

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Theoretical Review

2.1.1. General Concept of Ambiguous Sentence(s)

Based on Mansoer Pateda's quotations on Harimurti's and Palmer's book, the doubt word or sentence meaning which in linguistics is called ambiguity. In meaning connection, there is same form but different meaning; while there are different word forms but same meaning and there is more than one meaning.

Ambiguity emerges in any expression or phrase variations or written language. If we hear people expression or write a written text, sometimes we are difficulty in understand what we read or we express. For example if we read or listen people expression, we do not understand what it means. There are many kinds of our interpretation. A doubt and confusion in take decision about meaning and many interpretations meaning, this is called ambiguity. So, construction characteristic that can be given more than one interpretation.¹ According to Stephen Ullman's statement:

Ambiguity is a linguistic condition which can arise in a variety of ways. For example, "book", many questions that can be brought, e.g., *where is the book, what is the book, what color is book, what is a drawing book or a note book?* We doubt, we confuse, and we interpret about "book". If that word is expressed by a person, we still can ask to her or him, what it means with the book. And if it is observed more carefully, either word or sentence still emerge confusion to us. This confusion will be lost, if a speaker strengthen meaning word or sentence that is expressed.²

¹ Mansoer Pateda, *Semantik Leksikal*, Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2001, pg. 200-202

² Stephen Ullman, *Semantics an Introduction to the Science of Meaning*, Oxford: Basil Balckwell, 1972, pg. 156

1. Definition of Ambiguous Sentence(s)

The phenomenon when a sentence has multiple meanings. The aim of this event was to identify those brain areas, which are involved in contextually driven ambiguity resolution. Ambiguous sentences were selected which have a most frequent, dominant, and less frequent, subordinate meaning.³

2. Some Models of Ambiguity:

There are seven different types of ambiguity and divided three main forms; phonetic ambiguity, grammatical ambiguity, and lexical ambiguity.

a. Phonetic Ambiguity

Phonetic ambiguity has been emerged from mixed with language sounds that are expressed. Because sometimes the words which form a sentence is said quickly, another person to be doubt about meaning of sentence which is said. For example, “*near*”; what is meant *near* same with *a near* or *an ear*? If these are used in a sentence such as; *a near relation should be kept forever* and *an ear of Teddy Bear was broken by my child*, the meaning of *near* is clear.

This thing has been connected by our doubt to language sound from what we hear. Sometimes, because of doubt, we take a wrong decision.

To avoid an ambiguity, we have to ask again to speaker and of course, this attitude is best to be done.

³ <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science>. Accessed on 5 June 2009

b. Grammatical Ambiguity

Grammatical ambiguities emerge to unit of linguistics that is called sentence or phrase. So, grammatical ambiguity can be looked in three sides.

First possibility is ambiguity that is caused by process of the words grammatical formulation. In English, there are prefix and suffix can make ambiguity, even sometimes confuse us. For example, suffix *-able* in English is not forever contains same meaning like *desirable*, *readable*, *eatable*, *knowable*, *debatable*, because, *desirable* and *readable* are adjective, whereas *eatable*, *knowable*, and *debatable* are just same in format. And for prefix *-in* that causes mean *into*, *within*, *towards*, *upon*, for example *indent*, it means *to bring in*, but it also means *pit or dent*. The words contain any meanings when these words in context of sentence. Second possibilities, ambiguity in phrase same *equivocal phrasing*. Every word that forms phrase actually is clear but the combination can be interpreted more than one meanings. For example, “*I met a number of old friends and acquaintances*,” word *old* (long time or not young) in this sentence can be connected by *friends* and *acquaintances*. In sentence above, where is meant by *old*, what are *friends* or *acquaintances*? To avoid ambiguity like this, we need from context or element of supra segmental that follow. Third possibilities, ambiguity that emerge in context, what is individual context or situational context? For example in minor sentence “*go!*” What does it mean? People can ask, *where* do you go? *When* do you go? *Why* do you go? To avoid ambiguity in context, we have to know in what is the context people say.⁴

⁴ Stephen Ullman, *Op. Cit.*, pg. 157-158

c. Lexical Ambiguity

First side, for example “*easy*” as adjective has some meanings:

1. Not difficult, not hard (*This exam is easy*)
2. So fast, so quick (*Your child is easy infected a disease*)
3. Weak (*In big city, we are easy tempted*).

According to Stephen Ullman, to avoid ambiguity in polysemy, we need to investigate through contextual sentence.

Second sides, the words which have same sound but different meaning. This fact is called homonym. For example, “*fly*”, like in these sentences:

1. *I fly my new helicopter with my uncle*
2. *I am disturbed by fly.*

Meaning of *fly* in the first sentence is *move through the air like a bird does*, and in second sentences is *an insect*.⁵

When homonyms can occur in the same position in utterances, the result is lexical ambiguity, as in, for example, “*I was on my way to the bank.*” Of course, the ambiguity is not likely to be sustained in a longer discourse. A following utterance, for example, *is likely to carry information about depositing or withdrawing money*, on the one hand, or, on the other hand, *fishing or boating*. Quite often homonyms belong to different lexical categories and therefore do not give rise to ambiguity. For instance, *seen* is a form of the verb *see* while *scene* is unrelated noun; *feet* is a plural noun with concrete reference, *feat* is a singular noun, rather abstract in nature.

⁵ *Ibid*, pg. 202-206

Ambiguity occurs also because a longer linguistic form has a literal sense and a figurative sense.⁶

2.1.2. General Concept of Contextual Meaning

The meaning of a sentence has more than one meaning if we did not know the context. If a sentence with limited context, a reader will be confused what a meaning reader takes. But if a sentence is clear in context, a reader will not confuse and it do not emerge a doubt. Researcher's statement above has been supported by writer's explanation as follow:

Explaining, justifying and considering are often called rhetorical acts. In a text, they are sequenced and organized into patterns which display the writer's thoughts. These patterns combine into larger patterns until the overall pattern of the whole is reached.⁷ The concept of value is important, because it is quite possible to understand the signification of an utterance without interpreting its value correctly. You may like to take a sentence and see how many contexts you can think for it, in each of which it will take on a different value. It should be clear that to understand a text properly involves understanding the value of each utterance that composes it: if you interpret as a conclusion something, the writer intended as a hypothesis, you are not likely to understand his argument. The difference between signification and value corresponds to the difference between a sentence in isolation and the same sentence in use. Until a sentence is used in a certain context, it has only signification. It acquires value when it is used.⁸ Researcher gives the writer's example to support the definition above, such as:

As soon as a sentence is used in a given situation or context, it takes on a value derived from the writer's reason for using it, and from the relationship between one sentence (utterance) and others in the same text. For instance, the proposition:

Examination results are misleading.

Has no value when it stands alone, except as a generalization. But if it were to follow this sentence:

⁶ Charles W. Kreidler, *Introducing English Semantics*, London: Routledge. 1998, pg. 55-56

⁷ Christine Nutall, *Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language*, London: Heinemann. 1982, pg. 81

⁸ *Ibid*, pg. 12-14

.... *You should not expel my son just because he has failed.*⁹

Researcher takes a conclusion; it could be seen to have the value of an explanation or justification. The writer is using it to support the statement would be wrong.

2.1.3. General Concept of Formulation

We have seen that the initial stage of conceptualization is so far removed from the words we actually speak and write that it is difficult to delineate this phase of production. But at the second stage of speech production, formulation, we move close enough to the eventual output of the process to allow us to be more precise in our terminology and more convincing in our use of empirical data. Conceptualization is hard to conceptualize, but formulation is much easier to formulate.¹⁰

According to the definition above, researcher concludes that another way of trying to understand the process of producing language is to analyze the steps we have to take and the decisions we have to make in order to produce an intended utterance. In understanding someone's talking, we have to pay attention at the context and situation within conversation. Sometimes, a meaning of a sentence or utterance can be different. It depends on the context. The way we analyze and reconstruct a sentence in order to find out a suitable meaning is called formulation.

A way we choose to formulate what we are about to say or write is influenced by such factors as politeness or social appropriateness. These extremely important variables are not usually dealt with in the relatively social circles of psycholinguistics, but they are central to the concerns of linguists who investigate pragmatics – the study of what people mean when they use language in normal social interaction, or

⁹ *Ibid*, pg. 82

¹⁰ Thomas Scovel, *Psycholinguistics*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998, pg. 29-

those who study sociolinguistics – the study of why we say what to whom, when, and where. But just within the narrow confines of how we formulate a simple concept such as ‘not important’ into actual words, following the rules of the language we have chosen to speak, and disregarding all the complicated nuances of pragmatics and sociolinguistics, we have still many choices to consider.¹¹

From the definition above, a researcher states the meaning of a sentence is also influenced by all the complicated nuances of pragmatics and sociolinguistics, we have many choices to consider. Usually, people make a different style when they are talking; it depends on social context, politeness and a person they face. In this case, stress of word has an important role. In such situation we speak in raising intonation, but in other situation in falling intonation, however, the sentence we talk is similar. Stephen Ullman explains and gives the example as follow:

Recall that the first alternative the speaker had in formulating the concept ‘not important’, was whether to express the negative response lexically – via words, or grammatically – via the use of syntactic negation. Let us suppose the second alternative was picked, creating the series of choices exemplified by sentences: (a). It *isn't* important, (b). It's *not* important. You may have to glance at these twice to catch the slight differences between them, and they are so minimal that you might be provoked into using some of the earlier examples: the differences are nothing; they are trivial! But if the speaker has chosen to express the negation grammatically rather than through word choice, important differences can be indicated by means of stress. Normally, the contracted negative in (a) is chosen because negation is typically not the focus of our attention, but (b) offers an effective way of emphasizing negation. Supposing you are in an argumentative state, and your conversational partner keeps insisting that the situation is desperate; (b) allows you to be emphatic about your denial. Put tersely, the difference between the two sentences is in (a) the negative is not usually stressed, but in (b) it receives unusual stress. The significance of these slight differences may seem minimal within the context of the

¹¹ *Ibid*, pg. 37-38

myriad sounds, words, and sentences that comprise our daily staple of communication, but along with the slip of the tongue examples, they demonstrate the enormous number and intricacy of choices facing a speaker, or a writer, at this important stage of formulation.¹²

The writer takes conclusion that every message that we write, say, or express should be showed clearly to another speaker or reader with our body gesture, body language, punctuation mark, or speech sound. And, our communication will be understood and comprehended by another. So, formulation is second stage of speech production after conceptualization, we as the speaker or writer should be able to implement what we say and how we say it.

2.1.4. Classroom Action Research

1. Definition of Classroom Action Research

Action research indicates the basic unity of theoretical and practical knowledge. It means that in action research, a researcher not only needs the theories that support research but also needs to practice and to act with the subject of research. Furthermore, classroom action research is a reflective study done by teacher in a classroom for getting solution about the problem until it can be solved.

The researcher intends to elaborate action research because it is a kind of research to be used in his research and it could be done by a teacher in which involve a group of students to improve the teaching and learning process.

To know better about classroom action research, it will be better to understand the definition of action research as stated by Kemmis and Taggart, quoted by Richards and Nunan (1990).

¹² *Ibid*, pg. 40

“The linking of the term “action” and “research” highlight the essential feature of the method: trying out ideas in practice as a means of improvement and as a means of increasing knowledge about the curriculum, teaching, and learning. The result is improvement in what happens in the classroom and school, and better articulation and justification of the educational rationale of what goes on. Action research provides a way of working which links theory and practice into the one whole ideas-in-action”.¹³

From the definition, we could see that an action research could be used as a mean to improve and to increase knowledge.

