

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Language is an inseparable thing for human to communicate with others. All people around the world communicate using language either oral or written. There are so many languages in this world, such as English, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, Indonesia, and so on. English is an international language which most people in the world used it as the communication tool. English is the primary language of books and newspapers around the world. English textbook in Senior High School also written in English, so learning English is very important for students to understand the content of books and gain a lot of knowledge.

Understanding language is not easy, need an effort to understand it, moreover in written language. Understanding written language is more difficult than oral language because written language allowing the readers to make many interpretations. When reading the written language, it is important to know the true meaning of the word, phrase, or sentence.

Knowing a word means knowing its sounds and meanings. Both aspects are very important, since the same sounds may sometimes mean different things. When different words are pronounced the same but having different meaning, they are called homophone or homonyms. Homophones are sounds which have the same pronunciation but different spelling. For

example, the words *to*, *too*, and *two* are all pronounced /tu/ but they refer to different things. Whereas homonyms are sounds which are pronounced and spelled identically, such as in the word *well* in the following sentence, “Oh well, well, I will dig a well to see how well the well water will well up” (Fauziati, 2011: 74-75). Both of homophone and homonyms often create ambiguity.

Word, phrase, or sentence that has more than one meaning or interpretation is called ambiguity. Ambiguity occurs when a language element has more than one meaning. According to Kreidler (1998:298), “ambiguity is the condition whereby any linguistic form has two or more interpretations”. If ambiguity is in a single word, it called lexical ambiguity. The word *exercise* in the sentence “*Exercise is important for everyone whether he or she is young or old*”, of course have more than one meaning since the meaning of *exercise* is *physical activity that keeps health* or *activity intended for training or testing*. In addition, when ambiguity occurs in a sentence or clause, it called grammatical or structural ambiguity. For example showed in the sentence “*She read about the vacancy on her campus*”. This sentence has two or more interpretations. First, *she read about vacancy of campus* and second *she read on her campus about anything vacancy*.

Fauziati (2011: 75) states, “A word or a sentence is ambiguous when it can be interpreted in more than one ways. Ambiguity often becomes the bane of comprehension. It takes people longer process to comprehend ambiguous sentences than those which are not. Ambiguities are usually

resolved without awareness, but language resolution always takes time. Listeners usually use different strategies to comprehend ambiguous sentence. They may use single reading, multiple reading, or both”.

Not all students understand the intention of sentence when they are reading the materials in the textbook. When students understanding the materials in the textbook, they may feel confuse about the meaning of the sentences because occasionally has more than one interpretations in mind. This case is called ambiguous sentences. Students have to be careful when interpreting sentences.

Textbook is a printed media that used in schools or colleges for the formal study of a subject and not usually written by single author. It contains facts and ideas around a certain subject. Textbook is a teaching tool or material, which presents the subject matter defined by the curriculum. According to (Altbach in Altbach, et all, 1991: 1), “Textbooks are a central part of any educational system. They help to define the curriculum and can either significantly help or hinder the teacher”. Textbook is used to facilitate the reader especially students to understanding the materials.

Creative English is one of textbooks that usually used by the teachers or students in Senior High School. There are two series in every grade, A and B series. Every chapter in these books talks about text genres, such as narrative, descriptive, recount, and other text genres as the headings (chapter title). The sub chapters are all areas covered in the previous text. For example, for the first chapter in *Creative English 3A* discussed about narrative

(fortunately every text genre is discussed in double chapters so it is possible for the students to gain deeper comprehension). As the chapter talks about Narrative texts, the sub chapters are evaluation relate to narrative text itself as follows: questions deal with the previous texts, grammatical features related to the texts (past tense), vocabulary quizzes, and writing assignment.

Wallen and Fraenkel (2001) said that content analysis is an analysis of the written or visual contents of a document. Besides, it is a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words or concept within texts or sets of texts. Babie (1989) states that content analysis is the study of recorded human communications, such as book, websites, paintings, and laws. It is one of the methods used in analyzing qualitative data that looks at the meanings and relationship such as words and concepts within various forms of data. The writer will show the examples of ambiguous sentences that found in *Creative English* textbook.

1. *The child started crying when he realized that he had broken his toys.*

The sentence above may has two interpretations. The first interpretation is the child started crying when he realized that he had broken his toys. Second, the child started crying when he realized that he had broken his friend's toys. The ambiguity exists because the phrase 'his toys' may have two different interpretation in that sentence, they are (1) his own toys, and (2) his friend's toys. Additional context to the sentence sometimes can disambiguate the sentence, as illustrated below:

a. The child started crying when he realized that he had broken his toys.

- b. The child started crying when he realized that he had broken his friend's toys.

Based on the explanation above, the ambiguity of the sentence is belongs to referential ambiguity, especially anaphora is unclear.

2. *The boss liked you more than he likes me.*

The sentence above may has two interpretations. The first interpretation is 'boss liked you more than boss likes me'. Second, 'boss liked you more than someone likes me'. The ambiguity exists because the phrase 'more than he likes me' may have two different interpretations in that sentence; they are (1) more than boss likes me, and (2) more than someone likes me. Adding additional context to the sentence sometimes can disambiguate the sentence, as illustrated below:

- a. The boss liked you more than boss likes me
 b. The boss liked you more than someone likes me

Based on the explanation above, the ambiguity of the sentence belongs to syntactical ambiguity, especially deep-structure ambiguity.

