

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Language is an inseparable thing for human to communicate and interact with each other, and people can express their ideas, feelings and emotions by using language. Talking about the function of language that is as an instrument for conveying meaning, (Wierzbicka 1996:3) language has meaning whether it is spoken and written. Understanding meaning of the spoken language is easier rather than in written language, because if the listener does not understand what the speaker is saying, they can ask the speaker directly what he means. Meaning describes a notion with a wide range of application and we learn the meaning itself in semantic. Palmer (1976:1) states that semantic is the technical term used to refer to the study of meaning.

Sometimes people do not state the meaning clearly and make the listener or the reader interprets into different meaning. And sometimes people find themselves some difficulties to understand the message in written language. This misunderstanding is known as an ambiguity. According to Bach (2009)

Ambiguity happens when a word, phrase or sentence has more than one meaning and gives room from alternative reaction to the same piece of language.

Additionally, a word is ambiguous when it has more than one literal meaning. For example, the word “*bank*” has several distinct definitions, one as *financial institution* and another as *edge of a side*. But if someone says “I deposited S100 in

the bank” most people would understand that bank refers to a financial institution, not a shovel to dig in the mud.

Context and concept are two important domains to decide whether the words ambiguous or not. Context helps sentence to distinct the meaning of ambiguous words. It means that, the sentence will be clearly interpreted. in common use almost every word has many shades of meaning, and therefore needs to be interpreted by the context. Reed (2005) adds that ambiguity is statements with more than one meaning that, without context, may be interpreted inaccurately. For example, “she can not *bear* a baby”. The sentence is lexically ambiguous since the sentence that is containing the word ‘bear’ has no additional context. First interpretation tell us that she can not tolerate a baby, and the second interpretation means that she can not pregnant.

Moreover, the word *star*, which has two different meanings, the literal *celestial body* and the non-literal meaning *famous actor* whose semantic fields partially overlap for some properties: being bright or unachievable. Besides that, Nerlich (2003) divides criteria in analyzing ambiguous words into three kinds such as etymological, psychological, and translation criterion. First, Etymological criterion causing a superposition of terms in historical accident, for instance, word *file* which comes from French roots word *fil* and the Old-English word *féol*. Second, Psychological criterion is up to native speakers’ intuitions. Speakers judge a linguistic form as having related and semantic representations. The psychological criterion also depends on language considered while the word *open* is seemed as exhibiting polysemy in *open the door* and *open the curtains* and

hence the two senses are taken to be semantically related. Third, the translation criterion relies indeed precisely on the fact that ambiguity is usually not preserved in translation. Yet, some words which have multiple meanings can delay recognition. Understanding words within multiple meanings impeded an understanding of the text.

Research by Britton (1978) showed that words used in English texts were ambiguous. This could explain that English language needs more attention because many of the words in English have multiple meanings. Moreover, ambiguity also occurs because a longer linguistic form has its sense and figurative meaning in reading process.

Reading in foreign language would be a rather ambiguous process that involves processing unknown linguistic and cultural inputs, which might eventually cause uncertainty and/or confusion on the part of readers. It made EFL students learned English harder than ESL students. Parallel with the sentence above, Suzawa (2013) argued that what students learned should be clear and not vague and ambiguous. She also said that there should be no ambiguity in education. Hence, it is very important to understand what we are reading whereas reading is a process of drawing meaning or grasping information from a written text and forming interpretation from that information. In the reading text, there are several reasons that cause ambiguity, such as words without context, ambiguous word order, improper a missing punctuation and faulty pronounce reference.

A textbook is used as media in teaching reading English text at school. A textbook has an important role in teaching and learning process especially to study

a foreign language. According to Celce Murcia (2007), textbooks or course book are either required or supplementary to provide content and teaching learning activities, which shapes much of what happens in the classroom. Additionally, the quality of a textbook depends on some factors such as appearance and clearness. Appearance shows how the outlook of the textbook and the ways of the materials are made for example using of picture or diagram to support the materials. However, clearness shows the clear meaning of the materials especially meaning of the text. In consequences, the teachers have to consider and select the textbook since they hold the role for explaining the materials in detail to the students and later on, students can easily learn and master the material especially in reading text (Spelleri, 2011).

