CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of the research. The background to the study, research questions, objectives, significance to knowledge, and framework of the theories are described.

1.1 Background to the Study

To put language into a concrete form, one needs to undergo a process known as communication. It is an act of transmitting messages which may involve feelings, moods, or attitudes. In it, the one called sender and another receiver − whom later also known as speaker and addressee – are those who involve in performing such a process. The sender or speaker is the one carrying information intended to be transmitted to the targeted receiver or addressee. In the speaker's perspective, such a carrying information is an intention he or she expects to be communicative as he or she communicates with the targeted addressee. When the intention of factual or propositional information the speaker transmitted has been successfully reached − either that the addressee knew or believed that such an information was a fact – accordingly, it turned out meaningful or communicative for the speaker. Meanwhile, what is meaningful for the addressee is when he or she has succeeded to catch the value or significance of the transmitted information or message. Lyons (1977: 4)

thereupon said that such an attainment is meaningful or informative for the addressee.

Essentially, one uses sentence to deliver information. What appears in sentence is a construction of words. These words embody the meaning of their own. It is defined in the chapter 2 of *Introducing English Semantics* that: ”*The meaning of a sentence is determined by the language, something known to all people who have learned to use that language; It is the meanings of the individual words and the meaning of the syntactic construction in which they occur*.” (Kreidler, 1998: 27) That is to say, it is one way to determine how the addresse picks up value or significance of the information delivered. Though, there is another value or significance making which allows one to pull up and then select one over many possibilities which turns out true called proposition. Similar as sentence, proposition is expressed by sentence. The distinction lies in the notion that proposition delivers one information in different sentences and only one intention generated through many presuppositions denoting facts stored in one's memory or brain of the information delivered (Lyons, 1977; Kreidler, 1998).

Moreover, the propositions formed in both the speaker's and addressee's mind represent the state of knowledge or belief. Through these states, the goal of communication is then to combine and befit such former stored ideas. However, this will likely result ambiguity. Ambiguity is a common occurrence in communication − suggesting that it is such a rarity nowadays to communicate straightforwardly. Linguistically, it is a multi-interpretations making as a result of multi-interpretable linguistic forms (Lyons, 1977: Kreidler, 1998).

Sources of ambiguity are arguably caused by the multiplicity of language compositions. There is a term called zeugma that is according to Johnson (1991: 426) is "*the use of a word, often a verb, in two senses*." In a much broader sense, the term zeugma is a part of rhetorical figures; and what it means by rhetoric is defined by Burton (2007) as how language is effectively used both in speaking or writing, and the sense generated is likely beyond what is communicated.

Following that, there are, in fact, three previous studies found focusing on zeugma. The first one is entitled "*Literal and figurative meaning: a cognitive treatment of zeugma as a stylistic strategy in The Shadow of the Wind*", a research conducted by Gonzalo Calle Rosingana (2013). The object of the study is the zeugma in Carlos Ruiz Zafón's novel "*The Shadow of the Wind*" that discusses correspondences between the literal and figurative meanings contained in a single symbolic unit.

The second one is entitled "*Syllepsis and Zeugma in Obama's Speech: A Stylistic Analysis*" written by Retno Octaviani (2012). It is focused on the analysis of stylistic based on syllepsis and zeugma in Obama's speech.

Lastly, the third one is entitled "*Linguistic Lightbulb Moments: Zeugma in Idioms*" written by Kramer Undine (2006) whose focus is describing as well as explaining some aspects − types, structural and semantic properties, and effects of zeugmatic constructions involving idioms.

It can be inferred that the previous three studies are all focused on the mere conceptual understanding of zeugma with some providing elaborate aspects related thereto. However, none of them discuss zeugma in relation to ambiguity. As inferred

from Lyons (1977: 404-409), some zeugma are likely to be grammatically ambiguous. For instance, a sentence, "*We heard your voice and him slam the door."* (Lyons, 1977: 405) is structurally a zeugma. The verb *heard* governs the object noun phrases *your voice* and *him slam the door* respectively. However, there is ambiguity lies in this zeugmatic construction as to whether one would interpret that the subject *we* heard (1) your voice − without indication that the object noun phrase *your voice* has something to do with the verb phrase *slam the door* in which the verb is uninflected, and (2) him slam the door; or (1) your voice slam the door and (2) him slam the door.

The above example is thus served as, but not the only, model of ambiguous zeugmatic construction. By that, this research attempts to further examine the zeugma by identifying the syntactic features involving zeugma and the resulting ambiguity. In doing so, not only this research is expected to provide conceptual understanding as well as aspects related to zeugma but also, as an addition to the previous studies, attempts to examine the ambiguity by analyzing the meanings which are encoded in the zeugma.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the given background to the study above, the research questions in this research are as follows:

1. What are the syntactic features found in the zeugmatic constructions?
2. What are the ambiguous meanings resulting from the zeugmatic constructions?

1.3 Objectives

Based on the given research questions above, the objectives in this research are as follows:

1. To identify the syntactic features found in the zeugmatic constructions.
2. To identify the ambiguous meanings resulting from the zeugmatic constructions.

