

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of five important sub chapters, namely background of study, statements of the problems, objectives of the study, and scope and limitation of the study. Those subchapters are important to be explained since they help the readers to understand this chapter.

1.1 Background of the Study

Ambiguity is one of linguistic expressions, which people can not avoid in communication. In written language, ambiguity can happen in every writing like newspapers such as *Pikiran Rakyat* which is a well-known daily newspaper in Indonesia especially around West Java. There are some sections offered by the news, one of them is *Surat Pembaca*. It is a section of the *Pikiran Rakyat* in which the reader can send their letter to express their opinions or comments, suggestion and critics, about event or social phenomena on the previous day. Since the reader can express their opinions freely, there are many ambiguous expressions that can lead the non-native Indonesian readers to have multiple interpretations.

According to Leech (1981:30), an expression is said to be ambiguous when more than one interpretation can be assigned to it. This ambiguous expression can happen in one word or one phrase or sentence. Ulmann (1964:156) divides ambiguity into three kinds; phonetic, grammatical and lexical. However, the writer just uses lexical as the subject of analysis.

Hurford and Heasley (1983:128) state, “Lexical ambiguity is resulting from the ambiguity of a word”. Basically, every word has more than one meaning. Lexical ambiguity is caused by homonymy and polysemy. For example, the word *lari* (to run) in “*Ali berlari mengejar bus sekolahnya*” (Ali is running to catch his school bus) will have different meaning with “*Sari mencoba untuk lari dari kenyataan*” (Sari tries to run from the reality). The word “*lari*” in both sentences has two different meanings that makes the sentence can be interpreted differently. The first one means an activity to run to reach something while the second one means to get away from something. It would be confusing to get the exact meaning of that word without viewed within the context of a sentence in which it appears.

For these explanations above, the writer is interested to discover more about the lexical ambiguity in the one section of *Pikiran Rakyat* which is *Surat Pembaca*. Based on this case, the

writer decided to choose Surat Pembaca section as the object of the analysis since the writer finds many examples of lexical ambiguity in *Bahasa Indonesia* in the newspaper. For example, as Septiardi Prasetyo says in his letter on 22th May 2017 edition, “*Sungguh ironis, bulan suci yang seharusnya menjadi tambang emas dalam meningkatkan ibadah dan amal saleh malah menjadi lubang galian api neraka para pecinta uang riba*” (Ironically, the holy month that is supposed to be the gold mine in order to improve the worship and prayers instead of makes in for those who deals with the usury money). The phrase *tambang emas* can be interpreted as the potential place to make money or as the thick rope colored like gold. Viewed without the context of sentence, the sentence above is easily misinterpreted for them who just learn about *bahasa*. The words or phrases whose have multiple meaning like that are very interesting to be analyzed since they can lead to confusion for the non native Indonesian readers.

Furthermore, its content is quite real and familiar in the daily life. It contains the common cases in the society nowadays especially in the West Java. Since it is Indonesian newspaper, so the writer can understand the contents easily.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problems

Based on the research background the writer states three following issues, they are arranged as follows:

1. What kinds of lexical ambiguity found in *Surat Pembaca* section of *Pikiran Rakyat*?
2. What word classes of lexical ambiguity are found in *Surat Pembaca* section of *Pikiran Rakyat*?
3. What phrase types of lexical ambiguity are found in *Surat Pembaca* section of *Pikiran Rakyat*?

1.3 Objective of the Study

From the research questions above, it obviously can be seen that the writer intends to :

1. To discover kinds of lexical ambiguity found in *Surat Pembaca* section of *Pikiran Rakyat*.
2. To analyze word classes of lexical ambiguity which found in *Surat Pembaca* section of *Pikiran Rakyat*.
3. To analyze phrase types of lexical ambiguity which found in *Surat Pembaca* section

of *Pikiran Rakyat*.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Theoretically, the result of this study is expected to widen the non native Indonesian reader's knowledge about Semantics theory deals with kinds, word classes, and phrase types of lexical ambiguity occurs in *Surat Pembaca* section of *Pikiran Rakyat*.

Pratically, this study is expected the readers to avoid the misunderstanding causes by the ambiguity that can lead to miscommunication in written language particularly among the non native Indonesians. By reading this study, the writer hopes that the the non native Indonesian readers can understand more about the ambiguity itself, so their communication skills will arise automatically. The writer also hopes that this study can be the reference for people who are interested in analysis lexical ambiguity in their study later.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The writer analyzes lexical ambiguity in *Surat Pembaca* section of *Pikiran Rakyat* issued in May until June 2017. In this study the writer focuses on kinds of lexical ambiguity by using Hurford and Heasley's theory. To analyze the word classes, the writer uses Yule's theory. The writer also applies Crystal's theory to determine phrase types. The writer limits the analysis only to the letters contain ambiguity.