CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Research

There is a situation when people are discussing topics that are considered sensitive which labeled vulgar or inconsiderate such as death, religion, sex, racial issues or politics, the use of euphemism is very useful. For example, when people are talking about losing a job, it is quite hard to ask people about this particular situation. However, instead of saying "*Are you jobless at the moment*". People can use another word to say, *"Are you between jobs at the moment"*. The word *jobless* will make people loss their face. Thus, it is better to say *between jobs* to avoid a possible word that will hurt them and apply the euphemism.

Euphemism can easily define as another way of words for undesirable expressions and usually use in order to avoid possible loss of face for the reader or receiver. It makes a word sounds good in the ears of the listener or reader so that the speaker or writer can share his idea and purpose comfortably. The reader or listener also feels comfortable in receiving the messages. The words or the phrases become softer and its literal meaning has pushed aside and turn into sweet-sounding and inoffensive.

Sweet-sounding and inoffensive words always be a choice for people to talk whenever there is a sensitive discussion. People often try to select the potential hatred or offensive effect of expressions that are used. Hence, if they keep using it, they will make people be easily offended. Thus, people concern to be more polite switching the exact word with its substitution one. In order to

keep away saying the kind of words that might disturb the harmony of conversation or the relationship between them. The euphemism also can easily be found in the mass media.

Euphemism can be found in mass media especially in a politics area because political issues have highly sensitive topics. In writing or conveying news are required to use good or acceptable language. Acceptable in this case means language which is not sensitive or offensive to the readers. In mass media, the journalist mostly uses a feeling to avoid using bad or cruel words to give a good effect to the society. By using the euphemism, it can turn unmentionable words into mentionable and less offensive. Turning the unmentionable or bad words into mentionable or good words that make euphemism give rise to semantic change through changing the sense of words.

Hasan (2015) argued that semantic change mostly happens to a language. When languages borrow words, they frequently change the meanings of those borrowings, typically making generic words more specific, in the same way that one language's place names often grew out of another language's generic words for concepts. This process of changing meaning is called semantic change (pp. 1380-1381). These semantic changes lead to new meaning to be broader, narrower, metonymy, or metaphor. For example, everyone knows is *pretty*, which originally meant "crafty and cunning". Later, it took on a more positive connotation: *clever, skillful,* or *able*. For showing differences among the meaning of the words that have experience semantic change, it can be detailed by using componential analysis.

Using componential analysis, it can make easier to find out the meaning of the words taboo and euphemism. Each word has its own meaning features. For example, the term *booze* and *alcohol drink* both of them refer to intoxicating drinks. To show the differences between them, it can be explained by componential analysis. Thus, the components of *booze* are */+ Intoxicating Beverage/*, */+drink/, /+ Cause Physical Health Problem/,* and */- Irritation/.* On the other hand, the components of *alcohol drink* are */+ Intoxicating Beverage/,* */+drink/, /+ Cause Physical Health Problem/,* and */+ Irritation/.* From the explanation above, it can be summarized that the difference in the component between *booze* and *alcohol drink* is */- Irritation/* for *booze* and */+ Irritation/* for *alcohol drink.* Each component of meaning taboo and euphemism can be studied in sociolinguistics.

Sociolinguistics is study of the relationship between language and society. This discipline can be used to find out how the word can be called a taboo. In sociolinguistics, there is a language variation which how the language influenced by the speaker's background (social class, behavior, culture, etc). This area can be useful to observe why people use a bad language (taboo), because they have a background about that language. Sociolinguistics also concerns with the aspect of language and society which deals with the language and gender, dialect, register, language style, etc. Discussing sociolinguistics and its function which study and understand the language and society brings to the study of human language that is linguistics.

Linguistics concerns with human language as a study for helping people to know about how language is formed and used in such a way and how the language performs its role in human life. That is how linguistics can be defined as the systematic study that focused on all aspects and formulates theories as to how it works. Theoretical linguistics involves the systematic and analytical study which learn about speech sounds, words, sentences, meanings, the language in society, discourse, and how the studies evolve over time. Therewith, linguistics plays a great influence for people to study their language.

Language can be implied as a role for people to develop their skills in using it to communicate, to acquire knowledge from lectures and books, to integrate new information, to replace false beliefs with new true ones, and to increase or decrease our estimates of the likelihood that some belief people hold is true (Delahunty and Garvey, 2010, p.7). It cannot be denied that language is essential for human beings. People use the language every day in their society, such as to ally, survive, relate or even to learn in education. Because people are using language routines. That makes the reason why language is changing because everyday people are also moving.

Therefore, change in language is unavoidable. All languages change all the time (except extinct ones). Language change is just a fact of life; it cannot be refused or avoided. Regardless of all the worries and fears, life always goes on with no obvious ill-effects in spite of linguistic change. Indeed, the changes going on today which so distress some in our society are exactly the same in kind and character as many past changes about which there was much complaint and

worry as they were taking place but the results of which today are considered enriching aspects of the modern language (Campbell, 2013, p.3).

In this thesis, the writer is interested in digital or online media to be researched because it is a simple way for people nowadays to get information. It is a platform to talk or deliver information without saying face to face or in-person. Today, the online-based mass media can reach to a wider area, and touch all over the world. The mass media also has a significant role as a part of human life to get information handily. The information is a matter for human life that cannot be separated. From various information in the mass media, the information certainly increases knowledge and insight for people, so that they aware of what is going on outside without going anywhere.

Among the issues that people got and gained in digital media, one of them is a political issue. The writer chooses politics as a topic for corpus data because Matisonn (2017) on *theconversation.com* explained that politics help people to develop their sense of good and evil, justice and injustice so that people can enact upon a situation. Because most of the time, people are blindfolded by perception. Perception gives people a new vision in which it can be brainwashing thoughts or brilliant ideas. Understanding or engaging with politics is important for people's development. Then, the writer chooses *The Washington Times* as a digital media to be observed.