Moreover, Sutianah (2014) states that teachers should have the ability to predict whether the text is difficult, plain or easy for students. In fact, there are many textbooks that do not consider this factor. For instance, researcher observed an English textbook for vocational school and found that the reading texts in the textbook have some lexical ambiguities. It made the texts inside the books could not be well-understood. Misunderstanding happened when the text was translated into Bahasa in wrong interpretation. Clearness of textbook is one important factor in understanding the meaning. The clearness of the textbook depends on the meaning which cannot be ambiguous.

In Indonesia, there are so many textbooks provided by publishers for every level of school based on Indonesian National Curriculum Standards. In fact, every school used th different textbooks published by different publishers. It means that

the topics covered in the textbook are the same, but the texts can be different. Rahmawati (2012) found that there was a different level of text on textbook English today 1 and developed English competencies for grade X. English today 1 was in standard level, but developed English competencies for grade X was in low level.

Beside textbook factors, student is also an important part in understanding the text. In order to understand text, a reader should be able to identify words rapidly and know the meaning of almost all the words (Westwood, 2008). Students who do not understand much of what they read are likely to turn away from books. To make senior high school student become interested in reading the text they have to master the English vocabulary at least 2500 words. In fact, many of them only could master 1000 words after they graduated (Munjin, 2008). Limited vocabulary mastery causes poor comprehension and makes students lose the lexical word meaning. Moreover, student's experience in context allows them to recognize the vocabulary item. Students' own knowledge as student's experience is used to master vocabulary. If students do not master the vocabulary word by word, this condition will lead them to the problem of lexical ambiguity which is the most common ambiguity in reading text.

The researcher has found and seen some of studies that related to this research. Kaplan, Rogness and Fisher (2014) conducted a study to find out the lexical ambiguity in understanding some words in English which was used in statistics students and found some words such as random, association, average, confidence, and spread as ambiguous words. They used a method of analogy that

was called zebra-versus-hat mnemonic image to solve problem of lexical ambiguity in statistics.

In addition, Pramitasih (2012) conducted a study about ambiguity in exercise book of vocational school in Semarang and found that the lexical ambiguity and structural ambiguity mostly occurred in the reading texts. She divided lexical ambiguity into some parts of speech; verbs, noun, and adjectives. She used paraphrasing, adding preposition *of*, moving sentence construction, adding additional context, using hyphen (-) and using picture as the effective ways to disambiguate ambiguity.

Moreover, a research study in Semarang by Rekha (2014) found four types of ambiguity in an English textbook, such as lexical ambiguity, referential ambiguity, surface structure ambiguity, and deep structure ambiguity. In this study, the dominant type of ambiguity was lexical ambiguity. She made some ways to disambiguate ambiguity such as paraphrasing, truth conditional sentences, adding preposition, moving sentence construction, adding additional context, adding correct punctuation and using picture.

Riscahyanti (2014) in her research with the title Ambiguity found in Backpack 4 English Textbook. She found that there were 3 types of ambiguity; lexical ambiguity, referential ambiguity and surface structure ambiguity. In this study, the dominant type of ambiguity was referential ambiguity. She also found the ways to disambiguate were by using paraphrasing, truth conditional sentences, adding preposition, moving sentence construction, adding additional context,

adding correct punctuation and using picture. She found only 3 types of ambiguity.

Those studies indicated that not all reading texts were clear to the readers. Therefore, it is necessary to demote lexical ambiguity such as paraphrasing the texts, adding preposition *of* to the words in sentence, using hyphen (-) to separate the words and using picture to give description of words. Another recommended way is to use one or more people perform a check for ambiguities and for clarities. And then use self-paced reading time studies as a final check for lexical ambiguity (Matzen, 2009)

There are some kinds of reading texts arranged in syllabus for eleventh grade senior high school. The texts are description text, report text, procedure text, recount text, explanation text, narrative text, hortatory exposition and analytical exposition text.

