

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Language is everywhere. It permeates our thoughts, mediates our relations with others, and even creeps into our dreams. The overwhelming bulk of human knowledge is stored and transmitted in language. Language is so ubiquitous that we take it for granted, but without it, society as we know now is impossible (Langacker, 1968:3).

One of the essence of language is communication. Whereas, the most important function of the language is as a means of communication and interaction. Language is the cement of society, allowing people to live, to play together, to tell the truth but also to tell a lie, or lies (Waraugh, 1977 cited in Meinanda, 1981:9).

Communication without language is nothing. Language is intimately connected with society through its function, which is primarily that of communicating messages from any given individual to one or more others. The human society could not exist without language (Hall, 1967:6).

In order to exchange communication largely, we need mass communication. The term 'mass communication' is often used synonymously with mass media. According to Marion in his book *Broadcasting in America* (McCombs and Becker, 1979:380), the characteristics of mass communication involve large audience, message reproduction, rapid distribution and delivery,

and low cost to the consumers. In other words, mass communication is the spreading of a message to an extend audience through rapid means of reproduction and distribution at a relatively low cost to the consumers.

Mass media are mainly a source of information. However, life without the mass media would not only be pretty dull but it might even be impossible. In modern life, we are all very dependent on mass communication both socially and personally. It means that through the channel of mass communication we can express our opinion and to maintain our social relationship. The news or information can help individuals cope with daily life, can reduce uncertainty and help hold a society together.

There are two types of mass media, printed media and electronic media. The three major kinds of mass media, newspaper, magazines, and tabloids are grouped into printed media, while televisions, radios, and telephones belong to electronic media. These two types of mass media are considered as direct information where people receive from, by reading, listening, or watching the real sources as mentioned above. Printed media supply an unlimited amount of information that is presented in written language. By reading printed media, people expect to get the truth of the information they read.

From the three major kinds of printed media mentioned before, the researcher thinks that newspaper is the most popular and interesting one to be chosen as the subject of the research concerning vagueness in daily life, based on the fact that most people prefer newspaper to magazine and tabloid. Compared with magazine and tabloid, newspaper is preferable due to its

cheaper price, its latest news, its complete information, and its interesting advertisements and entertainment. Vagueness is supposed to be the main topic discussed in this study concerning the fact that many people do not realize the presence of vagueness nor even take it as a problem in their daily life.

To further support this argument, Baddock in *Scoop ! Communication Activities with British and American Newspaper* (1988:1) states that newspaper is a good basic for language study due to its variety of text types, languages, and language styles. Newspapers are considered to be a valuable carrier of news, since they help people share attitudes and understand cultural values and get the great variety of information. Newspaper could also be said as the main daily menu for most people since their presence in society functions not only to convey information, ideas, or opinions, but also to entertain the readers.

One of the essential requirements to be a successful newspaper is that it has to be well written, therefore vagueness or unclear meaning that may cause misunderstanding among the readers needs to be avoided. In order to fulfill these requirements, a newspaper has to be well prepared and organized. More attention should be put on the grammar, diction or word choice and also vocabulary. In addition, a good newspaper should also put more efforts to the most important thing that is the writing of news. It means that a newspaper should be able to write news while conveying information in a complete and clear manner so that misunderstanding could be avoided. If a newspaper is

well written, the information can be well transmitted to the readers, thereby a well understood situation must be created.

On the other hand, if the information is not being communicated in a good manner, misunderstanding or miscommunication might occur. This unwanted situation will drive the readers to a misleading of communication and it is a pity since newspaper becomes one of the printed media that may influence public opinion.

Basically, newspaper is one of the media for communication. It is read by all people with all professions from many different ages. That is why the language used in newspaper should be understandable for them. Moreover, the writer is expected to be able to deliver his message as clearly, coherently, and meaningfully, as possible so that the communication between the reader and the writer will not be disturbed. However, if the communication in both of them is broken down, the readers may misunderstand what the writer is saying. In this case, Genzel (1992:13) stated that the clarity in presenting the message is very important because the audience members will misinterpret the message if they do not understand what is exactly being communicated by the sender. This statement is strengthened by McCombs and Becker (1979:8) who say that the audience members have the ability to misperceive message and distort the message in various ways. Therefore, what they understand can be quite different from what the message was designed to tell them.

Vagueness emerges when the word, the phrase, or the sentence is written

unspecifically. It can also make people confused and have some interpretations of the meaning.

According to Kempson (1977:124), vagueness can be defined as lack of specification. Crystal (1997:17) also states that vagueness permits an unspecifiable range of possible interpretations. In addition, vagueness is a kind of doubtful meaning because it arises in degree of words in either two ways, comparatively and absolutely.

Therefore, the writer is interested in analyzing vagueness found in *Kompas* newspaper. She chooses *Kompas* in consideration that nowadays *Kompas* has become “The King” of daily newspapers, both in its circulation and income of advertisements (Sadono, 1996:12-13)

1.2 Statement of The Problem

1. Is there any vagueness in each news report of the *Surabaya Kita* sub section of *Kompas* newspaper?
2. What types of vagueness are found in *Surabaya Kita* news reports of *Kompas* newspaper?
3. Which type of vagueness is most frequently found in the news reports of *Surabaya Kita* sub section in *Kompas* newspaper?

