Language Ambiguity in EFL Learners' Narrative Texts: A Semantic Discourse Analysis

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This qualitative study investigates the ambiguity in five EFL learners' narrative texts. This study reveals that narrative texts contain lexical and syntactic ambiguities. Lexical ambiguity can happen because of polysemy and homonymy. In terms of syntactic ambiguity, ambiguous languages occur in the surface and deep structure of the sentences for various reasons, such as coordinator, gerund, and adjectives followed by an infinitive. Luckily, the lexical and syntactic ambiguities do not give the readers much trouble comprehending the texts if the context is clear. The context, particularly the preceding and following sentences, helps the readers understand the text. Sentences with ambiguous words or ambiguous structures can be clearly delivered as long as the writers are able to provide a clear context. Additionally, the writers in this present study tend to intentionally use ambiguous words in their sentences in order to use the words metaphorically and to tell the story in a more artistic way since the purpose of the narrative text is to entertain the readers.

INTRODUCTION

This research aims to investigate the ambiguity in EFL learners' narrative texts. Writing clearly without ambiguity is very crucial for every writer. The reason is because the ambiguity can lead the readers into the wrong interpretation so that they cannot get the intended meaning of the text. Clear text indeed is very important.

Moreover, according to Thornburry (2005) text is in every aspect of the life, such as in home, streets, at work, and at school. No wonder, it is mandatory for the teachers to equip the learners with good ability to engage with the text. (Thornburry, 2005) again points out that the learners as the language users need to comprehend the text and they need to create the text. Through this study therefore, the common language ambiguity that can mislead the readers of the text are revealed so that they can learn how to avoid writing any kind of texts with ambiguity.

The fact that ambiguous language is able to direct the readers to the wrong direction actually should encourage the teacher to be more aware about it. Hopefully, this research can rise that awareness since ambiguity can be a serious issue. Indeed, language, even a word, has a strong power in the society. According to Harmon & Wilson (2006) also words can encourage and discourage at the same time, such as uplifting, inspiring, inflicting pain, deepening insecurity, and so on. This is the reason why the learners have to be taught to choose the words, phrases, or expression for their writing correctly without ambiguous language so that the readers get the messages that are really intended by the writers.

In addition, the fact that writing is used to grade the learners' performance in universities strengthens the importance of it for learners (Bailey, 2006). This circumstances inevitably encourage the teachers or lecturers to assist the learners enhancing their writing ability, including writing narrative text which is recognized as one of the popular genres (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). Narrative text is recognized as the text type that has a purpose to entertain the readers by telling a story (Anderson & Anderson, 1997). However, narrative text is not that simple. Besides entertaining the readers, it has another generic purpose which is actually more important for the readers, namely changing social opinions and attitudes (Knapp & Watkins, 2005).

In more detail, narrative text consists of three common generic structures. In the first part of the text, the writers have to tell the readers about the story time and place (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). According to Anderson & Anderson (1997) this part is called as orientation where the information of who, where, and when, is introduced by the writers. In the second part of the text, the writers are required to bring one or more complexities or problems of the story. This is called as

complication which contains a chain of events that is followed by a resolution (Anderson & Anderson, 1997). This resolution is an important part of the text as it indicates how successful the text is.

According to Knapp & Watkins (2005) narrative text with those three generic structures explained above is read more by the readers. Unfortunately, writing narrative text is difficult enough for most of the writers. The writers need to produce the correct language in their text in order to avoid the wrong interpretation from the readers because there is always ambiguous sentence (Baker, 1995). It is when a sentence has two meanings (Griffiths, 2006). Although, ambiguity rarely gives issues in daily communication (Kreidler, 1998), language written on a piece of paper is something different. In writing, there are many elements that must be noticed, such as language structure, text functions, content, genre, and so on (Hyland, 2013). Therefore, writing perfectly without ambiguity is difficult even impossible (O'Grady et al.,1997).

