

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Research

Language is a very important aspect in the life of human beings. People all over the world cannot avoid uttering language. Through language, people can communicate and interact with each other within certain communities. The existence of language is also so much helpful for people so that they can express their mind to the others. Language marks the very difference of human beings, contrasted to animals. Indeed, such communications in the shape of words and utterance do only belong to human. Otherwise, animals cannot be said to have a system of communication, but they merely interact with each other using basic instinct so as to make relationships.

Wardhaugh (1972: 3) states that “language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbol used for human communication.” It means that the most important part from the definition of language is communication. Communication is always related with language, even it is often considered that language is a tool of communication, because the most principle sign system in human communication is language. Thus, people can communicate with each other.

Pei (in Alwasilah, 1993: 45) argues that language is “a system of communication by sound, i.e. through the organs of speech and hearing, among human beings of a certain group or community, using vocal symbols possessing arbitrary conventional meaning.” Language, thus, is a combination

of sounds, which are systematically produced by speech organs within human bodies. Therefore, the system of language is as so much important as is its function.

Language, according to Sapir (in Saeed, 1997: 42), is “a guide to social reality.” Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. Human beings, as social creatures, will never be separated from social interaction with its environment, especially to fulfill their needs. Right in this spot, language has its role as a media to communicate with each other.

It will surely be impossible to create a communication without language. Human beings in their life make communication, each to the other, in a community to convey messages, expressions, feelings, and emotions. This means that, through language, people are able to express their wills and desires.

Language will always obviously exist whenever and wherever people live. Primarily in the modern era, where the development of science and technology is in rapid progress, language has as well to make itself fully developed. This is because, within the last century, language has been studied in the scientific way, through comprehensive observation. This situation forces language to expand and to cover a greatest scope. Language is now not only

the simple media of conveying ideas in simple conversation, but also a basic system for technology.

Recent terms emerge and flourish in various fields of science and technology. However, unfortunately not all terms or words can lexically be translated to reveal their meanings according to the standard dictionary commonly used in daily life. In comprehending science and technology, it is then clear that people have to see the word meanings more deeply in order to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation.

One of the developed fields of technology is the world of computer. Computer, according to Hunter (1985: 3), is “an electronic device used to store, process, and analyze data, or to solve mathematical calculation. Moreover, Fry (1982: 89) states that computer is “any machine which can accept data in a prescribed form, process the data and supply the result of the processing in a specified format as information or as signals to control automatically some further machine or process.”

All of this shows the importance of computer in the present day of human civilization. Various computers are increasingly used to assist various tasks. For instance, computer is so much needed by advertisers, governments, institutes, schools, and colleges, all of which use it to process data in doing their business or duties. Therefore, as the product of high technology, computer requires special of particular commands to operate. English language used in computer is not in common with ordinary language.

Compared to daily utterance, there are various terms or words having different referred meanings in computer language.

Any attempt to understand the computer language in its operating system requires the mastery of semantic field. In this context, the research about the meanings of computer terms in computer language would be so much helpful, at least to remind people that each term has certain meaning which is particularly suitable only in certain contexts.

The elaboration of word meaning in English, precisely in the case of computer language, will lead to the study of meaning, which is widely known as semantics. As an instance, this sentence would be valuable to help comprehending this discussion: *as a precaution, your active desktop has temporarily been turned off*. The word *desktop*, in the context of computer language, is a screen of work that uses icon and menu to stimulate the surface of table. Thus, first of all, people have to understand which one of the exact meanings is needed.

Here people can find a somewhat different sense of the word *desktop*, compared to its ordinary understanding. This case undoubtedly indicates an assuring fact that computer has its own unique features of English language. In other words, the world of computer has created its own language.

Understanding and determining the meaning of a particular term in computer language is exactly a little bit hard task. This becomes the starting point from which the researcher has a great interest to analyze and to discuss

computer terms and their meanings. There are a lot of words which have the same writing and pronunciation but possess different meaning. Here exists the role of homonymy and polysemy. All of these problems are analyzed referring to English dictionary, in light of the operating system and application program contained in a computer.