2. Aims of Classroom Action Research

The development of a teacher’s professional expertise and judgment is very essential. Although many teachers are in broad agreement with this general aim, some are quite rightly concerned about what the exact aim of classroom action research is and how far involvement in classroom action research activity will impinge upon their teaching and on their personal time. Here are two aims of classroom action research:¹⁴

1. To give the teachers an introduction to the variety of methods available to them as a means of extending their repertoire of professional behaviors and of encouraging flexibility in personal development.
2. To improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practice, their understanding or these practices and the situations in which these practice are carried out.

Based on two explanations above, it can be concluded that classroom action research is one of strategies in improving or

¹³ Jack C. Richards and David Nunan, *Second Language Teacher Education*, Cambridge University, 1990, pg. 63

¹⁴ *Ibid*, pg. 64

increasing the practice of learning. It can be achieved by doing such reflection in order to diagnose condition and then try it systematically as an alternative way to solve learning problems that is being faced in class.

After knowing the aims in conducting classroom action research, the teacher uses classroom action research when he or she finds some problems such as the students have not achieved the target what is expected during teaching and learning process.

As a teacher, he or she has to find out the problem is by conducting classroom action research. A teacher does a classroom action research and it is conducted in the class. This involves all of the students in the classroom. By doing classroom action research the teacher may give contribution to him or other teachers as well as to students in general.

3. Characteristics of Classroom Action Research

Classroom action research has several characteristics that will be elaborated as follows:

a. On the job problem oriented

Problem which is being investigated appears from the authority of the researcher himself. The problem is the real problem faced by students' everyday.

b. Problem solving oriented

This research is oriented in the problem solving. This sort of research put the researcher as the agent of change.

c. Improvement oriented

This research gives emphasizes on the improvement of quality. This concept is according to the principle of critical research has to construct product oriented.

d. Multiple data collection

In fulfilling the critical approaches principle, there are several ways of collecting data, such as observation, test, and interview.

e. Cyclic

The sequences of the classroom action research identify of a problem (planning), collect data (acting), analyze and interpret data (observing) and develop an action (reflecting).¹⁵ Classroom action research usually conducted cyclic in which seeks to unit. Its two central concerns, improvement in practiced and increased knowledge and understanding is by linking them into an integrated cycle of activities in which each phase learns from the previous one and shapes the next.

f. Participatory

Researcher makes such collaboration with an English teacher to do the classroom action research.

4. The Steps of Classroom Action Research

There are several essential processes in doing classroom action research are needed cycle as follows:

1. Planning

After making sure about the problem of the research, the researcher needs to make a preparation before doing classroom action research. The kind of preparation can be seen as follows:

- a. The steps on the activities during the research
- b. Preparation for teaching facilities
- c. Preparation for data analysis during the research process

¹⁵ Geoffrey E. Mills, *Action Research; A Guide for the Teacher Researcher*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., 2000, pg. 6

d. Preparation for all researches in order not to make a mistake during the research such as alternative actions to solve the problem of the research.

2. Action

Doing an action research is the main cycle of action research. This is followed by researcher must be observation, interpretation and the reflective activities. A researcher must be very careful in practicing the classroom research; he or she has to follow the procedure or action planning during the researcher.

3. Observation

In this step, a researcher has to observe all events or activities during the research. The observation can be classified into three categories: (a) teachers' talk (b) pupils' talk (c) silence or confusion.¹⁶

Observation is a usual step when a researcher is observing or assessing the decision of research during teaching learning process interaction among the learners.

4. Reflection

A reflection is an effect to inspect what has or has not been done, what has or has not yet resulted after having an alternative action. The result of reflection is used to establish the next steps of the success or the failure in reaching the temporary purposes in order to determine the alternative steps that are probably made to get the final goals of the research.¹⁷

¹⁶ *Ibid*, pg. 7

¹⁷ *Ibid*, pg. 8

2.2. Previous Research

Earlier works on mastering reading can be found in several scientific works in the world. There can be found in several researchers' works such as:

1. The thesis entitled *Enhancing Students' Participation and Comprehension in Reading Course Using Jigsaw Strategy in English Class at the 9th Grade of MTs Ibtidaul Falah Kudus* by Mu'linatus Sa'adah (Student's Number: 3104154, Tarbiyah Faculty 2009, Walisongo State Institute for Islamic Studies Semarang) states that students find some difficulties in comprehending reading English text, especially when they find a lot of unfamiliar words which they cannot comprehend to use correctly. To develop teaching reading comprehension, teacher needs strategy that will make students enjoy and easy to read and understand the text. Teaching reading comprehension using jigsaw strategy is aimed at improving reading comprehension. The implementation of the jigsaw strategy is to enhance students' participation and comprehension in reading course at the 9th grade students of MTs Ibtidaul Falah Kudus.¹⁸
2. The thesis entitled *Implementasi Model Cooperative Learning dalam Pembelajaran PAI di SMP Semesta Semarang* by Yuni Ifayati (Student's Number: 3102232, Tarbiyah Faculty 2006, Walisongo State Institute for Islamic Studies Semarang) states that cooperative learning strategy is an instructional technique designs to enhance students' comprehension of a text. It organizes instruction according to the principles of positive interdependence, individual accountability, promotive face to face interaction, social and collaborative skills and group processing. The implementation of cooperative learning in teaching PAI involves 5 phases, that is provide objectives and students' motivation, present information, organizes students in learning teams, assist team work and study, testing and recognizing achievement. The finding shown that the

¹⁸ Mu'linatus Sa'adah. *Enhancing Students' Participation and Comprehension in Reading Course Using Jigsaw Strategy in English Class at the 9th Grade of MTs Ibtidaul Falah Kudus*, (Semarang: IAIN Walisongo, 2009), Unpublished Thesis.

implementation of cooperative learning in the classroom of Islamic lesson could increase the cooperative between the teacher and the students' religious development and dependence in the subject.¹⁹

However, this research is different with previous one. The researcher was conducted in the effect of contextual meaning formulation and learning circle strategies while this research will be conducted more specifically in the implementation the improvement of students' ability to identify the meaning of ambiguous sentences after being taught through using contextual meaning formulation at the 1st year of MAN Kendal. So, there are still have relevance and significance factors why it is interested to be observed.

2.3. Action Hypothesis

The objectives of teaching English in MAN Kendal are four language theories, namely lexical, pronunciation, grammatical, and vocabulary. Those theories are supported by listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The evaluation in MAN Kendal was conducted based on how active were the students in joining teaching learning process. This process demands the students to be active to identify the sentences or reading texts. Thus, the teacher uses contextual meaning formulation that focused on meaning of ambiguous sentences comprehension. The use of contextual meaning formulation can be easier to the students to study English because they do not only study the English language but also practice their grammar, pronunciation, lexeme, and vocabularies.

To reach the goal, the teacher and students do many activities in order to make students active in English teaching-learning process. It means that students are able to identify the meaning of ambiguous sentences well.

The teaching procedures in MAN Kendal are: the teacher opens the teaching-learning process by greeting, and she gives the background

¹⁹ Yuni Ifayati, *Implementasi Cooperative Learning dalam Pembelajaran PAI di SMP Semesta Semarang*, (Semarang: IAIN Walisongo, 2006), *Unpublished Thesis*.

knowledge to her students. After that, she explains the material; finally she discusses the material with her students. In this activity, the teacher gives the material that appropriate to her students. She uses book, worksheet, and anything that can help teaching-learning process. She also uses some methods to help students to understand the material. They comprehend the text, discussing, and practicing English. To evaluate her students, the teacher just looks at how active the students in teaching-learning activity. Besides the teaching procedures, the students' activities also influence the success of teaching. The students can do many activities such as reading aloud, discussing the material, and finding out the maintenance of text.

Based on the explanations above, the researcher takes a hypothesis that teaching English by using contextual meaning formulation with some treatments to the first year students of MAN Kendal is appropriate to condition of the students. The students will be able to improve their ability to identify the meaning of ambiguous sentences after being taught through using contextual meaning formulation.