intentions and products of the imagination to others and to understand what they communicate to him or her (Charles W. Kreidler, 1998:13). He also states, Semantics is the systematic study of meaning and how language organizes and expresses the meaning (Charles W. Kreidler, 1998:3). It
means that meaning in semantics is much needed for us to limit ourselves to the expression of meanings in a single language. Meaning could be concluded as idea or concept that could be transferred from the mind of the speaker to the mind of the hearer.

(Kempson, 1977: 2) states that all languages depend on words and sentences having meaning (every word meaning). He also says that a semantics theory must fulfill at least three conditions: (i) it must capture for any language the nature of word meaning and sentence meaning and explain the nature of the relation between them; (ii) it must be able to predict the ambiguities in the forms of language, whether in words or sentences; (iii) it must characterize and explain the systemic relations between words and sentences of a language (ibid: 4).

2.1.2 Meaning

In language, (Bloomfield, 1961: 139) states that the meaning of a linguistic form has been defined as the situation in which the speaker utters it and the response which is called forth in the hearer. Meaning is idea or concept which can be transferred from the mind of the speaker to the mind of the hearer to embodying them as it was in the forms of one language or other (Lyons, 1981: 136). Therefore, learning the language essentially also studies how every language user in a society can understand each other. The meaning of a word is not only influenced by its position in the sentence but also by a particular field of knowledge that uses the word. While according to (Leech, 1974: 10-24), meaning is dividing into seven types, such as:

1) Conceptual Meaning
2) Connotative Meaning
3) Social and Affective Meaning
4) Reflected and Collective Meaning
5) Associative Meaning
6) Thematic Meaning
7) Intended Meaning and Interpreted Meaning

2.1.3 Ambiguity

Ambiguity is a language phenomenon that usually happens in human daily communication. Ambiguity happens in any kind of spoken and written language. When we communicate or read the book and magazine, sometimes we get difficult to understand what the speaker or the writer means. According to (Cann) Sentence is said ambiguous if the sentence related to two or more different meanings (1993:8). Meanwhile
(Djajasudarma) state there are many impacts that a word can be ambiguous such as (a) the word or sentence is common (general). (b) The word or sentence which is interpreted is not the same with speaker/writer’s intention. The interpretation should depend on the context though the context is unclear. (c) The meaning limit connected to language and non-language is not clear. (d) The use of the word or sentence is not familiar to us (1999: 56).

(Christopher Kennedy) states that ambiguity has played a central role in the development of semantic theory by providing crucial data for both building and evaluating theories of lexical representation and semantic composition (2009: 15). He also says in the cases of ambiguity are often “analytical choice points” which can lead to very different conclusions depending on how the initial ambiguity is evaluated. Ambiguity is associated with utterance chunks corresponding to all levels of linguistic analysis, from phonemes to discourses, and is characterized by the association of a single orthographic or phonological string with more than one meaning.

Base on the expert above, ambiguity is when the words, sentence or phrase has more than one meaning. Furthermore, (Ulmann, 1977: 256) defines ambiguity as a linguistic condition which can arise in a variety of ways. From a purely linguistic point a view, he distinguishes ambiguity into three main forms: phonetic, grammatical and lexical.

2.1.3.1 Kind of Ambiguity

(Ullmann, 972, in Pateda, 2001: 202) divides ambiguity into three: phonological ambiguity, lexical ambiguity, and grammatical ambiguity.

1. Phonological Ambiguity

Ambiguity in the level of phonology arises from the sound of language uttered. Sometimes people speak too fast and make other people feel doubt about the meaning or message of the utterance so that people may interpret it in many ways.

Example: there (Th air ;) or their (Th air ;)

When the hearers hear the utterance above, they may have the different interpretation whether ‘there’ refers to the adverb or ‘their’ refers to pronoun.

2. Lexical Ambiguity

Lexical ambiguity arises when a single word has more than one meaning. This kind of ambiguity may arise in the written form, such as in the articles, in the news titles, and other form of written texts.
Example: *Experts warn the current global financial turmoil may take a biggest toll on emerging Asia. The word ‘toll’ in the sentence above may be interpreted into different ways since the word ‘toll’ has many meanings.*

Toll (n):
- Payment for road, bridge etc.
- Lost or suffered

Based on the definitions of the word ‘toll’ above, the readers may interpret the sentence into:

a. First interpretation
   Experts warn the current global financial turmoil may need or require a bigger payment on emerging Asia.

b. Second interpretation
   Experts warn the current global financial turmoil may cause a bigger lost on emerging Asia.

3. Grammatical Ambiguity

Ambiguity in the level of grammar occurs when phrase, clause or sentence create ambiguity because their structure may be interpreted more than one way. Same as lexical ambiguity, it may also arise in the written text such as articles, news titles and other written text.

In a more elaborate formulation, the definition might read as follows: “An utterance is structure- ally ambiguous when it can yield more than one syntactic interpretation or when it implies more than one syntactic relationship between constituents within a structure” (Oaks 2010: 15).

The phrase above may be interpreted into different ways. The readers may interpret into: Teacher of American history or American teacher of history. The
meaning of the first interpretation is *history teacher who is Americana* and second interpretation *teacher of American history*.