Based on the above consideration, this research focuses on computer language and analyze the meanings of computer terms based on semantic analysis. This research is therefore entitled *The Computer Language and Its Terms*.

B. Statement of Problem

The problem of this research is formulated into such questions as follows:

1. What is the meaning of computer language?
2. What terms are commonly used in computer language?
3. What are the meanings of the computer terms?

C. Purpose and Significance of Research

The purpose of this research is divided into such points as mentioned below:

1. To understand the meaning of computer language.
2. To know the common terms in computer language
3. To comprehend the meanings of the computer terms.

The significance of the research lies on two foundations. *First*, for the researcher, this research gives a chance to apply what the researcher knows about language and to develop the ability of mastering English, precisely computer language. *Second*, for the reader, this research is expected to be a helpful source in comprehending computer language and its terms.

D. Conceptual Framework

This research highlights computer language and its terms based on semantic analysis, because it is evidently true that computer terms have been undergoing semantic change, differed from their original meanings. Bloomfield (1964: 125) emphasizes that “semantic change is innovation which changes the lexical meaning rather than the grammatical function of a form.” This indicates that language is able to experience a change of meaning in any certain condition. In the context of this research, semantic change is closely related to the increasing vocabularies connected to science and technological development, especially to the use of English in computer.

In comprehending computer language, Malinowski & Firth (in Robin, 1964: 27) proposes a little theory called “context of situation.” This is a means of explaining the working language in society. Malinowski indeed lead to the framing of his theory of context of situation in working on the translation into English of keywords and sentences that can bring into multiple relations with the relevant components of the environment.

Another statement about context of situation is suggested by Chapman.

Chapman (1973: 66) writes that “a unit which most people would think of as ‘one word’ may result a number of meanings, by association with certain contexts.” In other words, a word has many meanings suitable to the context and its application. The meaning of a word thus truly depends on the situation. If one word can arbitrarily be interpreted, the situation is possibly unstable.

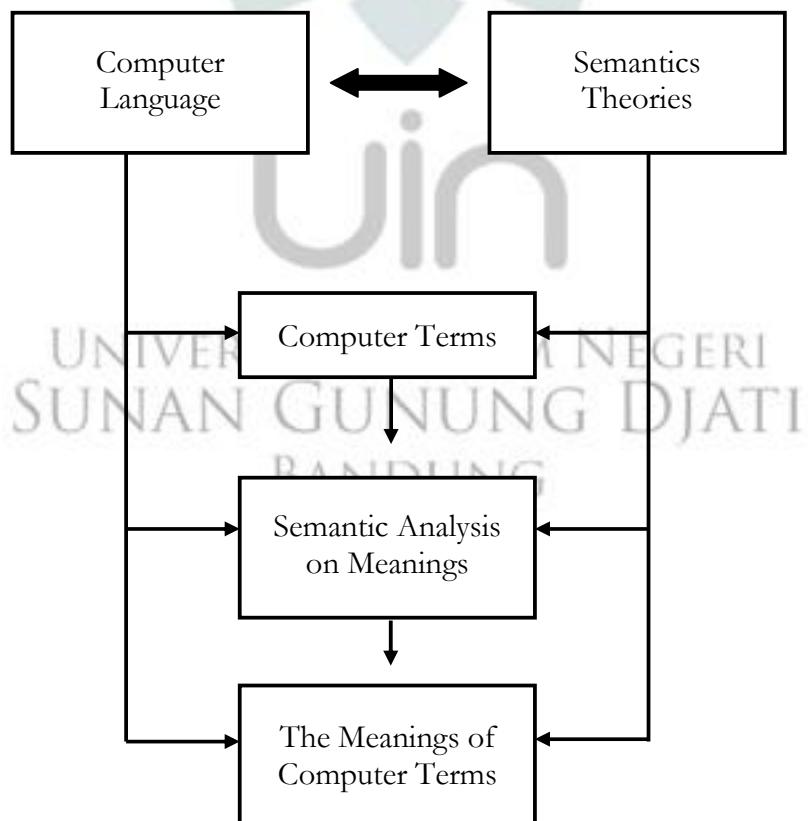
To give a simple case, people can look at ESP (English for Specific Purpose). Hutchinson (1987: 13) explains that “ESP uses *target situation analysis* in which the learner will use the language they learn.” Afterwards, the course of ESP designs a process which should be proceeded by identifying the target situation and then carrying out a rigorous of the linguist features of that situation.