1.3 Objective of the Study

1. To find out whether there is any vagueness in the news reports of *Kompas* newspaper, especially on the *Surabaya Kita* sub section.

2. To identify what types of vagueness in the news reports of *Surabaya Kita* sub section of *Kompas* based on the theory of Kempson.
3. To find out the type of vagueness that most frequently appears in the news reports of *Surabaya Kita* sub section in *Kompas* newspaper.

1.4 Significance of The Study

In general, the results of this study are expected to provide some benefits for readers of *Kompas* newspaper by giving further understanding about the language of *Kompas* and, in particular, for the students of English Department who are interested in making studies of semantics, especially on vagueness. Hopefully, this study can bring a good input for them.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The writer will limit the study to meaning vagueness found in *Kompas* daily newspaper. The news analyzed is also limited to *Surabaya Kita* sub section only of the edition November 3rd to 8th 2003. She considers that a week edition could represent every edition since the newspaper is managed by a permanent team of editors. Other sections of this newspaper were not included as the data.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

Knowing a language is knowing how to produce and understand sentences with particular meanings. The study of linguistic meaning, called semantics, is

concerned with the meaning of morphemes, words, phrases, sentences, and discourses (Fromkin & Rodman, 1993:164). This study has the framework of semantics. In this case, this study is focused on the theory of vagueness that is proposed by Kempson. The term 'vagueness' can be defined as lack of specification. According to Kempson (1977:124), there are four types of vagueness. They are:

a. Referential vagueness

The meaning of the lexical item is in principle clear enough, but it may be hard to decide whether or not the item can be applied to certain objects.

b. Indeterminacy of meaning of an item or phrase

The meaning of an item seems not clear or not fixed.

c. Lack of specification in the meaning of an item

The meaning is clear but is only generally specified.

d. Disjunction in the specification of the meaning of an item

The meaning involves an "either-or" statement of different interpretation possibilities.

1.7 Method of The Study

The method that is applied in this study is qualitative research. Bodgan (1992:32-33) states that:

Qualitative research is descriptive. The data collected are in the forms of words or pictures rather than numbers. They often contain quotations and try to describe what particular situation or view of the world

as like in the narrative form. The written form of word is very important in the qualitative approach. Qualitative researchers tend to analyze their data inductively. They do not search out data evidence to prove or disprove hypothesis they use before entering the study.

The implication is that the sample, which is going to be obtained, will be described qualitatively because the focus of this study is on the understanding of the context of the data analyzed in finding the issue of vagueness. It does not need to compare variables nor make a hypothesis.

1.7.1 Definition of Key Terms

It is necessary to define the following key terms so that the readers could easily understand the discussion. The definitions are as follows:

1. Vagueness means not clearly expressed or described.
2. News refers to the factual report of a current event.
3. Referential means having reference or connection to.
4. Indeterminacy can be defined as the impossibility of determining, not clearly seen as, or not fixed.
5. Disjunction means an expression of a choice or opposition between 2 ideas.

1.7.2 Population and sample

The writer chose *Surabaya Kita* sub section of *Kompas* daily newspaper as the source of data. This choice was made for purposes of

interest of required materials. In analyzing vagueness, she based only on the types of vagueness proposed by Kempson. The sample was taken from 18 news reports from the total 56 news reports issued from November 3rd up to 8th 2003.

1.7.3 Sampling

In this study, the writer use systematic random sampling and the sampling ratio is 3. She uses this ratio as the interval number, then randomly select number 3 as the initial number. The next number will be 6 ($=3+3$), 9, 12, 15,.....She picks the news of *Surabaya Kita* sub section in *Kompas* newspaper from the list, she has made before, corresponding to those numbers, i.e. title number 3, 6, 9,.....so as to get 18 out of 56 titles.

1.7.4 Technique of Data Collection

Data are very important in this study. Data are used when the writer analyzes vagueness in *Kompas* newspaper . The writer will use several procedures in collecting data. First of all, the writer takes *Kompas* newspaper published on November 3rd-8th 2003. The writer then selects only *Surabaya Kita* sub section on page B and C. After she lists all the news, she gets 56 titles. The writer uses systematic random sampling which every 3rd member is selected, beginning from number 3. Finally, the writer has 18 news to be analyzed.

In short, the procedures are:

1. choosing the population
2. taking the sample
3. making a list
4. selecting the sample for data analysis

1.7.5 Technique of Data Analysis

After doing the data collection, it comes the time to analyze the data. The first thing conducted by the writer was to identify each of the type of vagueness that occurred on the news reports, and then the data are classified according to each type of vagueness in the related to theory which have been mentioned before. For example, which sentences that have referential vagueness, etc. Finally, the classified data are put in certain tables according to the types of vagueness.

So, the steps of data analysis are:

1. identifying the data
2. classifying the data
3. making tables

1.8 Organization of The Paper

The paper is organized into four main chapters .The first chapter is Introduction. It covers 8 (eight) subchapters : background of the study, statement of the problems, objectives of the study, significance of the study,

scope and limitation, theoretical framework, method of the study, and the organization of the paper. The second chapter is Literary Review. It describes arguments, opinions, findings (or related studies) and other sources in the field study. The third chapter is Discussion that presents the findings and explanations of the data analysis. The last, fourth chapter is Conclusion which includes a summary of the results of the study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW