

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Language plays an important role in human's communication. A language has been taught to people for generations. People use language in whatever they do and whenever they get together. To be successful in mastering a language, people could acquire it from their families or learn it in educational places. People acquire their mother tongues when they are babies. Then when going to school, they will learn about the more complicated rules of the language. This phenomenon is also supported by Aarts (1997, p. 256) who points out that the linguistic ingredients of a language is arranged in accordance of a set of rules.

This phenomenon also happens not only in the way people communicate to others, but also in the way advertisements deliver a message. Every advertisement has one essential message that needs to be delivered. Advertisements use language as a crucial medium to deliver certain messages. Ferreira and Dell (2000, p. 177) support this idea by stating that "languages offer some flexibility within their syntactic systems, so that a particular idea can be communicated with distinct configurations of words".

There are many advertisements which use ambiguous sentences or phrases in their taglines. For instance, an advertisement of herbal medicine

called '*Tolak Angin*' uses an ambiguous tagline. Its tagline is '*Orang Pintar Minum Tolak Angin*'. It has two possible meanings, one of which is smart people consume *Tolak Angin* and the other is indigenous medical practitioners consume *Tolak Angin*. Jefkins (1996, p. 96) explains the style of writing a message in advertisements, as follows:

*Penulisan pesan iklan dan kehumasan memiliki dua gaya penulisan yang juga berbeda. Bahkan copy untuk iklan cetak (press advertisement), surat penjualan, selembarnya literature penjualan masing-masing membutuhkan perlakuan yang khusus, walaupun tujuan ketiganya adalah menjual.*

The process of writing an advertisement and public relation are two different processes. Copy for press advertisement, mail of marketing, and a piece of marketing literature even need a special treatment, even though the purpose of three of them is selling.

A sentence may be ambiguous whenever it can be associated with two or more unrelated meanings. Ambiguity can arise in a sentence for a number of reasons (Cann, 1993, p. 23). He also explains the phenomenon of ambiguity can occur because of the sentence pattern itself. In Indonesian, there are some sentence patterns, such as subject (S), predicate (P), object (O) and subject (S), predicate (P), object (O), complement (C). For example, an Indonesian sentence, *Dia membeli baju* has the sentence pattern of subject, predicate and object while another Indonesian Sentence, *Dia membelikan Ibunya baju* has the pattern of subject, prediate, object, complement.

*Dia membeli baju*

S     P     O

*Dia membelikan ibunya baju*

S P O C

*Dia membelikan ibunya baju* has the pattern of subject (*dia*), predicate (*membeli*) and object (*baju*) while another Indonesian sentence, *Dia membelikan ibunya baju* has the pattern of subject (*dia*), predicate (*membeli*), object (*Ibunya*) and complement (*baju*). The meaning of the first sentence is that someone buys a blouse while the meaning of the second sentence is that someone buys a blouse for his mother.

There is no sentence which does not have any pattern. It is because sentences are constructed by words arranged by the rules called sentence patterns. This phenomenon makes sentence patterns a primary part influencing the meaning of sentences. Sakri (1992, p. 76) states that every word in a sentence cannot be replaced by others having different functions without changing its meaning. This means that if the words are placed where they are not supposed to be, they will change the meaning of the sentence.

Ambiguity can be a unique study to conduct. It is because an ambiguous sentence can be associated with two or more related meanings (Cann, 1993, p.23). Moreover, there are many printed Indonesian advertisements which use ambiguous taglines in promoting their products. As a result, the writer intends to do a research about the classification which

concerns on ambiguous taglines in Indonesian written consumer goods advertisements.

## **1.2 Field of the Study**

This research is in the field of Linguistics.

## **1.3 Scope of the Study**

In this research, the writer focuses on the classification concerning ambiguous taglines in Indonesian written consumer goods advertisements as one of the studies in Syntax and Semantics. The writer is going to classify ambiguous taglines that are used in Indonesian consumer goods advertisements based on the theory of Ambiguity explained in theoretical background which is the theory from Kreidler (1998, p. 54-170).

## **1.4 Problem Formulation**

Based on the theory of Syntax and Semantics used as the basic of this research, the writer formulates one main problem as follows:

What are the classifications of the ambiguous taglines used in Indonesian consumer goods advertisements?

### **1.5. Objectives of the Study**

By looking upon the problem stated above, this study's objective can be elaborated as follows:

To find out the classifications of the ambiguous taglines used in Indonesian consumer goods advertisements.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The importance of this study is to learn about the ambiguous taglines particularly in Indonesian consumer goods advertisements. This research will contribute to the study in Linguistics by giving information about ambiguity in printed consumer goods Indonesian advertisements. Through this research, it is expected that the readers can be more critical concerning the types of ambiguity which are lexical, referential and syntactic ambiguity especially in printed Indonesian consumer goods advertisements. Furthermore, it is expected that the results of this study can give contribution to the readers concerning the dominant use of certain ambiguous taglines that may be able to help the readers in conducting further research.

## 1.7 Definitions of Terms

### 1. Tagline

Andy (2004, p.59) describes tagline as the main idea that every ad in the campaign, taken together, is trying to prove or get people to believe.

### 2. Ambiguity

Cann (1993,p.23) explains that a sentence is said to be ambiguous whenever it can be associated with two or more different meanings.

### 3. Consumer Goods Advertisement

is a picture, short film, movie, etc. which tries to persuade people to buy a product or service that satisfies human wants through their direct consumption or use (Jefkins, 1996, p.121).