1.4 Significance to Knowledge

This study will practically assist the writer, in particular, and many English learners especially those who are non-native-English, in general, to have better understanding regarding language ambiguity. Theoretically, the resulting findings of zeugma in relation to ambiguity are expected to make a contribution especially in scholarly linguistic research focusing on the use of the rhetorical figure that is zeugma.

1.5 Framework of the Theories

There are several theories which are relevant and thus used in supporting both the analysis, arguments, or hypothesis throughout this research. The fundamental theory is from Lyons' *Semantics* book (1977) whose explanations about grammatical ambiguity are widely considered to be the brainchild in conducting this research though it appears that the ambiguity found in this research is not of grammatical, structural, or syntactic ambiguity only.

Another source used to support Lyons' theory is Charles W. Kreidler's *Introducing English Semantics* (1998). Both Lyons' and Kreidler's theories on semantics are mutually used to generate a much better notion of the cases being discussed.

Essentially, both Lyons (1977) and Kreidler (1998) divide language ambiguity into two groups, lexical and syntactic ambiguity. In addition to lexical and syntactic ambiguity, there is also another element resulting ambiguity, that is, tropes. Tropes or language figures such as metaphor, metonym, allegory, and paradox to name a few which embody non-literal meaning are likely to cause multilayers of interpretations especially when they are widely used in literature. The ambiguity then is such an unavoidable matter in reading literature. Quiroga-Clare (2003) mentions about those aspects in her journal entitled *Language Ambiguity: A Curse and A Blessing*.

Besides semantics, this study also uses Jim Miller's *An Introduction to English Syntax* (2002) alongside Quirk and et al's *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English* (1985) and Benner's *Self Teaching Unit: Parallel Structure* (2006) as the fundamental syntactic approach in further explaining as well as relating the structural concept of zeugma. Since zeugma could appear in constructions such as phrases and clauses, syntactic theory regarding both aspects are then pivotal to strengthen the analysis.

For the zeugma, several sources are taken as the basis to explain zeugma deeply. They include Burton (2007), Croft and Cruse (2004), and Hall (2005). As inferred from the three theorists mentioned, zeugma can by all means be simply identified as

a coordination structure which embodies parallelism and ellipsis with its meaning generating (though not always) two or more senses or stating several ideas within one single construction.

Below is the framework of the theories which the writer concludes based on how the writer sees the problem involving ambiguous zeugmatic constructions as seen from syntactic and semantic viewpoint. The writer applies several theories such as Burton (2007), Croft & Cruse (2004), and Hall (2005) in discussing about zeugma; Miller (2002), Quirk and et al (1985), and Benner (2006) in discussing about syntactic aspects involving zeugma; and Lyons (1977), Kreidler (1998), and Quiroga-Clare (2003) in discussing about semantic ambiguity involving zeugma.

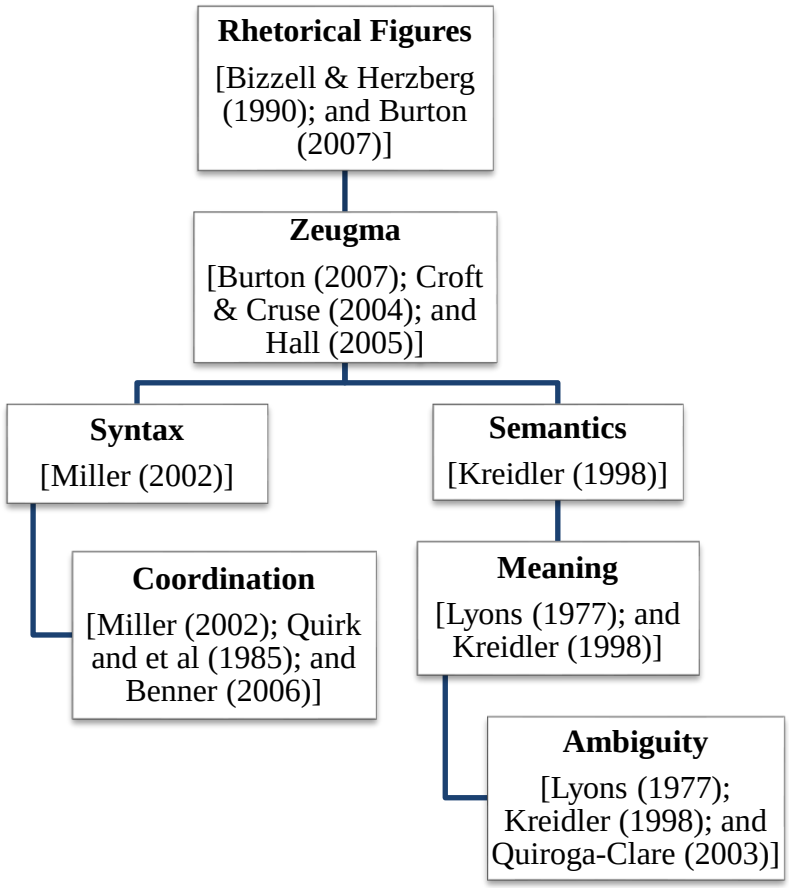


Figure 1. Framework of the Theories