CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

There are many fields of research that people do on humour; one of those fields is linguistics. As Mulder (2002:3) states, humour is a field of research that is done by combining or involving several academic disciplines in an approach to a topic or problem. Yet, Semantics is a part of linguistics field, as Kreidler (2002:3) mentions that the way meanings are organized and expressed by the language are what linguistic semantics is. In addition, Kreidler also mentions that the humour that depends on the double meanings of words or ambiguities found in sentences will find pleasure in jokes (2002:2).

Jokes may be said as something spoken, written, or done, which are intentionally humorous for entertaining. There are several forms of jokes; one of the several forms of jokes is a question-answer. The question-answer jokes are typically posed as riddles, which have usual question and humorous effect in the answer. The answer may attach word play to reach the humorous effect. The word play in the answer usually utilizes the ambiguity in sentence, which may be happened when there is one form of the same written and spoken word that has double meanings as Kreidler stated.

As slightly introduced, what are mentioned by Kreidler as double meanings word that unrelated but has the same written and spoken form (2002:63), which is an approach to find pleasure in jokes may be determined as

homonyms. Relating to Mulder statement, the writer tries to combine the term of homonyms using syntax and semantics approaches, which syntactically defines the syntactic categories of the homonyms and semantically examines lexical relations and associative meanings to apply to humour that is formed as riddles as a problem of this research.

A previous research in this field is entitled *Compound Adjective in The Jakarta Post* by Donna Pradana (2012), the case of the research is how the lexical relations are indicated within the data of hyphenated compound adjectives. Different from the previous research, this research applies the lexical relations that are indicated on homonyms in the riddles. Thus, this research is entitled, "The Homonyms in *Eight Ate: A Feast of Homonyms Riddles*: A Study of Syntax and Semantics"

1.2 Research Questions

To specify the problem, the writer formulates them in the following questions:

1. What syntactic categories are found in homonyms in the selected data in *Eight Ate: A Feast of Homonyms Riddles* by Marvin Terban?
2. What lexical relations are found in the data?
3. What associative meanings are found in the data?

1.3 Objectives

Based on the research questions above, this research tries to find the answers to those questions in the following:

1. To provide the syntactic categories that are found in homonyms in the selected data in *Eight Ate: A Feast of Homonyms Riddles*.
2. To examine the lexical relations that are found in the data.
3. To examine associative meanings that are found in the data.

1.4 Significance to Knowledge

Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the study of syntax and semantics that can be used for further reference, especially dealing with homonyms, syntactic categories, lexical relations and associative meanings.

Practically, the writer hopes that this research is worthwhile in understanding homonyms, syntactic categories, lexical relations and associative meanings for English Department students, especially for English Department student of Indonesia Computer University, language learners and the writer himself in improving their ability in analyzing lexical relations and associative meanings that are applied on homonyms correctly.

1.5 Framework of the Theory

This research focuses on the investigation of the selected data that are found in the homonyms riddles in Marvin Terban's book entitled *Eight Ate: A Feast of Homonyms Riddles* (1982). In analyzing the data, the writer focuses on the meaning relations and the associative meanings occurring in homonyms riddle. To aid the analysis, the writer uses the grand theories of meaning relations and associative meanings from George Yule: 2006 *The Study of Language: Third Edition* and Alice Mwihaki: 2004 *Meaning as Use: A Functional View of Semantics and Pragmatics*, as well as the other theories that the writer uses for supporting the grand theories.

In understanding the term of homonyms, the writer uses the theory from Kreidler (2002:52), which says that the term of homonyms are they pronounce and spell identically but have unrelated meanings. From the term of homonyms, there are other terms that are identical in pronunciation but unrelated spelling, which are homophones. In addition, there are also the terms that are reflecting from the terms of homophones. The terms that are identical in spelling but unrelated pronunciation, they are called homographs.

The writer classifies the data based on the syntactic categories. To define the syntactic categories, the writer uses the theory from Yule (2006:86) that defines syntax as the study of structure and component order among a sentence.

In realizing the lexical relations, the writer uses the theory from Yule (2006:104), which states that the functions of the words are not only fulfilling a

role. They have relationship; it may represent the sameness, the entailment, and even the opposite meaning each other.

