

THE ANALYSIS OF AMBIGUITY FOUND IN T.S. ELIOT'S POEMS

THESIS

*Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements to Obtain Bachelor of
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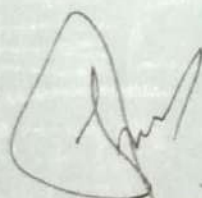
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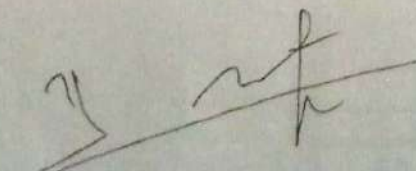
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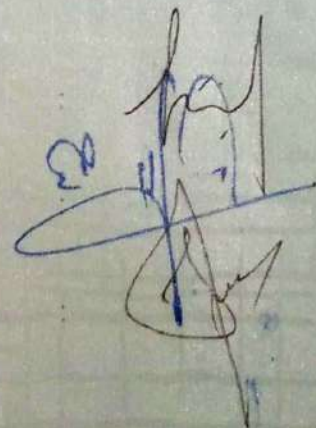
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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to analyze the ambiguity found in T.S. Eliot's poetry. This research was focused on Eliot words such as "The Love Song of J.Alfred Prufrock," "The Hollow Men," "Ash Wednesday," "The Waste Land," and "Gerontion." This research used qualitative descriptive methods to discuss the ambiguity of analysis contained in T.S. Eliot's poetry. The data was analyzed using Katz's (1971) theory of ambiguity. The result found ambiguity divided into three types, namely structural, referential and lexical ambiguity. This research identifies types of ambiguity in the data, then explains how ambiguity occurs in the data. The research results show that lexical ambiguity frequently occurs in T.S. Eliot's poetry rather than structural and referential ambiguity. In this study, phonetic ambiguity was not found in T.S. Eliot's poems.

Keywords: *Ambiguity, Poems, Structural, Referential, Lexical*

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis ambiguitas yang ditemukan dalam puisi T.S. Eliot. Penelitian ini difokuskan pada karya-karya Eliot seperti "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," "The Hollow Men," "Ash Wednesday," "The Waste Land," dan "Gerontion." Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif untuk mendiskusikan analisis ambiguitas yang terkandung dalam puisi T.S. Eliot. Data dianalisis menggunakan teori ambiguitas Katz (1971). Hasilnya menemukan bahwa ambiguitas dibagi menjadi tiga jenis, yaitu struktural, referensial, dan leksikal. Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi jenis ambiguitas dalam data, kemudian menjelaskan bagaimana ambiguitas terjadi dalam data tersebut. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ambiguitas leksikal sering terjadi dalam puisi T.S. Eliot daripada ambiguitas struktural dan referensial. Dalam studi ini, ambiguitas fonetik tidak ditemukan dalam puisi T.S. Eliot.

Keywords: *Ambiguity, Poems, Structural, Referential, Lexical*

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Padang, February 2024

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Problem

Language is a human communication system. It plays a crucial role in shaping how people communicate and coexist. The diverse nature of language facilitates global information exchange, whether through written words describing global events or through verbal and non-verbal expressions conveying thoughts and emotions. According to Sampson (2001:1), language is a communication tool, where individuals organize their thoughts through speaking or writing to ensure mutual understanding.

According to Fromkin (2000:3), linguistics is the study of human language. It examines how languages are structured, how they convey meaning, and how they are acquired and used by individuals and communities. By studying linguistics, we can understand the complexity of language and how language is used in communication.

Linguistics has various aspects related to language, including semantics. Semantics is a crucial subfield of linguistics that examines how context influences the meaning of words. According to Palmer (1981:1), “The technical term used to refer to the study of meaning and since meaning is a part of language, semantics is a part of linguistics” which is meant that Semantic is a technical terminology that concern with study about meaning and because meaning is a part of language so that semantic is a part of linguistics. It elucidates contextual significance, which can sometimes be mistaken for the literal meaning by certain individuals.

Consequently, words, phrases, and sentences can have multiple interpretations, leading to issues of ambiguity.

