

**THE STUDY OF LEXICAL AND SYNTACTIC AMBIGUITY IN PUNS POSTED BY
@THE.LANGUAGE.NERDS ON INSTAGRAM**

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Abstract

Pun– also known as paronomasia, a humorous play on words, is one of language phenomenon that has been used ubiquitously. A lot of people have been using puns to create humor by utilizing the ambiguity that inherent in them. Thus, this research aimed to identify the ambiguity both lexical and syntactic ambiguity in puns, which was the prerequisite of puns themselves. By using qualitative descriptive research, the researcher took the data from an Instagram account that heed of language matters, called @the.language.nerds and analyzed the data by categorizing and interpreting the interpretations that exist in them. Out of 20 data in total, the researcher found 15 lexical ambiguity and 5 syntactic ambiguity in the puns posted by @the.language.nerds on July 2nd, 2021 – December 4th, 2022. The results showed that the puns that contained lexical ambiguity were commonly used as the language tools to create the humor than syntactic ambiguity. The results also showed the different interpretation of meanings contained in each pun is the cause of the humorous sense of puns.

Keywords: *ambiguity, lexical ambiguity, paronomasia, pun, stylistic, syntactic ambiguity*

INTRODUCTION

The era of industry 4.0 or also known as the era of digital technology advancement, has led some impacts to various aspects of life, including languages. One of the phenomena is the appearance of some accounts discussed about language matters on social media. They appear on various social medias, i.e. Instagram, twitter, Facebook, and many others. @the.language.nerds, is one of the accounts that heeds of language matters on Instagram. The account itself strives to entertain and inform people who are passionate about languages and linguistics. Having 1.5M followers now, the account has been posting various topics related to languages, such as language history, language difference, grammar, language memes, puns, and so forth.

This paper, however, would focus to discuss about puns, that @the.language.nerds has been posting. Pun is one of language phenomenon that has been used ubiquitously. A pun itself is defined as a linguistic occurrence in which the whole meaning of the text must be grasped by making reference to a different set of sounds, words, and phrases that may or may not be the same as the first set by Attardo (2018). Yi-Bo (2015), on the other hand, has defined the word ‘pun’ first in simpler words as a humorous play on words that have two or more meanings. From what Attardo (2018) and Yi-Bo (2015) state about pun, it can be concluded then that pun is a kind of linguistic occurrence in a form of wordplay that arise due to two or more meanings that inherent in it. In addition, the two or more meanings to create humor in puns is called ambiguity.

To begin with, Giorgadze (2014) states precisely that ambiguity is a feature of language that

occurs when words, phrases, or sentences have more than one meaning. It can be denied that some people will find it difficult to determine the true meaning that is conveyed by those words, phrases, or sentences because they can be employed in a variety of circumstances due to ambiguity. In the case of puns, ambiguity allows more than one or multi interpretations to the addresses by confusing the meanings and giving different comprehensions to them. Those confusion and the different comprehensions subsequently will lead to humorous sense. As a matter of fact, a lot of people have been using puns to create humor by utilizing the ambiguity that inherent in them.

In order to create the humorous sense in puns, there are two types of ambiguity that commonly used: lexical ambiguity and syntactic ambiguity (Charina, 2017). According to Hurford et al., (2007), lexical ambiguity or also known as semantic ambiguity, is any ambiguity resulting from the ambiguity of words. The elements of lexical ambiguity are homonymy and polysemy. Kreidler (2013) defines homonymy as any words with the same pronunciation but different meanings that are unrelated. Meanwhile, polysemy, according to him, are any words with the same pronunciation but different meanings that are related. Those two elements are the devices to create lexical ambiguity. On the other hand, syntactic ambiguity or also known as structural ambiguity happens when sequence of words may have more than one interpretation caused by the rules of sentence construction.