### 2.1.3.2 The Causal Factors of Ambiguity

Ullmann (1972, in Pateda, 2001: 203-206) states the causal factors of ambiguity are as follows:

1. The causal factors of lexical ambiguity
   a. Polysemy or multiple meaning
      Polysemy or multiple meaning occurs when one word has two or more senses. Yule states that relatedness of meaning accompanying identical form technically known as polysemy, which can be defined as one form written or spoken (1996:121).
   b. Homonym
      Homonyms are two different words with the same form (Lyons, 1981: 146). Moreover, Bloomfield (1961: 45) states that homonym refers to the different linguistics forms which have the same phonetic form (and differ, therefore, only as to meaning).
      Homonym is divided into three varieties:
      a) Homophones words which have identical pronunciation but different spelling E.g.: wait V (wet) - weight N (wet)
      b) Homographs: words which have identical spelling but different pronunciation E.g.: lead V (lɛd) - lead N (led)
      c) Homonyms: Complete homonyms—words which have identical pronunciation as well as spelling E.g.: *bear* N [beə] (animal) - *bear* V [beə] (carry)

2. The causal factors of grammatical ambiguity
   a. Prefix
      The prefix is an affix which is placed before the stem of a word. Some prefixes can cause ambiguity.
      For example:
      The *door is unlockable*.
      Prefix-un in the sentence above may cause ambiguity. The readers may be confused. The readers may interpret the sentence into:
      *The door is capable of being locked, or;*
The door is impossible to lock.

b. Suffix
Some suffixes have more than one meaning and some of them may cause ambiguity.
For example is suffix-<i>ing</i> in the verb or noun in the sentence:
<i>Visiting relatives can be boring.</i>
Here, <i>visiting relatives</i> may be interpreted into two ways:
First, "visiting” functions as gerund ➔ the activity (<i>visit the relatives can be boring</i>).
Second, “visiting” functions as active participle ➔ relatives who are visiting make bore.

c. Equivocal Phrasing
Actually every word constructing a phrase has a clear combination, but it can be interpreted in many ways.
<i>Indonesian women and children are trafficked overseas for sexual and labor exploitation.</i>
➢ Description
It may seem confusing whether the word ‘Indonesian’ modifies the noun ‘women’ only or ‘children’ also.
➢ Interpretation
- Women from Indonesia and children are trafficked overseas for sexual and labor exploitation.
- Women from Indonesia and children from Indonesia are trafficked overseas for sexual and labor exploitation

d. Contextual Ambiguity
Contextual ambiguity arises in the context of the speaker’s condition or in the context of situation.
Example: Utterance “Get Out!”
This utterance may generate ambiguity when the context of situation makes two possible meanings. In other word, the hearers do not really understand the meaning as well as the context.
For example:
<i>Situation: </i>The headmaster is talking with a student who always makes a
trouble in the school. He is angry with the student. When he is angry, he asks
the student to leave him by saying *Get out!* At the same time, another student
enters the headmaster’s room and hears the command of the headmaster.
Here, the student who enters the headmaster room will not understand the
meaning of his headmaster’s command whether it is for him or for the
student who is sitting in the front of the headmaster. In this case, utterance
“*Get out!*” is a kind of contextual ambiguity because it may be interpreted
more than one way.
To avoid contextual ambiguity, people should really understand the context
of the speaker’s or writer’s condition, or the context of situation.

2.1.3.3 Ambiguity Interpretation

People may interpret the ambiguous words, phrases or sentences in many ways, and
some of them are:

1. Through the ascription of multiple meanings to a single word. It arises in the case
of homonym and polysemy.
   Example: *Experts warn the current global financial turmoil may take a bigger toll
on emerging Asia.*
   Toll → payment
   Lost or victim

2. Through the assignment of different syntactic structures to a sentence (in
Structural or grammatical ambiguity which depends on syntactic structure of a
sentence).

*Indonesian women and children* are trafficked overseas for sexual and labor
exploitation.

This sentence is considered as grammatical ambiguity in the case of equivocal
phrasing. It is necessary to know whether the word ‘*Indonesian*’ modifies the
noun the ‘*women*’ only or both ‘*women*’ and ‘*children*’.

Interpretation 1

*Indonesian women and Indonesian children* are trafficked overseas for sexual and
labor exploitation.
Interpretation 2

Women from Indonesia and children are trafficked overseas for sexual and labor exploitation.

3. Through the use of certain expression that may have different semanticscopes. For example is the use of ‘every’ and ‘some’ or negation ‘not’.

E. g.: Every good politician loves a cause.

The sentence is usually only assigned a single surface structure; so that this ambiguity cannot be directly attributed to a syntactic source referring to as a semantic scope of ambiguity:

- Every politician loves a cause and that is their own career (there is
only one cause that every good politician loves).

> Every good politician loves a cause and each one loves a cause that everyone else loathes (each politician may love different cause).

2.1.3.4 How to avoid Ambiguity

Pateda (2001, State about that the way to avoid ambiguity. They are in the case of phonological ambiguity; people may avoid ambiguity by asking the speaker to repeat his utterance.

1) By considering the context of situation or the supra-segmental elements

People may avoid ambiguity, whether lexical ambiguity or grammatical ambiguity, even phonological ambiguity by considering the context of situation. In listening unclear spoken utterance or reading unclear sentences, people occasionally have some difficulties to understand the meaning. They may ensure the meaning of words, phrases and sentences in a certain context of situation.

2) By replacing technique

The ambiguous word may be overcome by replacing its synonym or another word which is closely related without changing the massage of the sentence. For example is in distinguishing the word view from the meaning of natural scenery or personal opinion (point of view). It may be replaced by the word scenery if the writer intends to talk about natural scenery.

3) By expansion technique

Expansion technique is the other techniques to avoid ambiguity. The ambiguous word may be described or explained more by using the additional information about the ambiguous word. For example is when someone says “Get out!” that can be ambiguous because of the less information. People who hear this utterance may be confused because there is no explanation about the place to go, the people should go, the time to go and the purpose of their gone. This phenomenon can be avoided by expanding and add the information such as “Get out from my house right now!”

4) By insertion technique
Insertion technique can be used as the way to avoid ambiguity. By inserting some morphemes or words to the ambiguous words, phrases or sentences. Therefore, the meaning or the message of the utterance is intentionally conveyed.

By using the techniques which are explained above, the researcher can give clear information to the readers so that they will not be confused and have the wrong interpretation. There is also no misunderstanding between the writer and the readers. The researcher also gives the explanation about part of speech as supporting data.

2.3.4 Phrases

As we have seen, the two components of a structure of modification are head and a modifier, whose meaning serves to broaden, qualify, select, change, describe, or in some other way affect the meaning of the head. In the examples cited above home town, easily superior, hungry people both head and modifiers are single words. But this is by no means always the case. Both the head and the modifier which are immediate constituents of a structure of modification may themselves of more or less complexity.

a. Noun Phrase

Noun phrase is very frequently as heads of structures of modification. Modifiers in such structure may belong to any of the four art of speech. Noun determiners may also be classes as modifiers, so that function words may also perform this task.

b. Verb Phrase

At the outset of our discussion of structures of modification with verb as head, we must make a distinction of considerable importance, though it is usually overlooked in traditional grammar. We must distinguish, that is between those structures whose head is a verb alone and those head is some other types of structure containing a verb. As we shall see, the other structure in which verb is important are structures of predication and of complementation. Either of these may itself be the head a structure of modification.

c. Adverb Phrase

When adverbs appear as heads of structures of modification, they may be modified by qualifiers, other adverb, noun, or prepositional phrases. The first three of these precede the head (expect the qualifiers indeed and enough) and
prepositional phrases follow it (as they always do when they function as modifiers).

2.1.3.5 Previous Studies

This study is not the first study in analyzing lexical ambiguity. There has been another study investigating it. There is a study entitled “The Analysis of Lexical and Structural Ambiguity in Your Letter of the Jakarta Post” by Henny Andriani Tambunan which is from The University of Sumatera Utara, 2009. She has four objectives in her research. First, she identifies the words and sentences which are possibly ambiguous. Second, she analyses the classes of word that can be lexically ambiguous. Third, she analyses the kinds of sentence or phrase that can be structurally ambiguous. The last, she determines the most dominant types of ambiguity. The result of her research is that the classes of lexical ambiguity which are categorized into ten types i.e. noun, verb, adverb, adjective, preposition, conjunction, interjection, article, and participle were dominated by verb. It is followed by noun, adjective, and adverb. Meanwhile, structural ambiguity which is categorized into three types’ i.e. noun phrase, verb phrase, and adverbial phrase was dominated by noun phrase.

The next previous researcher is from Susan Kristanty as the student of Petra University and the title of her thesis is “The Structural and Lexical Ambiguity Found in Cleo Magazine Advertisements”. She finds the kinds of sentences or phrases which are structurally ambiguous and kinds of words that are lexically ambiguous. She wants to know what advertisements are ambiguous. Therefore, she applies the theory of structural and lexical ambiguity from Hurford and Heasley’s theory (1984). She also used the theory of syntactic structures by Adrian Akmajian (1995) and Nelson Francis (1954). In her research, the writer makes a relation between semantic theory and syntax theory.

The last study is from Srudji (2014) entitled ‘A semantics analysis on Avril Lavigne song’. The researcher is interested in analyzing the kind of meaning used in Avril songs which contains semantic.

Meanwhile, this research is different from Tambunan, Srudji and Susan Kristanty. It is focused on the forms of lexical and structural ambiguity on the news of Jakarta post. The researcher wants to find out about the casual factor of ambiguity. Then, the researcher also tries to identify the types of representing lexical and structural ambiguity. The researcher uses qualitative approach to analyses the data which is taken from the news of Jakarta election in the Jakarta post. Thus, the researcher focuses on the lexical and structural ambiguity.
2.1.3.6 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework used is adopted from some expert; it is because not all experts explain all branches of ambiguity. In ambiguity theory, the researcher used theory from Ullmann and Leech. The main point of the ambiguity itself is the same, but to complete each other the researcher used all their theories.