

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERARY REVIEW

#### 2.1 Previous Studies

Previous studies are needed in research, since they will be very helpful for the next researcher. Previous study provides the example of how to do the analysis and to conduct a research to create a good one. Moreover, it also has function to regard new research findings. In conducting this research, the writer has found four previous studies to support the analysis.

Name	Objectives	Methods	Findings
Arizona (2016)	To find lexical ambiguity in the cosmetic advertisements.	Descriptive qualitative	The researcher found that there are 11 advertisements that ambiguous in the form of phrases and sentences. In the total, there are 8 phrases and 6 sentences that are categorized as lexical ambiguity.
Tambunan (2009)	To find words, phrases and sentences that are classified as lexical ambiguity in Your Letter of The Jakarta Post	Descriptive qualitative	There are 23 lexical ambiguities and 24 structural ambiguities found in total. The most dominant ambiguity that is found is Structural Ambiguity.
Wahyuni (2014)	To identify the forms of lexical ambiguity in the script of Romeo and Juliet adapted by	Descriptive qualitative	There are two kinds of lexical ambiguity found, they are homonymy and polysemy. Among the three sub-types of homonymy, only

	David Hundsness		two of them occur. They are absolute homonymy and homophone. The absent type is homograph.
Purwaningsih (2014)	Explaining the kinds of words, phrases and sentences that are categorized as lexical and structural ambiguity and to find the most appeared of ambiguity.	Descriptive qualitative	There are 21 opinions that contained ambiguous words and phrases, they are: Lexical ambiguity which represents 76,2% include noun (6,25%), Verb (3,12%), Adjective (0,62%), while Structural ambiguity represents 23,8% include Noun Phrase (100%).
Safitri (2017)	Describe the types of lexical ambiguity that used by Zootopia characters and the most used types of ambiguity and to analyze the structural ambiguity that used by Zootopia characters	Descriptive qualitative	The researcher finds that there are 41 data related to ambiguity, they are: homophone (21,27%), homonymy (19,14%), homograph (12,76%), polysemy (34,04%) and structural ambiguity (14%). Hence, the most used ambiguity type that is applied in the movie is lexical ambiguity.

The first previous study that is done with the discussion of lexical ambiguity is from Arizona (2016) with the research entitled *Lexical Ambiguity in The Cosmetic Advertisements*. In this research, the objective is to find lexical ambiguity in the cosmetic advertisements by identifying the words in the cosmetic advertisements

and explain the interpretations of the readers toward the lexical ambiguity in the advertisements. In doing the research, the researcher conducts descriptive qualitative method. As the result of the study, it shows that 11 advertisements are classified as ambiguous and others 9 are not. There are around 8 phrases and 6 sentences classified as ambiguous from 42 phrases and 12 sentences. Existential presupposition, generalized conversational implicature and particularized conversational implicature are mostly found in every reader's interpretation of each ambiguous phrase and sentence.

The second previous study is from Tambunan (2009) with the research entitled *The Analysis of Lexical and Structural Ambiguity in Your Letters of The Jakarta Post*. The objective of this research is to find words, phrases and sentences that are classified as lexical ambiguity in Your Letter of *The Jakarta Post*. The writer conducts descriptive qualitative method in doing the analysis. The result of this research shows that there are 23 lexical ambiguities and 24 structural ambiguities found in total. The most dominant ambiguity that is found in the *Your Letter of The Jakarta Post* is Structural Ambiguity since most of the writers write some phrases that is quite unstructured so that causes ambiguity.

Another previous study that is related to lexical ambiguity is from Wahyuni (2014) with the research entitled *Lexical Ambiguity Represented through Pun and Wordplay in the Script of Romeo and Juliet Adapted by David Hundsness*. In this research, the aim is to identify the forms of lexical ambiguity in the script of *Romeo and Juliet* adapted by David Hundsness. In doing the analysis, the research employed a descriptive qualitative method. As the result, the finding of research shows that there are two kinds of lexical ambiguity found, they are homonymy and

polysemy. Among the three sub-types of homonymy, only two of them occur. They are absolute homonymy and homophone. The absent type is homograph. Homonymy is the most frequent form of lexical ambiguity in the script in which two or several lexemes have the same spoken or written forms or even both. The finding of polysemy shows that the same words which have several distinct meanings can still be related in sense.

The next previous study that discusses similar topic is from Purwaningsih (2014) with the research entitled *An Analysis of Lexical and Structural Ambiguity "Rubrik Opini" In Jawa Pos*. This study is aimed at explaining the kinds of words, phrases and sentences that are categorized as lexical and structural ambiguity and to find the most appeared of ambiguity. In doing the analysis, the researcher conducts descriptive qualitative method. As the result of the research, it shows that there are 21 opinions that contain ambiguous words and phrases they are 16 cases of Lexical ambiguity and 5 cases of structural ambiguity. Lexical ambiguity which represents 76,2% include noun (6,25%), Verb (3,12%), Adjective (0,62%), while Structural ambiguity represents 23,8% include Noun Phrase (100%).