Lexical and syntactic ambiguity themselves appear as phenomenon that are able to be analyzed in several approaches of study. One of the approaches that might be utilized to view ambiguity is stylistics. As a matter of fact, stylistics observes the study of style in language and can be applied to both literary and non-literary texts (Jeffries & McIntyre, 2010). And puns are one of the object that can be observed in stylistics. The pun, which is essentially an accidental link between two linguistic parts, enables a controlled 'double meaning' to be identified in what is key part of the stylistic arsenal of writers (Simpson, 2004). It is, however, a linguistic resource that we all share, and it is critical not to separate literary uses of language from ordinary language practices. And by this, it is clear to see how puns and ambiguity are related in stylistics.

One of the study of lexical and syntactic ambiguity is done by Fitri (2019) who analyzed lexical and syntactic ambiguity in the headline of CNN. This study focuses on types of lexical and syntactical ambiguity found in headlines of CNN. Fitri (2019) also concerns about the most frequently ambiguity used in the headlines of CNN. By using descriptive qualitative method and Saeed and Kreidler's theory, she found 17 lexical ambiguity which consist of 2 homonyms, 8 polysemy, 1 synonym, and 6 antonyms and 11 syntactic ambiguity which consist of 10 surface ambiguity and 1 deep structure ambiguity. Therefore, the most frequently ambiguity found in the headlines of CNN is lexical ambiguity.

Above and beyond, Jannah (2021) also did a research about lexical and syntactic ambiguity in the business news of BBC News. She intended to find out the types of lexical and syntactic ambiguities found in the business news of BBC News and describe how they apply in in the business news of BBC News. The results showed that there are 27 lexical ambiguity which consist of 10 homonyms, 8 polysemy, and 9 figurative sense; and 10 syntactic ambiguity.

This paper, eventually, contains similarity and difference with the previous studies. The topic of this paper– ambiguity, has the same focus with the previous studies. The object, on the other hand, is different from the previous studies. If the objects of the previous studies are from the news, this paper has puns as the object of the research. As one of the language phenomenon nowadays, it is valuable to analyze puns by understanding the ambiguity that create them. The ambiguity that creates puns, once again, will give multi interpretations by confusing the meanings and giving different comprehensions in order to create the humor. Therefore, it is important to differentiate the ambiguity that the puns contain, whether it is lexical or syntactical ambiguity to fully understand the meanings of them. Thus, this research aims to identify the style patterns of ambiguity that is used in creating puns by [@the.language.nerds](#) on Instagram, which is the prerequisite of puns themselves. This research also attempts to find the difference interpretation of meanings contained in each puns. Finally, this paper is expected to provide new information

about the correlation between puns and ambiguity.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

LEXICAL AMBIGUITY

Lexical ambiguity, according to Hirst (1992), is the ambiguity that creates the unique meaning of words in relation to the frame or script that represents an already-established or newly-established context. In simpler way, Hurford et al. (2007)) later on depict lexical ambiguity as any ambiguity resulting from the ambiguity of words. Kreidler (2013) has the same thought about this. He states that lexical ambiguity occurs when two homonyms can occur in the same place in an utterance. And by that, he means that homonymy is a vital element of lexical ambiguity. Homonymy, according to Kreidler (2013), is the term for words whose sound and spelling are the same but whose meanings are unrelated. Homonymy itself includes homographs and homophones. Homographs are senses of the same written word (Charina, 2017). Or, in simple words, homographs are words that have different pronunciations or sounds with the same spelling. Homophones, on the other hand, are words that have the same pronunciations or sounds with the different spellings. Besides homonym, Kreidler (2013) also mentions that polysemy is also an element of lexical ambiguity. Polysemy, according to him, are any words with the same pronunciation but different meanings that are related, in contrast with homonymy. It is clear that the difference between homonymy and polysemous words are on the meanings of the words, whether they are unrelated (homonymy) or related (polysemy).

SYNTACTIC AMBIGUITY

Syntactic ambiguity or also known as structural ambiguity, besides, happens when sequence of words may have more than one interpretation caused by the rules of sentence construction (Kreidler, 2013). Having the same thought of this, Ovu (2011) states that syntactical ambiguity occurs when no individual word is uncertain but rather when there is a structural relation inside the sentence. And by those, we can infer that when a phrase or sentence has more than one underlying structure, syntactical ambiguity is present.

Into the bargain, Kreidler (2013) mentions that there are two types of syntactic ambiguity. The first type is called surface-structure ambiguity. Kreidler (2013) declares that surface structural ambiguity occurs when words group together to form various potential constructions. He then divides surface structure into six types, which are (1) constructions containing the coordinators and – or; (2) a coordinate head with one modifier; (3) a head with coordinate modifier; (4) a head with inner modifier and outer modifier; (5) a complement or modifier or two complements; and (6) certain function word, including not, have possible differences in scope.

The second types of syntactic ambiguity is called deep structure ambiguity. Deep structure ambiguity is a condition where there can be more than one interpretation of a particular word sequence because ellipsis, or the deletion of something that is understood, is permitted by the rules of sentence formation (Kreidler, 2013). This type of syntactic ambiguity is divided into two types by Kreidler (2013), namely (1) gerund followed by object or participle modifying a noun, (2) adjective followed by infinitive, tied to subject or to complement, and (3) ellipsis.

METHOD

This research was conducted by using descriptive qualitative research design to analyze lexical and syntactic ambiguity found in puns posted by an Instagram account that heeds of language matters namely @the.language.nerds. Descriptive research, as defined by Sukardi (2011), is a research method that aims to characterize and understand objects in light of the existence of the research. This research used descriptive qualitative research since the data of the research are in form of puns (words, phrase, sentences) that contain lexical and syntactic

ambiguity which need to be described, classified, and evaluated.

The object of this study are the contents, puns to be specific, posted by an Instagram account that heeds of language matters namely @the.language.nerds. Thus, the data that are analyzed in this research are puns posted by @the.language.nerds on July 2nd, 2021 – December 4th, 2022. There are 20 data in total that the researcher took. The data are analyzed by categorizing them based on Kreidler’s theory, analyzing the data that have been categorized to find what interpretations that inherent in them, and drawing conclusion based on the research findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this part, the researcher provides the findings of 20 data of puns that are posted by @the.language.nerds on July 2nd, 2021 – December 4th, 2022.

Table 1.
The Frequencies of Types of Lexical and Syntactic Ambiguity in Puns Posted by @the.language.nerds

No.	Types of Ambiguity	Elements	Occurance
1.	Lexical Ambiguity	1. Homonymy	15
		2. Polysemy	0
	Total of Lexical Ambiguity		15
2.	Syntactic Ambiguity	1. Surface Structure Ambiguity	3
		2. Deep Structure Ambiguity	2
	Total of Syntactic Ambiguity		5

Based on the table above, lexical ambiguity appears in data 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20. The data contain lexical ambiguity which are in form of homonyms, not any is in form of polysemy. While syntactic ambiguity appears in data 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14. Data 10, 11, and 12 are in form of surface structure ambiguity, and the rest of them, which are data 13 and 14 are in form of deep structure ambiguity.



Figure. 1

- 1) “The sun doesn’t have to go to college because it already has 28 million degrees.”

(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CYltZeC1c7h/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

This pun is created through lexical ambiguity which appears in the word ‘degrees’. The word ‘degrees’ is homonym— any words whose sound and spelling are the same but whose meanings are unrelated. In this pun, the word ‘degree’ has two meanings. The first meaning is degree as in temperature. And the second one is degree as in the degree title. It is clear that both meanings are unrelated.



Figure. 2

2) “I like language jokes but I like HU MOR”

(Taken from: https://www.instagram.com/p/CU8BnBlMP_1/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=)

This sentence contains lexical ambiguity which appears in the word ‘HUMOR’. The word ‘HUMOR’ sounds like ‘you more’ when it is pronounced. Thus, the sentence has two interpretations: 1) I like language jokes but I like humor and 2) I like language jokes but I like you more. This indicates that the pun is created through homophone— any words that have the same pronunciations or sounds with the different spellings, which is one of the lexical ambiguity vital elements.

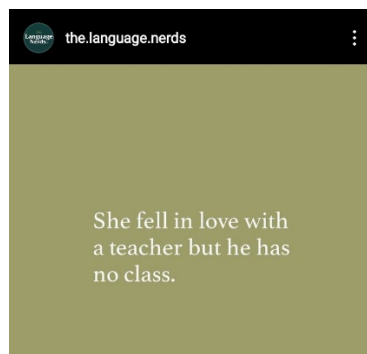


Figure. 3

3) “She fell in love with a teacher but he has no class.”

(Taken from: https://www.instagram.com/p/CahasiBoCE_/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=)

This sentence contains lexical ambiguity to create the pun. It appears in the word ‘class’ that has correlation with the word ‘teacher’. Thus, the word ‘class’ has two interpretations in this case. First, ‘class’ as in a group of students who are taught together. Second, ‘class’ as in elegant and classy. Therefore, the pun is created through homonymy, one of the lexical ambiguity elements that create puns.

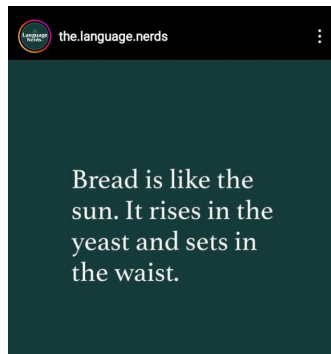


Figure. 4

- 4) "Bread is like the sun. It rises in the yeast and sets in the waist."
(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CQy2fYgoyHq/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

The ambiguity in this pun could be found in the words 'yeast' and 'waist'. Those words are homophones: words that have the same pronunciation but different meanings and spelling. Homophone is one of the lexical ambiguity elements that creates puns. The words 'yeast' and 'waist' sound like 'east' and 'west'. Hence, the pun says that bread is like sun: both of them rise in the yeast (east) and set in the waist (west).

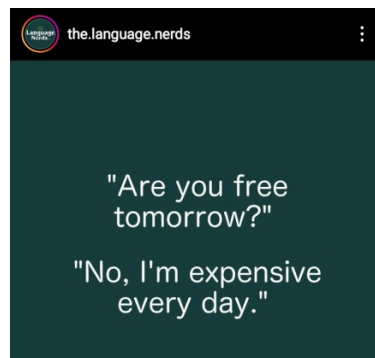


Figure. 5

- 5) "Are you free tomorrow?"
"No, I'm expensive every day."
(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/Ce6END4MghS/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

The word 'free' could be homonymy or polysemy. Nevertheless, in this case, the word 'free' is a homonymy word, a multiple unrelated meanings word, that forms the lexical ambiguity. The first meaning is that free as in 'not busy' or 'being able to do something'. Meanwhile the second meaning is that free as in 'cost nothing'. In this case, the second person interprets the word "free" as in the second meaning. Hence, the second person responds with the word "expensive", the opposite of the word "free" in the second meaning.



Figure. 6

6) “I love how the earth rotates. It literally makes my day.”

(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CbXlxfzMEOW/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

The phrase ‘makes my day’ could be interpreted into two meanings. First, the earth rotation on its axis literally makes a day or 24 hours. Second, as the sincere expression of saying a memorable day. Both interpretations are unrelated if we pay attention to them. For this reason, it could be said that the utterances contain homonymy, one of lexical ambiguity elements, since both meanings are unrelated toward one another.



Figure. 7

7) “Had a date last night. It was perfect. Tomorrow I’ll try a grape.”

(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CccKr1ToCE7/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

This pun contains lexical ambiguity, a homonymy word to be specific. It appears in the word ‘date’ which has more than one meanings in this case. First, ‘date’ refers to a ‘social or romantic appointment or engagement’. Second, ‘date’ refers to ‘a sweet and dark brown oval fruit’. The humour is created because the reader would think the word ‘date’ refers to the first meaning, which unexpectedly, it actually does refer to the second meaning.

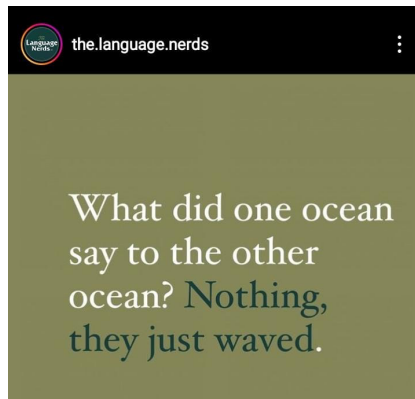


Figure. 8

- 8) “What did ocean say to the other ocean? Nothing, they just waved.”
(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CeipavhLYmV/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

The word ‘waved’ has two meanings in this case. First, ‘waved’ as in a noun that means any surging or progressing movement or part resembling a wave of the sea. Second, ‘waved’ as in a verb that means moving one’s hand to and fro in greeting or as a signal. This indicates that the word ‘waved’ is a homonymy, a device to create lexical ambiguity, since both meanings are unrelated one another.



Figure. 9

- 9) “How do celebrities stay cool?”
“They have a lot of fans.”
(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CeMVb2wLK5J/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

There are two ambiguities in this pun. The first ambiguity can be seen in the word ‘cool’ which has two meanings: (1) at a fairly low temperature and (2) the quality of being fashionably attractive or impressive. The second ambiguity appears in the word ‘fans’ which has two meanings as well: (1) any device for producing a current of air by the movement of a broad surface or a number of such surfaces and (2) people who have a strong interest in or admiration for a particular person or thing. Again, those two words denote lexical ambiguity that use homonymy.



Figure. 10

10) “I help blind people.”

(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/Cc6ARkJL7BL/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

This pun is caused by syntactic ambiguity. It is surface structure ambiguity since the sentence has more than one sentence constructions. The first construction is *[I] [help] [blind people]*. And the second one is *[I] [help blind] [people]*. Towards those two constructions, the pun could be interpreted into two interpretations. The first construction could be interpreted as: “I help people who are blind.” And the second construction could be interpreted as “I help to blind people” or “I help to make people blind.” In the first interpretation, the word ‘blind’ acts as an adjective that modifies the word ‘people’, while in the second interpretation, it acts as a verb.

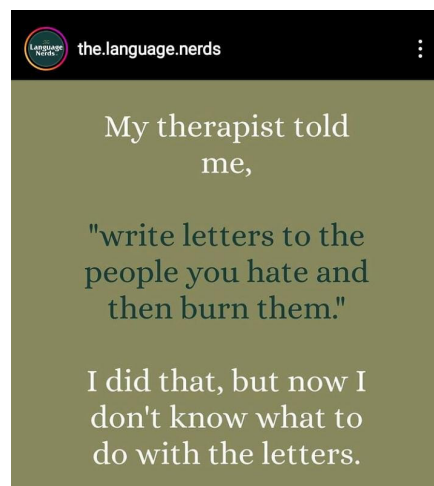


Figure. 11

11) “My therapist told me, ‘write letters to people you hate and then burn them.’ I did that, but now I don’t know what to do with the letters.”

(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/Cd00s-Ws6sL/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

Containing syntactic ambiguity, the pun appears in the utterance “write letters to the people you hate and then burn them.” That utterance contains two complements, which are ‘letters’ and ‘people you hate’. Furthermore, there is the reference ‘them’ which makes the utterance ambiguous. The word them whether refers to ‘letters’ or ‘people you hate’. Thus, it could be interpreted into two meanings. First, “write letters

to the people you hate and burn the letters.” Or, second, “write letters to the people you hate and then burn the people.” Nevertheless, that person (I), thinks that the therapist ordered him to write letters to the people she/he hates and burn the people as stated in the first meaning. While in fact, the therapist actually intends the second meaning. Eventually, the utterance that contains two complements is a type of surface structure ambiguity.

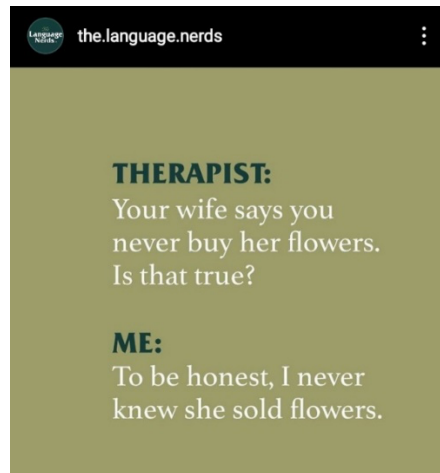


Figure. 12

12) “Therapist: Your wife says you never buy her flowers. Is that true?

Me: To be honest, I never knew she sold flowers.”

(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CX3Rdzksmht/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

The ambiguity that creates the pun is syntactic ambiguity. It appears in the utterance “you never buy her flowers.” Having more than one sentence construction, this utterance is a part of surface structure ambiguity. The first construction is *[you] [never buy her] [flowers]*. And the second one is *[you] [never buy] [her flowers]*. The utterance, therefore, could be interpreted into: 1) you never buy flowers for her; and 2) you never buy flowers that she sells. This utterance, of course with the two sentence constructions, can lead to multi interpretations for the respond. The therapist apparently intends to the first interpretation. However, the person (me) understands the phrase with the second interpretation which lead to the respond that he did not know if his wife sold flowers.



Figure. 13

- 13) “Wife: I’m pregnant.
Husband: Hi pregnant, I’m dad.
Wife: No, you’re not.”
(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/Cd7rb3JjiMu/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

The clause ‘I am’ could be followed by a noun, verb+ing/ed, or adjective. This is something that is studied in syntax. In this case, the form of the clause “I’m pregnant” said by the wife, is ‘I am’ followed by an adjective, which is ‘pregnant’ to inform that she is having a child in her uterus. Regardless, the husband makes fun of it by assuming that her wife’s name is pregnant, which is in a form a noun. Hence, he responds by saying that he is dad. Just like the clause “I’m pregnant”, the clause “I’m dad” also contains ambiguity due to the lack of the article. Thus, that clause could be interpreted into: (1) the husband’s name is Dad or (2) the husband is the dad of the child that the wife is pregnant. What adds the humour sense is that the respond given by the wife by saying that he is not the dad of the child. Nevertheless, this pun is created through deep structure ambiguity, which is a type of syntactic ambiguity.



Figure. 14

- 14) “Call me antisocial but please don’t call me.”
(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CRGTCAcqIKZ/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

The ambiguity that is contained in the pun above is syntactic ambiguity. The pun is created because the sentence uses ellipsis or the deletion of part of a sentence, in which the missing part is understood from the context. Therefore, the phrase could be interpreted into: 1) regard the person as someone who is antisocial, but do not contact her/him or 2) refer the person as someone who is antisocial or do not refer her/him as someone who is antisocial. According to Kreidler’s theory, ellipsis is a part of deep structure ambiguity.

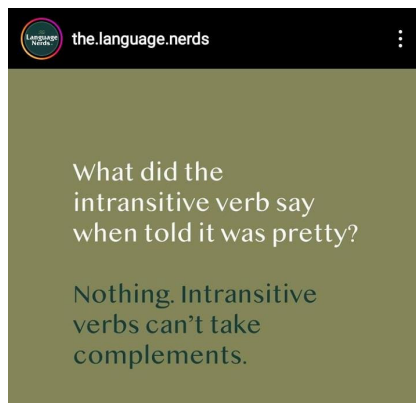


Figure. 15

- 15) “What did the intransitive verb say when told it was pretty?”
“Nothing. Intransitive verbs can’t take complements.”
(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/Ce-osUIIOe6/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

This pun is created by lexical ambiguity which appears in the word ‘complements’ that has the same pronunciation as the word ‘compliments’. The word ‘compliment’ refers to the act that said the intransitive was told it was pretty. Whereas the word ‘complement’ refers to any word or group of words used to complete a grammatical construction. The humor is made because ‘intransitive verbs’ literally could not take any complements due to the grammatical rules.

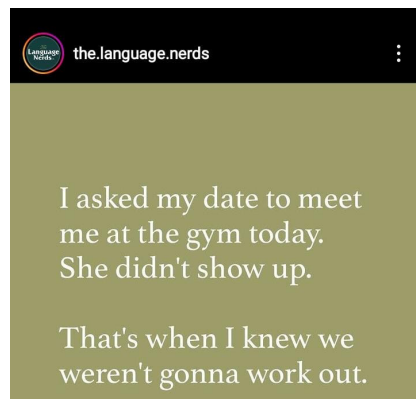


Figure. 16

- 16) “I asked my date to meet me at the gym today. She didn’t show up. That’s when I knew we weren’t gonna work out.”
(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/Cij2S1CIfab/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

The pun above contains lexical ambiguity. The ambiguity itself appears in the phrase “work out.” The phrase, in this case, could be interpreted into two meanings. The first meaning is “work out” as in to engage in physical activity in order to enhance one's health or to do exercise. The second meaning is “work out” as in something goes well. In this case, the first meaning suits the context since that person mention “the gym” which is the place to work out or to do exercise. By this, the phrase “work out” refers to them (the person and her/his crush). The second meaning, elseways, also suits the context. In the second meaning the phrase “work out” refers to the relationship that they have at that time that will not go well.



Figure. 17

- 17) “What do you call a short mother?”
“Minimum.”

(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CeYA0JAK9Sb/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

Being produced through lexical ambiguity, this pun contains homophone — any words that have the same pronunciations or sounds with the different spellings. The homophone appears in the word ‘minimum’ that is pronounced like ‘mini mom’.



Figure. 18

- 18) “I asked my wife when her birthday was. She said March 1st. So I walked around the room and asked again.”

(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CjoGzjwrtYU/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

The pun appears in the phrase ‘March 1st’. And it is created through lexical ambiguity. In particular, the phrase ‘March 1st’ is pronounced march first which can make another interpretation. The first interpretation, of course, ‘March 1st’ as a date format of the birth. And it is what the wife means by saying the phrase ‘March 1st’. Nevertheless, the husband interprets the phrase in a different way. The second interpretation, ‘March 1st’ is as to walk with regular and measured tread as on parade. This makes the phrase like an order. That is why the husband walked around the room. The word ‘march’ in this case is a homonymy word — any words whose sound and spelling are the same but whose meanings are unrelated.



Figure. 19

- 19) “Guess who I bumped into on my way to get my glasses fixed?”
“Everybody.”

(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CloywuiL9tC/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

This pun contains lexical ambiguity to create the humorous sense to the reader. It appears in the phrase ‘bumped into’. The phrase ‘bumped into’ actually can be interpreted into two different meanings in this case. The first meaning of the phrase is to meet someone unexpectedly. While the second meaning is to hit against someone or something accidentally. The second meaning could fit the utterance since the person intends that he/she was not wearing his/her glasses which made him/her hit against some people due to his/her eyes that could not see clearly without glasses. The phrase, in this case, is homonymous.



Figure. 20

- 20) “So, tell me, are you catholic?”
“Yes, I have been addicted to cats my whole life.”

(Taken from: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CbVPij6s5BF/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

This pun is created through lexical ambiguity. It arises in the word ‘catholic’. The word ‘catholic’, in this case, can be interpreted into two meanings. The first meaning that the word gives is the adjective form of the religion of Catholic. And by this meaning, the speaker intends to ask if someone he/she talks to is someone who

believe in Catholic religion. On the other hand, the second meaning of the word 'catholic' refers to the characteristics of loving cats. This word actually is homonymous, in a form of homophones, to be specific. They are pronounced the same, without related meanings, of course.

The findings show that ambiguity has the vital role in creating the humorous sense of the puns. Lexical ambiguity appears in data 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20. The data contain lexical ambiguity which are in form of homonyms– any words with the same pronunciation but different meanings that are unrelated. And not one is in form of polysemy– any words with the same pronunciation but different meanings that are related. Precisely, lexical ambiguity confuses the addresses by offering a mind-blowing possible interpretation with the multi lexical meanings that inherent in utterances that lead to the humorous sense.

Apart from that, syntactic ambiguity appears in data 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14. Data 10, 11, and 12 are in form of surface structure ambiguity that occur when words group together to form various potential constructions. While the rest of them, which are data 13 and 14 are in form of deep structure ambiguity that occur when ellipsis, or the deletion of something that is understood, is permitted by the rules of sentence formation. And by this, it is certain that syntactic ambiguity confuses the addresses with the syntactic rules, including the constructions and the structure of sentences.

Having the same topic with the studies done by Fitri (2019) and Jannah (2021), which is lexical and syntactic ambiguity, the results of this research and the previous studies are alike. The previous studies revealed that lexical ambiguity is dominated rather than syntactic ambiguity in the object selected. This research had the same result even though the object is not similar. Hence, it becomes clear that lexical ambiguity is commonly found rather than syntactic ambiguity.

Persist on the topic, the object of this research is not similar with the previous studies. The studies done by Fitri (2019) and Jannah (2021) took the data from the news matters– CNN and BBC News. This research, alternatively, used puns– a kind of linguistic occurrence in a form of wordplay that arise due to two or more meanings that inherent in it, as the object of the research. Due to the different objects of the research, the ambiguity that is caused by lexeme and syntax also give different effects to the objects. For the news, lexical and syntactic ambiguity caused the readers to misunderstand the utterances of the news that contain them. And this is substandard for news, since the purpose of news itself is to inform the readers without making any misunderstanding. In contrast with that, lexical and syntactic ambiguity are needed to create the humorous sense in puns. The humorous sense of the puns is created through the ambiguity that offer multi interpretations that are unlikely related to the addresses.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis of the data, it is apparent that ambiguity– any words, phrases, or sentences have more than one meaning, has a vital role in creating puns. Ambiguity that often used to create puns are called lexical ambiguity and syntactic ambiguity. In this analysis, the researcher found 15 lexical ambiguity and 5 syntactic ambiguity that are applied in the puns from the 20 data in total. From the 15 lexical ambiguity that create the puns, all of them are in form of homonyms, none of them is polysemy. While the 5 syntactic ambiguity are formed of 3 surface structure ambiguity and 2 deep structure ambiguity. The results indicate that lexical ambiguity is commonly used to form the puns as the language tools to create the humor rather than syntactic ambiguity by the account of @the.language.nerds.

Over and above that, the researcher could conclude that the humorous sense of the puns is created through the ambiguity that offer multi interpretations that are unlikely related to the addresses. Lexical ambiguity confuses the addresses by creating a mind-blowing possible interpretation with the multi lexical meanings that inherent in utterances that lead to the humorous sense. Syntactic ambiguity, on the other hand, confuses the addresses with the syntactic rules,

including the constructions and the structure of sentences. To this point, context also has a crucial role in enabling various interpretations of the utterances in puns. Eventually, the researcher hopes that this research could be elaborated deeper by future researchers in this field by providing the explanation of why lexical ambiguity is commonly used to form the puns as the language tools to create the humor rather than syntactic ambiguity.

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