As one of those genres is learned in senior high school on the second grade syllabus, analytical exposition is commonly used as a reading text in national and local examination. This reading text consists of arguments in the way to persuade readers. If people persuade someone to do something, they have to deliver the arguments clearly. It means that it should not have ambiguous word in the text because it is arranged based on the factual data. But to make sure that the readers are persuaded by the text, people may use some diction to convince the readers. It might cause lexical and structural ambiguity also have misunderstanding meaning in the text.

Based on one of the texts, taken from *Pathway to English 2* for Senior High School, entitled “Why Students Should Stop Cheating”, there was found types of lexical ambiguity which consisted of 3 Synonymys, 2 Antonymy, 5 Homonymys, and 3 Polysemy. Beside that, the structural ambiguity also found 1 case which consisted of surface structural ambiguity within gerund+object or participle modifying a noun.

Why Students Should Stop Cheating

People say that corruption (**begins:synonymy**) with small (**practices:homonymy**) of (**dishonestly:synonymy**) in daily life. This is very apparent in school. The pressure to pass tests has led many students to cheat during tests. This (**practice:homonymy**) should be discouraged, as (**cheating:antonymy**) has no benefit for students.

First, by cheating, students fail to use their own (**intelligence:synonymy**). They might underestimate their actual (**abilities:synonymy**) due to (**anxiety:homonymy**) and (**fear:polysemy**) of (**failure:homonymy**). Cheating (**keeps:homonymy**) students from understanding their abilities and potentials. They might actually be able to pass the test if they (**study hard:homonymy**).

Second, cheating on other students (leads:polysemy) to dependency (Deep Structural ambiguity). Students who don't prepare for a test well and cheat on other students will get even more anxious when others can't help them.

Third, when students cheat, they are actually fooling and lying to themselves. If this continues, they will be led into the habit of doing anything to

get what they want, even if it means doing morally questionable acts. This habit is what (**starts**:synonymy/antonymy) corrupt practices. Cheating during tests is a (“**small**”: antonymy) form of corruption, but as time passes, it can lead to (**bigger**:antonymy) forms.

Based on those reasons, we can (**conclude**:antonymy) that cheating is a bad habit that should be discouraged in students.

(Source: *Pathway to English 2*)

Since similarity of meaning is usual for us but differences of meaning owned by the same word can be unusual, indeed it is found very often in English. Therefore, this research is aimed to analyze the lexical and structural ambiguity of reading text in English textbook for Grade XI of Senior High School especially in analytical exposition texts which is needed to enhance meaning and information in the process of comprehending analytical exposition texts.

B. Problems of the Study

The problems of the study are briefly stated as follow:

1. What are the types of lexical and structural ambiguity found in analytical exposition texts in *Pathway to English 2* for the second grade of Senior High School?
2. What is the most dominant types of lexical and structural ambiguity in analytical exposition text in *Pathway to English 2* for the second grade of Senior High School?

C. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are:

1. To find out types of lexical and structural ambiguity used in analytical exposition texts in Pathway to English 2 for senior high school.
2. To determine the most dominant types of lexical and structural ambiguity found in analytical exposition text in Pathway to English 2 for Senior High School.

D. Significances of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to be useful theoretically and practically:

1. Theoretically

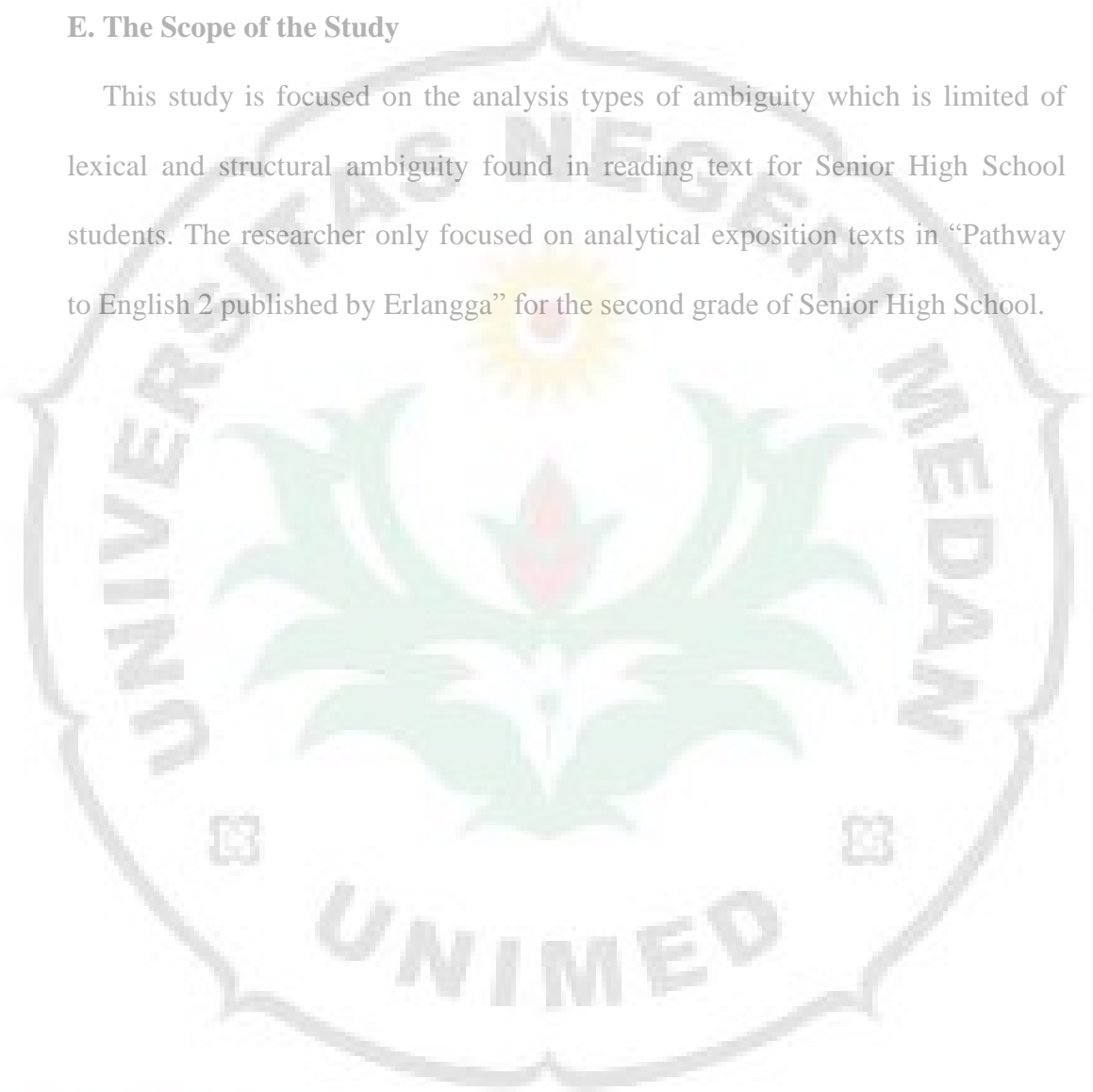
- The result of this study could enrich and strengthen the knowledge of the theories on lexical and structural ambiguity of analytical exposition in English reading texts.
- Other researchers, to be used as a referential contribution for those who want to conduct a further in depth research in analyzing the textbook and interest in doing the related study.

2. Practically

- The teacher can select the textbook which is most suitable in teaching and learning process and the students' needs.
- The result of this study could give a new perspective for the English teacher in using or selecting analytical exposition text that they are suitable for the students' educational level

E. The Scope of the Study

This study is focused on the analysis types of ambiguity which is limited of lexical and structural ambiguity found in reading text for Senior High School students. The researcher only focused on analytical exposition texts in “Pathway to English 2 published by Erlangga” for the second grade of Senior High School.



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