Ambiguity generally is divided into two types, namely lexical and syntactic ambiguity (Löbner, 2002). Additionally, Kess (1992) proposes one additional type of ambiguity called as deep or underlying structure ambiguity which is "on the deep structure level of logical relationships between underlying syntactic constituents". The lexical ambiguity meanwhile refers to a form which has two or more meanings (O'Grady et al., 1997). It means it occurs in the word level (Hurford et al., 2007). No wonder, homonymy defined as a word that has two or more different senses or meanings and polysemy defined as a word that has some very closely related senses are the main causes of lexical ambiguity (Hurford et al., 2007). Table 1 adapted from (Hurford et al., 2007) below presents some examples of ambiguity that occur in the level of words.

Table 1. Lexical Ambiguity

No.	Sentences	Possible Interpretations
1.	The people run in panic because the <u>earth</u> was shaking / <u>Earth</u> is one of the planets in the solar system.	Soil or our planet

2.	There are many <u>guards</u> in front of his house / Face <u>guard</u> is needed when doing dangerous sport.	Person who guards, sentinel or solid protective shield, e.g. around machinery
3.	He gave that person a <u>punch</u> / She provided <u>punch</u> for the party.	Blow with a fist or kind of fruity alcoholic drink
4.	My captain <u>steered</u> me towards the river / John own that <u>steer</u>.	To guide or young bull

The first two examples are lexical ambiguities that are caused by polysemy represented by *earth* and *guard*. Both words have some interrelated meanings (Löbner, 2002). In the case of *earth*, it possibly means *soil* or *planet*. It means both refer to land at different levels of generality. Similarly, the meanings of *guard* are interrelated by *the person who protects* or *solid protective shield*. They contain the concept of protection against danger (Hurford et al., 2007). In contrast, the last two examples are homonymy defined as the words with the same sound and spelling, but different meaning (Löbner, 2002). The homonymy in both sentences are represented by words that do not have the interrelated meanings (Hirst, 1988). The meanings of *punch* can be *blowing with a fist* or *kind of fruity alcoholic drink* and *steer* can be *to guide* or *young bull*. However, it is difficult to deal with the differences between polysemy and homonymy (Kreidler, 1998). The easiest way is by learning that homonymy is "words with different senses or meaning which are far apart from each other and not obviously related to each other" (Hurford et al., 2007).

In contrast, the syntactic ambiguity is caused by the sentence structures that have some possible interpretations (Kreidler, 1998). There are two kinds of Syntactic ambiguity proposed by Kreidler (1998). The first is syntactic ambiguity caused by words that can cluster together in different possible constructions in the surface structure of the sentence. The second is syntactic ambiguity that occurs in the deep structure of the sentence. In more detail, Cruse (2000) states that there are four ambiguities that can be found in the level of sentence. Those are pure syntactic, quasi-syntactic, lexico syntactic and pure lexical ambiguity. Table 2 adapted from

Kreidler (1998) and Hurford et al (2007) below presents the example of syntactic ambiguity.

Table 2. Syntactic Ambiguity

No.	Sentences	Possible Interpretations
1.	John and Mary or Pat will go	([John] and [Mary or Pat], [John and Mary] or [Pat])
2.	The only people left were old men and women.	([old men] and [women], old [men and women])
3.	*The chicken is ready to eat*	('The chicken is ready to be eaten' or 'the chicken is ready to eat something')
4.	*Visiting relatives can be boring*	('Visiting relatives is boring' or 'relatives visiting are boring')

The first example is the syntactic ambiguity that occurs in the surface structure of the sentence. It is caused by the use of the coordinators *and* and *or* (Kreidler, 1998). It can mean that someone who surely will go is only John that will be accompanied by Marry or Pat. Also, it can mean that John and Mary will go or it is only Pat who will go. Similarly, the second example is also in the surface structure of the sentence caused by a coordinate head with one modifier (Kreidler, 1998). It can mean that those who are old are only men or it can mean that both men and women are old. Meanwhile the third and fourth are in the deep structure of the sentence (Kreidler, 1998). The third example is caused by adjective and infinitive tied to subject or to complement. It can mean the chicken is ready to be eaten or the chicken is ready to eat something. The fourth example is caused by gerund and object or participle modifying a noun. It can means visiting relatives is boring or relatives visiting are boring.