Lastly, previous study from Safitri (2017) in a form of thesis entitled *Lexical and Structural Ambiguity found in Zootopia Movie*. In this research, the objective is to describe the types of ambiguity that is applied by Zootopia characters and to describe the most dominant types of ambiguity in Zootopia movie. In order to do the research, the researcher conducted descriptive qualitative method and applied Ullmann's theory (1977) of ambiguity. Further, as the result of the research, it shows that there are 47 types of ambiguity that are applied by the characters in the movie of Zootopia. The 41 data are from lexical ambiguity which consists of

homophone (21,27%), homonymy (19,14% and homograph (12,76%). Meanwhile the rest of the data (6 data/14%) comes from structural ambiguity.

Based on the previous studies above, it can be noticed that the similarity can be seen from the approach and the uses of theory where both of previous researches and this present research conducts semantic approach and applies theory from Ullmann that is discussing about meaning and ambiguity. Meanwhile, the difference between this research and those previous studies comes from the object of research. As seen from the previous researches, they are analyzing newspapers, cosmetic advertisements and drama script of Romeo and Juliet. However, in this research, the writer is focusing on analyzing memes selected from 9gags website. Therefore, it is vividly can be concluded that the result of the analysis of this research and the previous researches are completely different.

## **2.2 Semantic**

Semantics is known as the study of linguistics that discussing meaning (Afrianto, 2017). However, it is more usual within linguistics to interpret the term narrowly, concern on the study of the aspects of meaning which are encoded in linguistic expressions and are independent of their use on particular speech community (Umagandhi and Vinothini, 2017). In other words, Semantics is the study of meaning abstracted away from those aspects that are derived from the intensions of speakers, their psychological states and the socio-cultural aspects of the context in which their utterances are made.

Semantics is the study of the meaning of texts (that consists of words, phrases, and sentences) (Yule in Charina, 2017; Halliday and Hasan in Afrianto, 2017). Also,

Lyons in Tambunan (2009) added that semantic is a part of a larger enterprise, linguistic theory which includes the study of syntax (grammar) and phonetics (pronunciation) besides the study of meaning. In semantics analysis, there is always an attempt to focus on what the words conventionally mean on a particular occasion.

All languages depend on words and sentences having meaning (every word meaning) (Wiratno in Afrianto et al, 2020). Moreover, Kempson in Irawan (2009) also explained that for any language, semantics theory must be able to assign to each word and sentence associated with it in that language. In the case of words, this essentially means writing a dictionary but in the case of sentences, the meaning of those sentences depends on the meaning of words it contains. However, it is not a simple accumulation because sometimes word-order will change meaning. Thus, a semantics theory is not only to capture the exact nature of the relation between word meaning and sentence meaning, but it must also be able to state in which ways this relation depends on word-order because both words and sentences can be ambiguous.

The case of ambiguity relates to the meaning and interpretations. Meaning and interpretations in relation with the communication are the main things that the speaker must consider before he or she utters and write because different interpretation of the two or more hearers or readers may cause misunderstanding and finally raises problems (Leech in Umagandhi and Vinothini, 2017).

Furthermore, semantics rules should not be allowed to delete meanings during the derivation of the meaning of a composite expression. The interpretation implies that meanings should be ascribed not only to lexemes and sentences but also to other

syntactic constituents (Charina, 2017). The concept of syntax as a bridge between phonology and semantics in many grammatical theories would seem to require that all constituents be assigned meaning by the semantics (Charina, 2017). It is common to assume that semantics constituency is paralleled to the syntactic constituency and hence, an adequate semantics theory must be able to ascribe appropriate meanings to the words, phrases and sentences according to their syntactic structure.

### **2.3 Ambiguity**

Ullmann in Charina (2017) stated that ambiguity occurs when a sentence or word has more than one meaning and it can be caused by the ambiguous lexicon in which one word has more than one meaning and it can also be caused because of the way the sentence is structured. In other words, ambiguity is the construction of the sentences that can be given in more than one interpretation and it can arise in variety of spoken and written language. As if when we listen to the speaker's utterance or read a text, we are sometimes difficult to understand what the speaker or the writer means (Charina, 2017).

Furthermore, ambiguity arises in spoken and written form. In listening, unclear spoken utterance or in reading there is unclear sentence, people occasionally have some problems with the meaning or interpretation conveyed by the speaker or the writer (Degani and Tokowicz, 2010). They only can ensure the meaning of the words, phrases, or sentences of any utterance in certain situation or context. However, in deciding whether or not a word, phrase, or sentence is ambiguous is not an easy thing to do. As argued by Kempson in Gallagher (2013), there is a little

problem in deciding of as given sentence whether or not it is ambiguous due to what must be counted as the ambiguity.

Therefore, ambiguity can happen in daily conversation or in the book. Ullmann in Gakis et al (2013) stated that ambiguity is linguistic condition that can arise in a variety of ways and in this case, Ullmann divided ambiguity into three types, they are phonological ambiguity, lexical ambiguity, and grammatical ambiguity. However, regarding to this research, the writer only focuses on discussing lexical ambiguity.

#### **2.4 Lexical Ambiguity**

Lexical ambiguity arises when a single word has more than one meaning and it is related to the ambiguous meaning of a word (Kehoe, 2010; Crystal in Kristian, 2018). Thus, this kind of ambiguity may arise in the written form, such as in the articles, in the news titles, and other forms of written texts (Ullmann in Umagandhi and Vinothini, 2017). In other words, based on the explanations, it can be noticed that lexical ambiguity is a kind of ambiguity that comes from a single word which has more than one meaning and it mostly appears in written form such articles and any other written texts. The example can be seen as follow:

*Experts warn the current global financial turmoil may take a bigger toll on emerging Asia.*

(Irawan. 2009: 117)



The word ‘toll’ in the sentence above may be interpreted in different ways since the word ‘toll’ has many meanings, it can be:

- Payment for road, bridge etc.
- Lost or suffered

Based on the definitions of the word ‘toll’ above, the readers may interpret the sentence into:

a. First interpretation

*Experts warn the current global financial turmoil may need or require a bigger payment on emerging Asia.*

b. Second interpretation

*Experts warn the current global financial turmoil may cause a bigger lost on emerging Asia.*

Further, Ullmann (1977) also divided lexical ambiguity into two major points based on the causal of factors of ambiguity, they are polysemy and homonymy.

#### **2.4.1 Polysemy or Multiple Meaning**

Ullmann (1977) stated that the term polysemy is derived from the Greek *poly* which means “many” and *semeion* which mean “sign” and this multiple meaning occurs when one word has two or more senses. As it stated by Brinton & Brinton, (2010) that, polysemy is known as a word that having more than one meaning related to one another. In that case, it can be said that polysemy is known as the word that has multiple meanings. Yule in Purwaningsih (2014) added that relatedness of meaning

accompanying identical form technically known as polysemy, which can be defined as one form (written or spoken). Thus, it needs to point out that polysemous words often have related meanings and this relatedness of meaning that distinguishes polysemy from homonymy. Here are the examples of polysemy:

<b>Word</b>	<b>Meaning 1</b>	<b>Meaning 2</b>
Barrel	Part of a gun	A large storage vessel
Corn	Kind of grain	A formation like grain
Ear	Part of the human body	Part of a plant
Foot	Part of the human body	Part of a hill or table
Glass	Reading glass	A drinking vessel
Head	Leader of a group	Part of the human body
Mouth	Part of the human body	Part of a bottle/river

*Examples of Polysemous Words (Ovu, 2016)*

Example in sentences:

- I keep my *barrel* in basement.
- I think there is something wrong with my *ear*.
- Last night, Rudi accidentally broke his own *glass*.

Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between polysemy and homonymy. Thus, in order to distinguish them, it can be seen from the word category, if the category a word and meaning is different but the same shape means the word is homonymy, but if category and the same shape but its meaning is different then, the word is classified as polysemy.

### 2.4.2 Homonymy

Homonyms are two different words with the same form and it refers to a situation in which two or more lexemes have a similar shape of words which is considered as similar sound or written form (Ullmann, 1977). Further, Leech in Wahyuni (2014) divided homonym into three varieties:

- Homophones: different words pronounced alike but spelt differently  
E.g.: *two* (tu:) – *too* (tuw:); *sea* (sie) – *see* (sie).
- Homographs: different words spelled alike but pronounced differently  
E.g.: *minute* ('minit) – *minute* (mai'nju:t) ; *bow* (bəv) – *bow* (bav).
- Homonyms: words both spelled and pronounced alike.  
E.g.: *club* (kl^b) (social organization); *club* (kl^b) (a blunt weapon)

Further, the example of absolute homonymy is the word *letter*. As same as the word *bank*, *letter* also has more than one meaning. As seen in Oxford Dictionary, *letter* can be a written or printed sign representing a sound used in speech or a written message. On the other hand, words can be categorized as partial homonymy if they have one or two characteristics of absolute homonymy, but not all three. The example of partial homonymy is the word *found*. *Found* as the past form of *find* is not grammatically equivalent to *found* as the form of *found*. *Found* as the form of *found* share the form *finds* and *finding*, but *found* as the past form or *find* cannot.