The writer chooses *The Washington Times* as the corpus data for the research. *The Washington Times* according to *washingtontimes.com* (2020) was established in 1982 and has been a trusted counterweight to the mainstream

media. Moreover, *The Washington Times* has many recognitions throughout its career as media, such as the most trusted publication on Capitol Hill and number 5 most trusted among printed media by Simmons Research. The writer prefers online articles rather than printed media because based on Nielsen Indonesia Survey in 2017 posted on *www.kompasiana.com*, the number of Indonesian people who read media online reaches up to 6 million, or higher than people who read printed media which only reach up 4.5 million.

Furthermore, from all of the aspects that have been mentioned above, euphemisms in the mass media, especially in the online article, are essential for the writer of article or editor to use. In order to say something taboo, the writer or editor can use euphemism to turn an unpleasant word into a pleasant word so that nobody will be offended. In this research, the writer is interested in analyzing the types of euphemism as well as the semantic change through componential analysis in *The Washington Times* Online Political Articles. The title of the research that the writer observed is "Euphemism Types in *The Washington Times* Online Political Articles: A Study of Semantic Change".

B. Questions and Scopes of the Research

1. Question of the Research

Based on the focus of the study above, the writer arranges this research through the following questions:

1. What types of euphemism were found in *The Washington Times* online political articles in June 2019?

2. What semantic features and meaning relation were found on the euphemism and taboo words, phrases or clauses in *The Washington Times* online political articles in June 2019?

3. How did semantic change of euphemism experience in *The Washington Times* online political articles in June 2019?

4. What the most frequent of types of euphemism, meaning relation and semantic change were found in *The Washington Times* online political articles in June 2019?

2. Scopes of the Research

In conducting this research, the writer focuses on words, clauses, and phrases of the euphemism types, along with the types of meaning relation and semantic changes of the meaning found in *The Washington Times* online political articles in June 2019 through componential analysis. The writer uses *the* theory proposed by Allan and Burridge for euphemism types, theory of Geeraerts for meaning relation and O'Grady, Dovrovolsky, & Katamba' theory for semantic change.

In addition, componential analysis is used in order to get the real meaning relation and semantic change of the euphemism by Nida's theory. The writer applies both theories above to get the overall data analysis appropriately. The writer chooses *The Washington Times* online political articles because at this time the use of euphemism is not only limited to oral language, but also to a written language where there are ideas and opinions

that are trying to deliver to the wide variety of readers. Euphemism is used to avoid using bad words to give a good effect on society, especially in talking about politics that has known to have many sensitive issues.

C. Objective and Significance of the Research

1. Objective of the Research

In accordance with the research questions that have been described previously, there are three objectives of the research as described as follows:

1. To classify the types of euphemism found in *The Washington Times* online political articles in June 2019.

2. To analyze the semantic features and meaning relation on euphemistic and taboo word, phrase or clause found in *The Washington Times* online political articles in June 2019.

3. To analyze the process of semantic change of euphemism experienced in *The Washington Times* political articles in June 2019.

4. To find out the types of euphemism, meaning relation, and semantic change mostly used in *The Washington Times* political articles in June 2019.

2. Significance of the Research

In this study, the writer hopes there are benefits that can be taken. It is divided into two separate parts, those are theoretical benefits and practical benefits.

Theoretically, it is hoped that this research will give a contribution to the development of the linguistics field especially in the study of semantics or euphemism. It will also help the next researchers to find ideas to develop some researches about euphemisms and their semantic change.

Practically, this research can be used as a reference to give a contribution to society in giving a better understanding about euphemism, so that people can apply the use of it in their written or spoken communication.

D. Operational Definition

To avoid ambiguity and uncertainty, the researcher will describe the meaning of the important words of phrase used in this research. They are as the followings:

1. Euphemism

Expression substituted for other words thought to be offensive to avoid the loss face: either one's own face or, that of the audience, or of third party. The unpleasant or offensive expression may be taboo, fearsome, distasteful, or have negative connotation to execute the speaker's intention on a given occasion or context, in this case euphemism used in politic article in The Washington Times.

2. Headlines

The most actual news that published or presented by media.

3. Politics

A thought to get power in society.

4. Article

A complete piece of writing, as a report or essay that is part of newspaper, magazine, or book.

5. The Washington Times

The world International multimedia news agency, providing, investing news, business, headlines news etcetera. It is located in Washington, USA.

6. Componential Analysis

It refers to a group of numerous features that distinguish the members of the set from one another.

7. Semantic Change

It refers to a new meaning to a certain word, but also creates the whole meaning changed.

E. Systematization of the Research

Systematization of the research means to present the paper in well-editing composition. The research is divided into five chapters as follow:

Chapter I: Introduction explains about background of the research and reason why the writer choses the research, question and the scope of the research, objective and significance of the research, operational definition and systematization of the research which consist the resume of the content of the research as a whole.

Chapter II: Theoretical description consists of sociolinguistics, taboo terms, types of euphemism, meaning, componential analysis, meaning relation,

semantic change, and research of the relevance which shows the previous researches that had been conducted.

Chapter III: Methodology of the research involves procedure of the research, technique of data collection, technique of data analysis and sources of the data primary and secondary data.

Chapter IV: Research findings and discussion show about data description in the online articles, analysis of the data where the writer analyzes all the data that the writer found in the corpus data, data interpretation and the discussion.

Chapter V: Conclusion and suggestion give the summary of the conclusion which relate of discussion, suggestion which relate to significant of the research.