Furthermore, ambiguity has been researched by many researchers before. Those are the work of Ramadani (2015) entitled "Lexical Ambiguity in the Headlines of *The Jakarta Post* Newspaper", the work of Charina (2017) entitled "Lexical and Syntactic Ambiguity in Humor", the work of Bucaria (2004) entitled

"Lexical and Syntactic Ambiguity as a Source of Humor: The Case of Newspaper Headlines", and the work of Khawalda & Al-saidat (2012) entitled "Structural Ambiguity Interpretation: A Case Study of Arab Learners of English". However, the research that focuses on lexical and syntactic ambiguity in EFL learners' text, including narrative texts, has received less attention. This problem leads the writer to conduct this semantics study. Through it, the teachers hopefully are able to assist the learners to write in better ways without any ambiguity as learning semantics means learning how to deliver meanings in more accurate ways without ambiguity (Hurford et al, 2007).

METHOD

Research Design

This study is qualitative study defined by Creswell & Creswell (2018) as a methodology whose researcher is interested in the meaning, process, and comprehension that can be obtained from written or visual information. Also, the data are taken from the actual words of the respondents (Fraenkel et al., 2012). This study additionally employs semantic discourse analysis proposed by Van Dijk (2014). The reason is because this study aims to analyse written documents, namely the EFL learners' narrative texts, using semantic theories. The primary data of this study are five pieces of EFL learners' narrative texts under the various theme that the lecturer has decided before. The learners have to create imaginative stories in their texts on certain topic with the purpose to entertain the readers.

Five EFL learners are selected as the research subjects for the current study. They were selected to take part in this study because researchers favor intensive qualitative research with fewer participants rather than more participants (Mackey & Gass, 2022). With only a few groups of research participants, it should be possible to support the data collection process and ensure proper data collection. Fraenkel et al (2012) mention five procedures of analyzing data. Those are identification of the phenomenon to be studied, identification of the participants in the study, data collection, data analysis, interpretations and conclusions.

Instrument

It must be highlighted that the effectiveness of various procedures depends on the researcher's expertise. This is because the main means of acquiring data in research is the researchers themselves (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). They independently collect data through participant interviews, behaviour observation, and document analysis. The researchers are the ones who actually collect the data, even though they may use a tool. In the context of the current study, data were gathered manually and analysed them using the theories of Kreidler (1998) and Hurford et al (2007).

Data Analysis Procedures

Once the data are gathered, the researcher conducts several steps. All the five narrative texts are analysed by using the semantics theories to reveal the common ambiguity produced by the writers and how those ambiguities affect those five narrative texts. Then, in analysing the data, the writers conduct some steps. Firstly, the narrative texts are broken up into sentences. Second, the writer analyses those data based on the theories that have been explained previously. Then, dealing with homonymy and polysemy, online Cambridge dictionary is used since it is easy to access and recognized as the recommended online dictionary. Finally, the data are categorized into lexical and syntactic ambiguity and explained deeply in paragraphs.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The results reveal that the narrative texts contain some ambiguities. In the first narrative text, there are seven lexical and five syntactic ambiguities found. In the second narrative text, the analysis found five lexical and four syntactic ambiguities. Then, in the third narrative text, there are eight lexical and four syntactic ambiguities. Differently, the analysis found three lexical and ten syntactical ambiguities in the fourth narrative text. Lastly, there are six lexical and one syntactical ambiguities in the fifth narrative text. Some excerpts of the finding are elaborated more below.

(1)   Once upon a time, there are man.