In a particular language, the meaning of words and phrases is not determined by their sounds and written forms, but by their significance in various contexts. Such a condition of multiple meaning is called *polysemy*. For example, in the context of computer language, people can read this sentence: *cannot find the file or one of the components, make sure the path and the file name are correct and that required libraries are available*. Here the underlined word, *libraries*, according to computer language, is routine collection in the programming to put on the file. Basically, this definition is somewhat similar with *libraries* in daily language, a place used to put books and records. Thus, the meanings of

the word *libraries* in computer language and in daily language have a kind of functional relationship.

It is eventually clear that semantic analysis upon computer language requires discussing the semantic change. This is because semantic analysis, as asserted by Hudson (1984: 69), “consists of making explicit about the relationship between each word and the other words of language, and also their relations toward the outside of the language.” This proves the necessity of semantic analysis to adapt suitable relation among the analyzed words.

To make this research easier to understand, the analysis is schemed as below:



E. Procedure of Research

This research is conducted based on the following procedure:

1. Method of Research

This research uses descriptive method. Seliger & Shohamy (1989: 24) states that descriptive method is “a collection of technique used to specify, delineate, or describe naturally occurring phenomena without experimental manipulation.” The researcher analyzes the terms and command words in computer language without doing such a manipulation.

2. Data

The data used in this research is the qualitative one, taken from any source featuring computer language and all of media containing computer terms.

3. Source of Data

In this research, computer and any media about computer, or any source containing computer terms, are the sources of data. These sources are also completed with written references relevant to the theme of this research.

4. Technique of Collecting Data

- a. Exploring written sources containing computer language and its terms and exploring computer media itself.
- b. Reading written references about semantic analysis, precisely those related to semantic change in comprehending certain terms in certain fields, in this case computer language.
- c. Verifying the computer language and its terms.

5. Data Analysis

The data analysis is conducted through such steps as below:

- a. Identifying computer language and its terms. Computer language is a help language to determine the instructions to be done by computer. A computer can carry out and finish a task completely when it is given instruction step by step. To be effective, the computer and the user need to understand a common language.
- b. Classifying the terms to be analyzed and interpreted. For this, learning computer programming, need with high level language and low level language. These languages have been designed to be relatively easy for them to understand.
- c. Concluding the analysis. In linguistic perspective, there is a change of word meaning after the word is transformed to the computer language. Here people can find the existence of homonymy and polysemy in computer language such as machine-oriented languages: assembly language and machine code.

F. Organization of Writing

The writing of this research is organized into four chapters. The first one is *Introduction*. This chapter consists of background of research, statement of problem, purpose and significance of research, conceptual framework, methodology, and organization of writing.

The next chapter is *Semantics and Computer*. This chapter consists of discussions about semantics and a brief review about computer. The discussion of these issues is firstly needed to be the theoretical foundation in this research.

The third chapter is *The Computer Language and Its Terms*. This chapter discusses the computer language and interprets the meaning computer terms. This chapter is presented in three subchapters. The first deals with how the computer language has recently been developing itself rapidly with its unique features, the second talks about the most common terms used in computer language, and the latter explores the meanings of the computer terms.

The final chapter is *Conclusions and Suggestions*. This chapter concludes the whole analysis and gives suggestions.