Additionally, the theory from Mwihaki (2004:131) is used by the writer to comprehend the associative meaning. She states that:

> *"Associative meaning describes a composite of six modes of language usage, which draw on certain mental connections. Such connections are based on the contiguities of real-world experience rather than the linguistic context."*

Mwihaki has developed the theory from Leech, which composes six types of associative meaning. Meanwhile, Mwihaki only describes four types' associative meanings in her research, which are connotative, social, and affective meanings. She mentions that associative meanings are more defining the meaning of words based on experience than the linguistic context. The descriptions above are illustrated in the following figure:

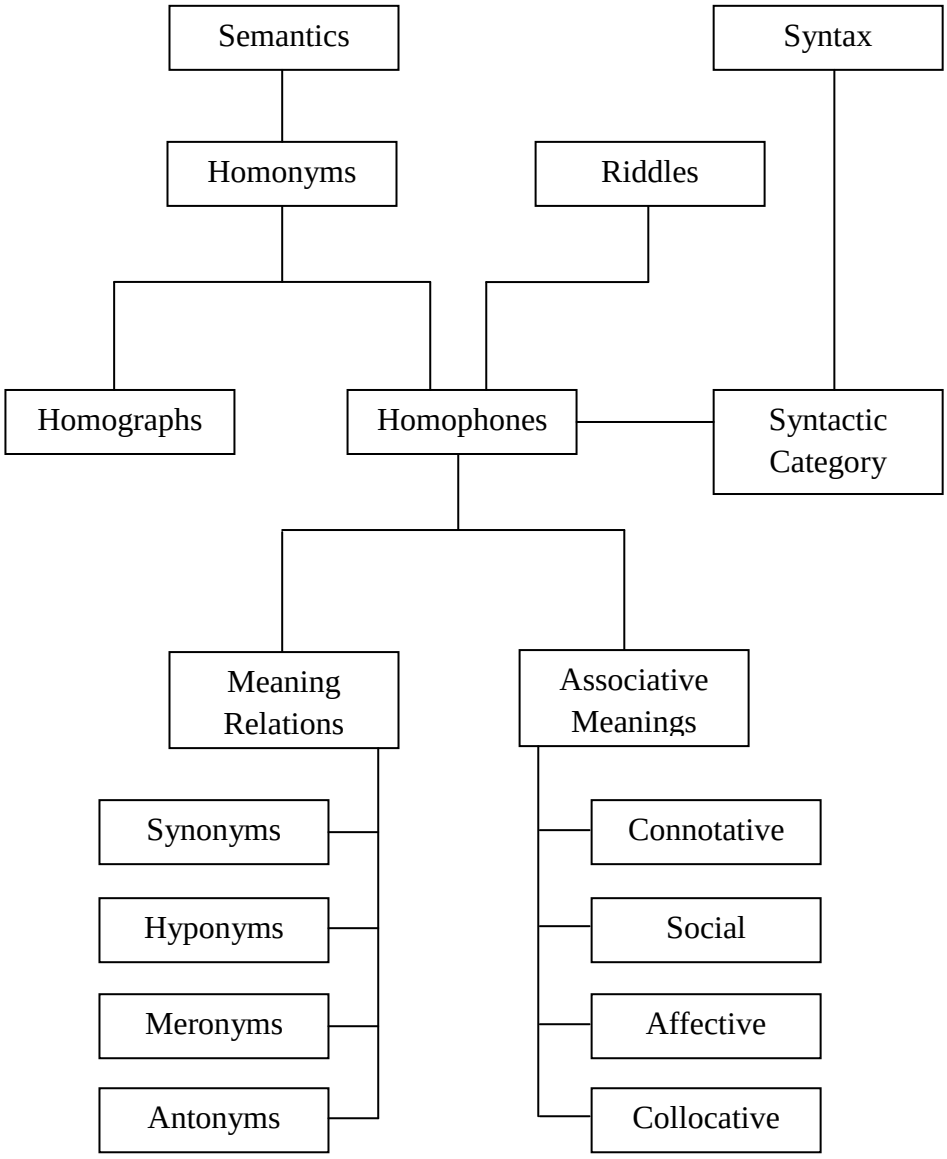


Figure 1.1 Framework of the theory