The sentence above is the example of lexical ambiguity as the ambiguous meaning is caused by the word *man* that has interrelated meanings. That is why polysemy is the main cause of this ambiguity. Based on online Cambridge dictionary the word *man* can mean *an adult male human being,* or *the human race*. Both meanings are interrelated because both of them refer to the human who are creatures on earth. However, the ambiguity in the sentence above does not give a significant issue to the readers as the readers can take a look the context of the text, particularly the following sentences. Based on the context, the readers can easily interpret that the real intention of the writer by writing the word *man* is telling *an adult male human being* as story tells about three friends who were going to the forest. This first meaning is acceptable while the second does not seem suitable because the readers will never think that the story is about *the human race*. Therefore, it can be said that the sentence is not ambiguous even though there is one ambiguous word inside it because the meaning is still clear.

(2)   They must meet the old man and woman in the forest.

Syntactic ambiguity occurs in this sentence. This is caused by words that can cluster together in different possible constructions in the surface structure of the sentence. The coordinators *and* in this sentence triggers this ambiguity. The readers possibly interpret that *old* only describes *man,* excluding *woman*. They also likely interpret that *old* refers to both *man* and *woman.* Both of the interpretations are acceptable in this sentence. However, based on the context of the text, the researcher infers that the intention of the writer in this first narrative text is saying *old man* and *old woman*.

(3)   He likes challenging animals.

This second finding is also categorized as the syntactic ambiguity. However, it does not occur in the surface structure. It occurs in the deep structure of the sentence because the ambiguity is caused by gerund that is followed by the object or participle modifying a noun. In the case of this sentence, the gerund *challenging* followed by the object *animals* is the cause of the ambiguous language since it can make the readers to have more than one interpretation. The first possible meaning

is that the readers likely to interpret the sentence as the subject *he* likes to challenge the other animals. Then, the second possible interpretation is that the readers likely to interpret the sentence as the subject *he* likes animals which challenge. Fortunately, the real intention of the writer by writing that sentence is easy to interpret since the context of the text, particularly the preceding and following sentences, give so many clues for the readers to interpret the real intention of the writer. It is clearly that the real intention of the writer is the first meaning, namely subject *he* likes to challenge the other animals.

(4)   So a course was fixed and a start was made.

This sentence is ambiguous because it is represented by words that do not have the interrelated meanings, but the word that have the same sound and spelling with different meaning. It contains ambiguity that is caused by homonymy of the word *course*. Based on the online Cambridge dictionary, *course* can means differently. It can mean *a set of classes or a plan of study on a particular subject, usually leading to an exam or qualification.* It also can mean *an area of land or water used for a sports event.* It means both words have the same sound and spelling, but different meaning, which is the characteristic of homonymy. Like the lexical ambiguities explained previously, the context, particularly the preceding and following sentences, actually helps the readers to interpret the intended meaning of the sentence. The meaning of this sentence seems clear that the writer intends to say that the word *course* represent *an area of land or water used for a sports event* since the story is about competition between the tortoise and the rabbit. However, the writer of the story still have to arrange the sentence carefully so that the intended meaning is clear and the readers can interpret the meaning correctly.

(5)   They must go to England and Italy or Spain.

Syntactic ambiguity occurs in this sentence. This is caused by words that can cluster together in different possible constructions in the surface structure of the sentence. The coordinators *and* and *or* in this sentence triggers this ambiguity. It means it occurs in the surface structure of the texts. The readers possibly interpret

that the writer of the text intends to say that the subject *they* must go to England and Italy or only Spain. Furthermore, the readers possibly interpret that the writer of the text intends to say that the subject *they* must go to England and the subject *they* has another one additional country, Italy or Spain. This circumstance makes the sentence ambiguous. Moreover, the context of the text, particularly the preceding and following sentences, does not give any clues for the readers. Therefore, the readers likely cannot interpret the real intention of the writer clearly. It is because the readers do not get the point of where exactly the characters of the story go. It is to england and Italy, England and Spain, or only Spain. This is why the writers of any text are suggested to write the sentences clearly and they have to arrange the sentences clearly in order to avoid the ambiguous language so that the readers are not confuse to get the real intention of the writers.

    (6)   On the middle of their way, one ant said, "that is mine".