3. *They also learn some very basic greetings, letters, words, and figures.*

The sentence above may has two interpretations. The first interpretation is they also learn some very basic greetings, messages, words, and figures. Second, they also learn some very basic greetings, letters, words, and figures. The ambiguity exists because the word 'letters' may have two different interpretation in that sentence, they are (1) written messages, and (2)

written or printed sign representing a sound. Paraphrasing to the sentence sometimes can disambiguate the sentence, as illustrated below:

- a. They also learn some very basic greetings, messages, words, and figures.
- b. They also learn some very basic greetings, A-Z letters, words, and figures.

Based on the explanation above, the ambiguity of the sentence is belongs to lexical ambiguity.

4. *She was killed by someone with a knife.*

The sentence above may has two interpretations. The first interpretation is someone killed her using a knife. Second, someone who brings a knife killed her using gun. The ambiguity exists because the word ‘with’ may have two different interpretation in that sentence, they are (1) using, and (2) bring. Moving sentence construction to the sentence sometimes can disambiguate the sentence, as illustrated below:

- a. Someone killed her using a knife.
- b. Someone who brings a knife killed her using gun.

Based on the explanation above, the ambiguity of the sentence is belongs to syntactical ambiguity, especially surface-structure ambiguity.

5. *They are repairing the broken bridge.*

The sentence above may has two interpretations. The first interpretation is they are repairing the broken bridge of the river. Second, they are repairing the broken bridge of the ship. The ambiguity exists because the word ‘bridge’ may have two different interpretations in that sentence, they are (1) structure providing a way across a river, and (2) part of a ship where the

captain and officers stand to control and steer it. Adding preposition *of* to the sentence sometimes can disambiguate the sentence, as illustrated below:

- a. They are repairing the broken bridge of the river.
- b. They are repairing the broken bridge of the ship.

Based on the explanation above, the ambiguity of the sentence is belongs to lexical ambiguity.

Nowadays, almost school in the world are using textbook as the media of the teaching learning process in the class. Textbook is one of tool to gain more knowledge, but not all textbooks are good for learning. Based on the phenomenon and explanation above, of course the students will confuse to understand the sentence that has many interpretations. This textbook is not suitable to use in the school because there are many ambiguous sentences that found in it.

The writer chooses the *Creative English* textbook as the data source of this study. There are many reasons why the writer select and analyze the data source, because ; (1) textbook is one of the media that almost teachers and students use it for teaching or learning, (2) the writer can find the example of ambiguity in *Creative English* textbook, (3) the writer wants to know how can find the ambiguity in this textbook, (4) the writer wants to know more about the ambiguity, (5) the writer wants to give explanation to other researcher or reader about ambiguity in this *Creative English* textbook. Therefore, this study brings some benefits to other researcher in the future. Based on the background above, the writer is interested in analyzing the ambiguities

further of the textbook and writes it down as a study entitled *Ambiguity Found in "Creative English" Textbook: Content Analysis*.

B. Limitation of the Study

This study is focused on the ambiguity found in *Creative English* textbook because it contains many ambiguous sentences. The textbook is written by Ng Foo Mun and friends. It published in Jakarta by Erlangga publisher. All ambiguous words, phrases, and sentences in *Creative English* textbook become the data of this research.

C. Problem Statement

Based on the background, identification, and the limitation above, the writer states the following problems.

1. What are the types of ambiguity found in *Creative English* textbook?
2. What is the frequency of each types of ambiguity?
3. What are the types of ambiguity that are dominantly appears?
4. What are the causes of the ambiguous sentences?
5. What are the ways to disambiguate ambiguity?

D. Objective of the Study

In the relation to the above problem statements, the writer will formulate the following research objectives;

1. To describe the types of ambiguity found in *Creative English* textbook
2. To describe the frequency of each types of ambiguity

3. To describe the dominant types of ambiguity
4. To describe the causes of the ambiguous sentences found in *Creative English* textbook
5. To describe the ways to disambiguate ambiguity.

E. Benefit of the Study

The writer hopes that this research will have some benefits for theoretical field and practical field, like,

1. Theoretical benefits
 - a. This study can give description on the types of ambiguity, the frequency of each types of ambiguity, the dominant types of ambiguity, the causes of ambiguity, and the way to disambiguate ambiguity.
 - b. The result of the study develops the theories which are available before, especially on the types, the causes, and the ways to disambiguate ambiguity.
2. Practical benefits
 - a. Teachers

The results of this research hopefully can be useful for the teachers in choosing media for teaching-learning English.
 - b. Future researcher

The researcher hopes that this research will be useful for the future researchers who are interested in ambiguity analysis.

c. Writers of the textbook

The result of this study can be enriching the writers' knowledge about ambiguity. So the writers can be more careful in proofing the sentences.

F. Research Paper Organization

The writer organizes this study into five chapters as follow:

Chapter I is introduction. It consists of background of the study, limitation of the study, problem statement, objective of the study, and benefit of the study.

Chapter II is underlying theory, which presents the previous study and theoretical background of ambiguity, such as notion of ambiguity, types of ambiguity, causes of ambiguity and way to disambiguate ambiguity.

Chapter III is the research method that discusses the type of the research, object of the research, data and data source, method of collecting data, and method of analyzing data.

Chapter IV is research finding and discussion. The research finding consists of data analysis of the ambiguous sentence including the types, the frequency, dominant types of ambiguity, the causes of ambiguity, and the way to disambiguate ambiguity.

Chapter V is conclusion and suggestion. This chapter contains the summary of the whole analysis according to the result of the research, pedagogical implication and suggestion to the teachers, the future researchers, and the writers of the textbook.