According to Leech (1981:30), an expression is said to be ambiguous when it can be interpreted in more than one way. Furthermore, Fromkin and Rodman (1983:168-169) also state that a word, phrase, or sentence is considered ambiguous if it can be understood or interpreted in more than one way. From the above quotation, we can simply conclude that ambiguity occurs when a word, phrase, or sentence has more than one meaning.

The importance of studying ambiguity is to reduce any judgments that occur in the field of language where some people study language. They make judgments among themselves that their friend's interpretation is wrong. They simply stick to their own interpretation without considering others' interpretations. Furthermore, they are not aware that linguistics does not consider the correctness or incorrectness of a language. What they should realize is how a language is appropriate or not in its usage.

The analysis of ambiguity in T.S. Eliot's poems delve into the intricate layers of linguistic complexity embedded within his works. Eliot, a key figure in the modernist literary movement, crafted poems such as "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," "The Hollow Men," "Ash Wednesday," "Gerontion," and "The Waste Land," each exhibiting a deliberate and profound use of ambiguity. These instances prompt diverse interpretations, mirroring the internal conflicts and uncertainties inherent in Eliot's characters. The dramatic monologue form employed by Eliot introduces unreliable narrators, inviting readers to discern

between reality and illusion, contributing to the intentional ambiguity that permeates his works. This deliberate ambiguity extends to Eliot's use of symbolism, intertextuality, and allusions, constructing a poetic labyrinth that demands active reader engagement.

The poems were situated within historical contexts, exploring the psyche of characters like Prufrock and the Hollow Men, addressing broader themes of modernity, existentialism, and societal disintegration. In conclusion, Eliot's masterful incorporation of ambiguity invites readers to navigate the intricate layers of meaning, making his works enduring subjects for analysis across literary, cultural, and psychological dimensions. The identified ambiguities, phonetic, structural, lexical, and referential, create complex and profound layers of meaning, illustrating the intricacies of the human mind, existential doubts, and the changing social paradigms of Eliot's era. The intentional obscurity in Eliot's poetry serves to stimulate deep thought and interpretation, allowing readers to actively participate in the meaning-making process, enriching the reading experience and exemplifying the profound challenges and changes of the times Eliot faced.

This research zooms in on the ambiguity inherent in the poetry of T.S. Eliot, a prominent individual in the modernist literary movement. The exploration of Eliot's works, known for their layers of meaning and exploration of human desires and suffering, aims to analyze the types of ambiguity present and how ambiguity occurs in the poetry of T.S. Eliot. The identification, description, and analysis of these ambiguities not only contribute theoretically by expanding the examples of

ambiguity types but also hold practical significance for linguistic students, encouraging a nuanced understanding of word-level ambiguities and fostering open-minded interpretation. Ultimately, this research seeks to enrich the comprehension of language as a subjective and interpretive medium, urging language professionals to appreciate the contextual nature of interpretation within the intricate tapestry of linguistic expression.

There are several studies about ambiguity on the poems to take as a reference. First, Sari (2017) wrote the study entitled “Ambiguity Analysis on Drama Script on William Shakespeare ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream.” This study was conducted to find out the types of ambiguity and how an ambiguity happens in the drama scripts of William Shakespeare ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream. Kristianty (2006) wrote the study entitled “The Structural and Lexical ambiguity found in Cleo Magazine Advertisements.” She identified the kinds of sentences or phrases which are structurally ambiguous and kinds of words are lexically ambiguous. Another study by Nurfadilah (2022), “This study focused on elucidating the syntactic ambiguity present in business headlines published by The New York Times. The objectives were twofold: firstly, to dissect the ambiguity evident within the tree diagram, and secondly, to evaluate the alignment between the headlines and the actual content of the news articles in The New York Times. Then, Aini (2020) This study delves into an instance of ambiguity found within the short stories of Ernest Hemingway.

The difference between this study and previous studies is the object and purpose of the study itself. For this study, the object analyzed is the poetry of T.S.

Eliot, which will be studied based on the type of ambiguity. By conducting this study, the author hopes to provide new information and enrich the analysis of the concept of ambiguity in poetry, especially in the poetry of T.S. Eliot.