The sentence above is the example of lexical ambiguity as the ambiguous meaning is caused by the word *mine* that has multiple meanings. That is why homonymy is the main cause of the ambiguity because the word *mine* has the same sound and spelling with different meaning. Based on online Cambridge dictionary the word *mine* can mean the *one(s) belonging to or connected with me* or *a hole or system of holes in the ground where substances such as coal, metal, and salt are removed*. Both meanings make the sentences ambiguous as both of them are acceptable in term of the story. Like the lexical ambiguities explained previously, the context, particularly the preceding and following sentences, actually helps the readers to interpret the intended meaning of the sentence. However, in the case of this sentence, both meanings are acceptable and both of them make sense. It means the readers have to interpret the text well since the clue provided by the writer is limited. Based on the context provided by the writer, the word *mine* in this sentence means *the one(s) belonging to or connected with me*. This is also the reason why the writer of the story still have to arrange the sentence carefully so that the intended meaning is clear and the readers can interpret the meaning correctly.

    (7)   He always protect the animals with unique look.

The sentence taken from the fourth text above is the example of syntactic ambiguity. It occurs in the deep structure of the sentence. The ambiguity in this sentence is caused by the additional element of the sentence which is represented by *with unique look.* This makes the sentence ambiguous because the meaning is multiple. The readers possibly will interpret the sentence differently. Some of them likely think that *with unique look* refers to the subject *he*. They interpret that the subject *he* uses a unique look when he protects the animals. Furthermore, some readers possibly think that *with unique look* refers to the object *the animals*. They interpret that the subject *he* only protects the animals that have a unique look. Animals without unique look are not protected. Those are the two possible interpretation made by the readers. However, the context of the sentences represented by the preceding and following sentences gives the readers clues in order to interpret the sentences correctly following the writer's real intention. As far as the readers are good readers, they likely will never interpret that *with unique look* refers to the object *the animals.* They will surely interpret that *with unique look* refers to the subject *he*. They interpret that the subject *he* uses a unique look when he protects the animals since the context mentions the clues. Whatever it is, the readers are still suggested to read the text carefully and the writers are also suggested to write as clear as possible.

(8)   The farmer was mad,

The sentence above is a lexical ambiguity caused by the polysemy. The word *mad* here has several interrelated meanings that possibly interfere the readers. Based on the online Cambridge dictionary, the word *mad* can mean *very angry or annoyed* or *extremely silly or stupid,* even it can mean *mentally ill, or unable to behave in   a reasonable way.*   All the possible meanings are interrelated as they similarly refer to the description of someone. However, the readers actually are not interfered too much by this lexical ambiguity as the preceding and following sentences help them to interpret the intended meaning of the writer. Based on the context, the readers can easily interpret that the real intention of the writer by writing the word *mad* is telling *very angry or annoyed* as story tells about hunters that kill animals that are always protected by the farmers.

That is why the farmer mad or angry. This first meaning is acceptable while the second and thrid do not seem suitable because the readers will never think that the story is about someone who is *extremely silly or stupid, mentally ill, or unable to behave in a reasonable way*. Therefore, it can be said that the sentence is not ambiguous even though there is one ambiguous word inside it because the meaning is still clear. Whatever it is, the readers are still suggested to read the text carefully and the writers are also suggested to write as clear as possible.

(9)   The fox slept under the big tree and sky.

Syntactic ambiguity occurs in this sentence. This is caused by words that can cluster together in different possible constructions in the surface structure of the sentence. The coordinators *and* in this sentence triggers this ambiguity. The readers possibly interpret that *big* only describes *tree,* excluding *sky*. They also likely interpret that *big* refers to both *tree* and *sky*. Both of the interpretations are acceptable in this sentence. However, based on the context of the text, the researcher infers that the intention of the writer in this second narrative text is saying *big tree* and *sky*.

(10)   The moon came and accompanied him.

The ambiguity in the sentence above is caused by the word *accompany*. Based on the online Cambridge dictionary, it *means move to the speakers or listeners*. If the text is academic text, it is not really suitable because the moon that can accompany is something that does not make sense. Since this text is narrative text which is imaginary story because it is a fantasy story (Anderson and Anderson, 1997), this meaning is acceptable. Additionally, the word *accompany* in this circumstance can also refer to *shine all night long*. The reason of the writer to use the word *accompany* instead of *shine* possibly is to use action verb metaphorically to create effective image. The writer also possibly uses that word to create more attractive sentence as ambiguity functions that way. These two possible interpretations possibly interfere the readers to interpret the intended meaning of the writer even though the preceding and following sentences actually give them significant clues regarding the real intention of the writer. Based on the context of

the story, the real meaning of that sentence is that the writer want to tell that the moon shines all night long in a more artistic way.

(11)   Hunting animal was dangerous

From the respondent's narrative text in this study, the aforementioned sentence was taken. This finding falls under the category of syntactic ambiguity. It does not, though, happen in the surface structure. Due to the ambiguity being brought on by the participle modifying a noun, it appears in the deep structure of the phrase. In this instance, the usage of the gerund *hunting* before the object *animal* results in confusing language since it allows for multiple interpretations by the reader. The reader's first probable interpretation of the text is that any animal that can hunt is dangerous. The second interpretation is that the readers are more likely to view the line as meaning that hunting animals is a risky pastime. Fortunately, it is simple to determine what the author really intended when he or she wrote that statement because of how many hints the text's context, particularly the sentences that come before and after it, provides for the readers. It is obvious that the writer meant to convey the second sense, namely that hunting animals is a risky pastime.

(12)   The fox loved disturbing animals

This discovery is additionally labeled as a syntactic ambiguity. It does not, though, happen in the surface structure. Due to the ambiguity created by the gerund that is followed by an object or participle modifying a noun, it appears in the deep structure of the sentence. This sentence has ambiguous language since the gerund *disturbing* is followed by the object *animals*, which gives the reader room for interpretation. The reader's immediate interpretation of the line is that the subject, *the fox*, enjoys disturbing other animals. The second interpretation is that the readers will probably think that the subject of the line, *the fox*, loves animals, which is disturbing. Fortunately, it is simple to determine what the author really intended when he or she wrote that statement because the context of the text, especially the sentences that come before and after it, provides a wealth of information for readers

to do so. It is obvious that the writer's true objective, namely that the subject, *the fox* enjoys disturbing other creatures, is the first meaning.

(13)   The ants used the wood to hide

The lexical ambiguity in the previous sentence was brought on by the polysemy. The word *wood* has a number of overlapping meanings that could confuse readers. The word *wood* can refer to a hard substance that forms the branches and trunks of trees and can be used as a building material, for creating things, or as a fuel, according to the online Cambridge dictionary. It can also refer to a region of land covered in a dense growth of trees. All interpretations are connected to one another. However, this lexical ambiguity does not really cause the readers too much trouble because the sentences before and after it make it clear what the author meant to say. Readers can easily infer from the context that the writer meant for the term "wood" to refer to "a hard substance that forms the branches and trunks of trees." The meaning is still evident, thus even if the statement contains one confusing word, it cannot be regarded to be truly ambiguous. Whatever the case, it is nevertheless advised that readers attentively read the material and that writers write as simply as possible.

(14)   The sun was so alive

The word *alive* is what gives the above sentence its ambiguity. It refers to someone or something which is *living or not dead*, according to the online Cambridge dictionary. The word *alive* can be used to describe anything that is living but the sun is not, thus if the material is academic, it is not really appropriate. This usage is appropriate given that the text in question is a narrative that tells an imaginary story because it is a fantasy (Anderson and Anderson, 1997). Furthermore, in this context, *alive* might also mean *very hot*. The writer may have chosen the word *alive* over *hot* because he or she wanted to employ an action verb to create a powerful image. Given how ambiguity works, it is also possible that the author used that word to make a more appealing statement. Even if the phrases that come before and after this one give readers important hints about the writer's true goal, these two interpretations may make it difficult for them to understand what

the writer really meant. Given the context of the narrative, the underlying intent behind that statement is for the author to express how hot it is in a more creative manner.

