CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

People interact with the other people to express their feelings, ideas, and emotions by using a language. As Jakobson (1960:350-377) states that there are six elements of language, those are: (1) context, (2) addresser (sender), (3) addressee (receiver), (4) contact, (5) common code and (6) message. Therefore, language is the main instrument of communication.

Language has a meaning whether it is an oral language or a written language. We learn the meaning itself in semantics. As Kearns says (2002:1), “semantics deals with the literal meaning of words and the meaning of the way they are combined”.

In communication with the other people either in oral or written forms, they use language as a media. An understanding of a written language form is more difficult than an understanding of an oral language form because if the listeners do not understand what we say, they can ask as directly what we mean as to confirm. On the other hand, a reader cannot ask directly to a writer of a book, a novel, a magazine, a newspaper and other written media when the reader does not understand about the writer’s writing that make the misunderstanding. This misunderstanding is known as ambiguity.
According to Kreidler (1998:298), ”ambiguity is the condition whereby any linguistic form has two or more interpretations”. For example, the word of *club* has two meanings. First is as a *heavy stick*, and second is as a *social group*.

Ulmann in Tambunan (2009:8) states, “ambiguity devides into three kinds; phonetic, grammatical, and lexical”. However, the writer just uses lexical and grammatical ambiguity as the subject of analysis.

Misbakhudinmunir (2010) states, “lexical ambiguity is a word or phrase that has more than one meaning while it stands in a sentence”. For example: However, let’s be *clear*.

The word of *clear* has two possible meanings. The first, the word of clear can be *obvious* or *clean*. And the second, it can be *empty*. Therefore, the meaning of *clear* can be *obvious* or *empty*.

In analyzing lexical ambiguity, the writer wants to find the ambiguous word and also classifies the word based on the class of word. This classification is known as part of speech. Yule (2006:74) said, “part of speech is divided into 8 types; they are noun, article, adjective, verb, adverb, preposition, pronoun, and also conjunction”.

Misbakhudinmunir (2010) states, “structural ambiguity occurs when a headline may have more than one alternative structure and ambivalent structure”. For example: There were a tall man and woman come to my house yesterday.
The sentence above has two alternative syntactic representations that make it structurally ambivalent. First, there were two tall people, they are the tall man and the tall woman, or second, someone who is tall, only the man.

Yule (2006:80) states “an alternative type of diagram is designed to show how the constituents in sentence structure can be marked off by using labeled brackets”. So, the writer uses this diagram to be more effective in describing the constituents in sentence structure clearly.

Nowadays, people need more actual and complete information with several ways. One of the examples is newspaper. Newspaper is one way to get information. Based on this research, the writer chooses the source data from *The Jakarta Post* newspaper, and the writer chooses Your Letters column as the object of this analysis.

There are many reasons why the writer selects the data, because (1) *The Jakarta Post* is one of daily English newspaper in Indonesia, and (2) the writer can find the example of lexical and structural ambiguity in Your Letters column. Based on the background above, the writer purpose to conduct a research entitled *The Analysis of Lexical and Structural Ambiguity in Your Letters Column of The Jakarta Post Newspaper Published July 2012.*

B. Previous Study

This research deals with some previous researches but it has difference in some matters. In this previous related studies, the writer would like to review two others studies, done by Hartono and Kusumawati. The first research was
conducted by Hartono (1999) entitled *The Structural Ambiguity in News Headlines in The Jakarta Post Newspaper*. The object is analysis phrases and sentences in news headlines in *The Jakarta Post* newspaper. Her goals on that research are classifying the ambiguities into phrases and sentences. She collected the data for the structural ambiguities study in one week and found twenty five ambiguities. She found that the ambiguities are mostly caused by the arrangement of the prepositional phrases in sentences (20 ambiguities=80%), which are used as an adverb of place in the sentence, besides that the ambiguities could also be caused by the arrangement of the noun phrases in sentences (5 ambiguities=20%).

From the first previous studies above, it can be concluded that the writer’s study is almost similar to Hartono’s study. Both the writer’s and Hartono’s study are about structural ambiguities and use *The Jakarta Post* newspaper as the source of the data. On the other hand, the different from the first previous studies that Hartono’s study did not analyze the structural ambiguities in *Your Letters of The Jakarta Post* newspaper, but it only analyzed the News Headlines of *The Jakarta Post* newspaper. Hartono’s study has led the writer to use Phrase Structure Rules as her theory to do the analysis.

The second research is conducted by Kusumawati, in her research (2001) entitled *The Study of Ambiguity in the Articles of Hello Magazine*. The object is analysis phrases and sentences in the articles of *Hello Magazine*. Her research aims at analyzing the structural ambiguities in *Hello Magazines* by using Andrew Radford and Diane D. Bornstein’s theories, and the lexical ambiguities in *Hello
Magazines by using Jacob and Rosenbaum’s theories. She found out that the structural ambiguities appear more frequently than the lexical ambiguities. She found sixteen structural ambiguities and four lexical ambiguities from twenty ambiguities, so the frequency of structural ambiguities is 80% and the frequency of lexical ambiguities is 20%.

From the second previous studies above, it can be concluded that there is the similarity between her study and the writer’s study, which is the analysis of lexical and structural ambiguity. On the other hand, the difference from the second previous study of Kusumawati’s is that she did not analyzed the lexical and structural ambiguities in Your Letters of The Jakarta Post newspaper but she analyzed the lexical and structural ambiguities in the articles of the Hello Magazine.

C. Limitation of the Study

The focus of this study is to analyze the lexical and structural ambiguity in some of Your Letters of The Jakarta Post newspaper. The data of this research are taken from the column of Your Letters of The Jakarta Post newspaper issued in July 2012. The writer limits the data within two weeks edition from July 2012 and there are 21 letters. After selecting the data, in fact there are 21 letters which contains ambiguous words and phrases. The data will be analyzed focusing on lexical and structural ambiguity by Crystal’s theory (1980), kinds of word, phrase, and sentence, and labeled and bracketed sentences or phrases by Yule’s theory (2006).
D. Problem Statement

According to the background of the study in the preceding discussions the following research problem is formulated:

1. Which words and phrases are possibly ambiguous?
2. What classes of word are lexically ambiguous?
3. What kinds of sentence or phrase are structurally ambiguous?
4. Which types of ambiguity is the most dominant?

E. Objective of the Study

This study aims to answer the problem stated above:

1. To find out words and sentences which are possibly ambiguous.
2. To analyze the classes of word that can be lexically ambiguous.
3. To analyze the kinds of sentence or phrase that can be structurally ambiguous.
4. To determine the most dominant type of ambiguity.

F. Benefit of the Study

From this research, the writer hopes that this study has benefits theoretically and practically, they are as follows.

1. Theoretical Benefit

   a. Students

       The writer hopes that this research paper will be useful for the English students of UMS as linguistic reference which will assist them to
understand and appreciate works of linguistics, especially in lexical and structural ambiguity.

b. Lecturer

The result of the research hopefully can be useful input for the lecturers to give example to the students in teaching linguistics especially in the lexical and structural ambiguity.

2. Practical Benefit

a. Other Researcher

This research hopefully will be useful for the other researchers who are interested in investigating the other newspapers which have the same topic.

b. Reader

The writer hopes that this research will provide information for the readers of The Jakarta Post newspaper. Hopefully, the readers will get scientific description about the lexical and structurally ambiguous sentence so that the readers will expectedly be more careful either in producing English sentences or interpreting meanings of those potentially ambiguous sentences.

G. Research Paper Organization

This research paper is divided into five chapters. They are as follows.
Chapter I is introduction. It consists of the background of study, previous study, limitation of the study, problems statement, objectives of the study, and benefit of the study.

Chapter II presents review of related literature (underlying theory). It consists of semantics theories, meaning, lexical and grammatical meanings, ambiguity part of speech, kinds of phrase, kinds of sentence, and also labeled and bracketed sentence.

Chapter III is the research method. It deals with type of research, object of research, data and data source, method of collecting data, and method of analyzing data.

Chapter IV is research finding and discussion.

Chapter V is conclusion and suggestion.