The research titled "The Analysis of Ambiguity Found in T.S. Eliot's Poems," needs to be done to see and understand the unique style of poet T.S. Eliot. Eliot's writing style is complex and full of ambiguity, requiring in-depth understanding, especially regarding the ambiguity contained in his poems. Analysis of this ambiguity will not only provide deep insight into Eliot's works but can also enrich the reader's understanding of layers that may be hidden in literary works. This research will make a significant contribution to understanding the concept of ambiguity in literature in general, as well as creating a basis for further understanding ambiguity in contemporary literary works. Through the analysis of one of the leading poets, such as T.S. Eliot, this research is also relevant in the context of modern literature, allowing the connection between classical works and literary issues and questions that are still relevant today. In an attempt to investigate the influence of context on ambiguity, this research reveals how factors such as time, place, and Eliot's personal experiences influenced the formation of ambiguity in his work. Thus, it is hoped that this research can make an important contribution to enriching literary understanding and developing literary analysis methods that can be applied to other literary works.

1.2 Identification of the Problem

Based on the background above, the problems of this research can be identified. Firstly, identifying and understanding the ambiguities present in the poems of T.S. Eliot poses challenges that need to be addressed. Secondly, enhancing the understanding of the ambiguities that arise in T.S. Eliot's poems are necessary to effectively utilize them in improving the overall understanding of poetry. Thirdly, identifying the types of ambiguities in T.S. Eliot's poetry, considering word meanings, phrases, and sentences, is an important aspect to be studied. This research aims to identify and understand the ambiguities in T.S. Eliot's poems and explore how these ambiguities can contribute to a deeper understanding of poetry.

1.3 Limitation of the Problem

Based on the problem identification outlined above, the researcher confines this study to the analysis and exploration of ambiguities found in the poems of T.S. Eliot. This research will focus on methods for identifying ambiguities, understanding the ambiguities that arise, and the various types of ambiguities present in T.S. Eliot's works, with the aim of gaining a deeper understanding of the use and contribution of ambiguity in poetry.

1.4 Formulation of the Problem

Based on the limitations, this study was formulated into: "What types of ambiguity are found in T.S. Eliot's poems, and how does ambiguity occur in his works?"

1.5 Research Questions

The research questions found in this study were:

1. What are the types of ambiguity found in T.S. Eliot's poems?
2. How does ambiguity occur in the T.S. Eliot's Poems?

1.6 Purpose of the Research

Based on the research questions, the purposes of the research were:

1. To identify what types of ambiguity found in T.S. Eliot's poems.
2. To describe how ambiguity occurs in T.S. Eliot's Poems.

1.7 Significance of the Research

Analyzing types of ambiguity in poetry has theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, this analysis contributes to increasing knowledge or understanding of linguistics, semantics and ambiguity studies. So this research can be useful for future researchers. In addition, understanding the types of ambiguity in poetry also provides practical benefits by increasing in-depth understanding of poetry, inspiring and motivating readers, improving communication skills, and increasing appreciation of language arts in conveying messages effectively and aesthetically. Overall, this analysis allows readers to appreciate and deepen the meaning and message contained in the poetry.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

1. Semantic studies refer to the exploration of meanings conveyed by words, phrases, and sentences.
2. Ambiguity in T.S. Eliot's poetry denotes words, phrases, or sentences that offer multiple interpretations, potentially causing confusion.
3. Phonetic ambiguity in T.S. Eliot's poetry refers to words that sound the same but have different meanings.

4. Structural ambiguity in T.S. Eliot's poems occur when a phrase, clause or sentence can be given two or more different interpretations as a result of the arrangement of words (the structure).
5. Referential ambiguity in T.S. Eliot's poems occur when a word or phrase can be interpreted to refer to more than one meaning.
6. Lexical ambiguity observed in T.S. Eliot's poetry refers to the situation where a single word holds two or more potential meanings. This phenomenon is also referred to as semantic ambiguity or homonymy.
7. Poem is characterized as a literary work that employs fluent and meaningful language.