Discussions

Ambiguity has a disadvantage because the diverse meanings interfere with one another (Rodd et al, 2004). This looks simple but cannot be underestimated because many conflicts that occur in the community are triggered by misperceptions of language. Conflict in the society is often caused by language contact (Nelde, 1987). Communication often leads to misunderstandings that lead to social conflict. Humans as social beings interact with other people. It is undeniable since they cannot live alone. One of the most important parts of interacting is communicating. Communicating is related very closely with the way of language. Communicating, both spoken and written, is not only expressing the contents of the heart and feelings, but also by using good language rules, one of which is by minimizing language ambiguity. By minimizing language ambiguity, the possibility of misinterpretation will be reduced and the final line is conflict can be avoided.

The discussion above shows how important it is to produce language, both spoken and written, clearly without ambiguous language. Therefore, it is important for EFL learners to understand the importance of avoiding language ambiguity. However, it has been noted that pupils find it challenging to interpret ambiguous structures and typically assume the broad meaning that follows the word order (Khawalda & Al-saidat, 2012). The difficulties on ambiguous languages also is experienced by the respondents of this present study even though the ambiguous language they produced do not fully disturb the meaning of their text.

In many cases, the ambiguity in the text indicates the ability of the writer. The writers with lack of vocabulary knowledge have more possibilities to produce lexical ambiguity. Similarly, those who are lack of grammar knowledge have more possibilities to produce syntactic ambiguity. Kreidler (1998) states the same thing that lexical ambiguity is caused by limited vocabulary resources while syntactic ambiguity is caused by limited grammatical resources. However, the findings of this study show that the ambiguities in the level of lexical and syntactic are not

necessarily caused by limited vocabulary resources and lack of grammar knowledge since the intended meaning of the sentence is actually clear if the readers also involve the context, particularly the preceding and following sentences. Context is used to determine the interpretation of the sentence (Charina, 2017). Griffiths (2006) also says that contextual information clarifies the ambiguities.

Then, narrative text is different with other texts as it has a function to entertain the readers. Through this study, it is found that some words, particularly ambiguous words, are written to fulfil that function, namely entertaining the readers. The example is in the fifth and seventh findings that have been presented above. Also, the fact that the writers of narrative texts often use action verbs metaphorically affects their words choice (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). On the other words, it can be said that the writers often intentionally produce ambiguity to create an attractive sentence (Charina, 2017).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

It can be concluded that, in using language, ambiguity is not avoidable. Ambiguity also has become popular issue in producing language (Khawalda & Al-saidat, 2012). Luckily, ambiguity does not always give a significant problem when the contextual information is involved. The findings of this study is the example. Even though there are some lexical and syntactical ambiguities, the intended meaning of the writers in their narrative texts is still clear when the readers also involve the contextual information, particularly the preceding and following sentences.

Furthermore, this present study gives three types of significances, namely theoretical, pedagogical and practical benefits. Theoretically, the findings of this present study can give the knowledge about ambiguous language and later it can be used as the reference for the future research. Pedagogically, the teachers or lecturers can use the findings to teach the learners. They need to teach and encourage the students to enrich their vocabularies in order they are able to choose the correct vocabulary in delivering messages through writing. The teachers also need to teach and encourage the students to develop their grammar knowledge in order to avoid ambiguity. Both of these steps hopefully are able to develop the students' writing

ability. Practically the knowledge of language ambiguity equips the learners to produce clear language when they communicate with others whether spoken or written.

Lastly, through this study, the writer encourages the other researchers to conduct the other studies dealing with ambiguity and EFL learners to enrich the findings. First, the fact that this study only deal with one text type, namely narrative text, can be a reason to conduct other studies to deal with ambiguity in the other text types, such as exposition, explanation, or even academic text. Secondly, the future studies can also deal with ambiguity in spoken language. Last but not least, the future studies also can enter the EFL classroom to deal with the teaching activity to figure out ambiguity produced by the teachers in explaining certain topic. All of the results from these suggested researches are surely beneficial for every party, particularly teachers and students.

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