It should be noted that both polysemy and homonymy may be accompanied by syntactical differences. When a word belongs to several parts of speech for instance double which adjective, an adverb, a verb and a noun, these uses will differ not only

in meaning but in grammatical function. Homonyms may come from different word-classes: grave (Adjective) – grave (noun), bear (noun) – bear (verb).

Word 1	Meaning 1	Word 2	Meaning 2
Aisle	A passage way	Isle	An island
Aural	About hearing	Oral	About speech
Boy	A male youth	Buoy	A safety device
Cereal	A kind of crop	Serial	Part of a story
Chord	Musical note	Cord	A kind of rope
Colonel	A rank in military	Kernel	Part of a nut
Desert	An arid land mass	Dessert	Light fruit meal
Flour	Corn powder	Flower	Part of a plant

*Examples of Polysemous Words (Ovu, 2016)*

Example in sentences:

- He went to the **aisle/isle** yesterday.
- The girl was fascinated by my **aural/oral** skill.
- The **flour/flower** is too expensive.
- The **buoy/boy** was pulled out of the sea.

In summary, the term ambiguity refers to a situation where an utterance (both sentence or phrase) represents more than one meaning. In other words, the ambiguity of a text has the origin of either it categorized as homonymy or polysemy. Thus, since the analysis in this research is related to wordplays which found in 9gag memes, lexical ambiguity study must be applied in order to describe and reveal the possible meaning from the phrases as the form of humor made by creative people.

## 2.5 Internet Memes

Mememes were originally described by Richard Dawkins in his book *The Selfish Gene* (1976) as a unit of cultural transmission, or a unit of imitation (Dainas, 2015). There are many examples of mememes are tunes, ideas, catch-phrases, fashion trends, tool making or architectural techniques. A meme in the meme pool (much like a gene in the gene pool) can only survive if the represented knowledge evolves and without adapting to the constantly changing conditions of the social world, the value or usability of knowledge will diminish and the meme will die (Shifman, 2013).

While this simple idea has been the source of much academic debate about what a meme is and how it works, the word “meme” has been picked up by the internet users around the world (Shifman, 2013). As stated previously, online, a meme or “internet meme” is used to describe the rapid uptake and spread of a “particular idea presented as a written text, image, language ‘move’, or some other unit of cultural stuff” (Knobel and Lankshear, 2007). An internet meme can be anything from a single to word to a graphic, from a song to a video.

Internet mememes, further has characteristics to describe recent, often short live fads that can rise to “internet fame” in a matter of hours or days or weeks and then fade away into nothing. Another difference is that the unit of an internet meme tends to be considered obvious and concrete such as YouTube videos or image macros that lure many spinoffs as opposed to the more abstract and controversial unit of traditional memetics research (Shifman, 2011). Both types of mememes however can be best understood as cultural information that is passed from person to person, but in aggregate scales into social phenomena with a wide-reaching impact on the mindsets, behavior and actions of social groups (Knobel & Lankshear, 2007).

Accordingly, internet memes are a unit of information (idea, concept or belief) which replicates by passing on via internet (could be e-mail, forum, social networks, etc) in the shape of a hyper-link vide, image or phrase which can be passed on as an exact copy or can be changed and edited or evolved. Here, the mutation on the replication can be by meaning keeping the structure of the meme or vice versas and it can be occurred by chance, addition or parody and its from is not relevant.

The internet memes also depend on both carrier and social context where the transporter acts as a filter and decided what can be passed on and it can be interactive as a game and some people relate them with creativity. In addition, internet memes can be manufactured (as in the case of the viral marketing) or emerge as an offline event taken online which has goal to be known well enough to replicate within a group (Diaz, 2013).

## **2.6 Humour**

Humour is a universal phenomenon that is exhibited by most cultures which primarily consists of jokes (spoken or written words) and actions which elicit laughter or generate mirth (these actions can be described in words) (Sen, 2012; Ritchie, 2004). As it supported by Gardner in Hadiati (2018) that humor is defined as anything that makes people laugh or amuse, or the capacity to recognize what is funny about a situation or a person.

Further, Martin (2007) explained that humor may be viewed as a habitual pattern, an ability, a temperament, an aesthetic response, an attitude, a world view, a coping strategy, or a defense mechanism. Moreover, Martin (2007) distinguished four

components of the humor process, that is, a social context, a cognitive-perceptual process, an emotional response, and the vocal-behavioral expression of laughter.

Also, humor is seen as an international form of social communication and as a verbal or nonverbal message that evokes amusement and positive feelings by the receiver (Hurren, 2006). Robert and Yan (2007) emphasized the intentional use of both verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors that elicit positive responses such as laughter and joy. Interestingly, different generation may find different thing about “funniness” because humor is a wide, often subjectively treated study and despite many theories of humor across disciplines such as psychology, linguistics, anthropology and medicin, it is still nearly impossible to determine how humor works (Gardner in Hadiati, 2018).