

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

In the previous chapter, I have analysed how ambiguity can be a humorous element in the jokes because ambiguity can create misunderstanding. In this chapter, I would like to draw some conclusions based on the discussion in the previous chapter.

The theory of Ambiguity can be divided into three types: Syntactic Ambiguity, Semantic Ambiguity and Phonological Ambiguity. The writers of the jokes use the ambiguity which can create misunderstanding. In the end, this misunderstanding can produce a humorous effect. This is caused by the two different contexts between the characters in the jokes. In the joke that I have analysed in chapter three, I find that the writers of the jokes use ambiguous word as the cause of misunderstanding that occurs in the joke. The misunderstanding happens not only through the meaning of one word but also because of the sentence construction and the sound of the word or phrase which is uttered can have more than one interpretation. That is why, in my opinion, to understand a joke, the reader has to recognise the cause of the misunderstanding that occurs in the joke.

In the jokes that I have analysed, I find Syntactic Ambiguity in four jokes, Semantic Ambiguity in fourteen jokes and Phonological Ambiguity in four jokes.

Furthermore, the jokes can be classified based on the theory of Ambiguity. Syntactic Ambiguity, includes Structural Ambiguity and Categorical Ambiguity. In the joke that I have analysed, I find Structural Ambiguity in three jokes and Categorical Ambiguity in two jokes. The number of the jokes which contain Structural Ambiguity is more than Categorical Ambiguity. In my opinion, the jokes with Categorical Ambiguity are easier to understand than those with Structural Ambiguity. In the jokes which contain Categorical Ambiguity, the writer of the joke focuses on a word which has more than one meaning or belongs to more than one part of speech to create more than one interpretation. However, in using Structural Ambiguity, the writers of the joke use the ambiguous sentence construction that leads to misinterpretation. That is why, to understand the jokes, we have to parse the sentence to find the possible meanings of the sentence and not analyse it word by word.

In Semantic Ambiguity, I find Lexical Ambiguity, Elliptical Ambiguity and Referential Ambiguity. In the jokes that I have analysed, I find Lexical Ambiguity in six jokes, Referential Ambiguity in five jokes and Elliptical Ambiguity in three jokes. We can see that Lexical Ambiguity is most often used in the jokes. The writer of the jokes uses an ambiguous word to cause a misinterpretation in the joke. In my opinion, since the writer only focuses on an ambiguous word which belongs to the same part of speech, writing this kind of jokes is simpler than writing those which contain Elliptical Ambiguity or Referential Ambiguity.

From the explanation of Lexical Ambiguity and Categorical Ambiguity above, we can see that these two types of Ambiguity are quite similar because of the misunderstanding in this joke is caused by an ambiguous word. However, the jokes that contain Categorical Ambiguity are more difficult to find. In my opinion, a word

with Categorical Ambiguity not only has more than one meaning, but also belongs to different parts of speech. Therefore, when the word is formed in a sentence, the writer of the joke has to make a sentence using a word that can have two functions in that sentence. That is why, to understand this kind of joke, the reader has to know the part of speech of the word. Otherwise, they will not get the joke for they think it is meaningless. We can see the word bark in data 4 and the word blind in data 5 can have two functions. In the joke, the word bark can function as a noun or a verb, and the word blind can function as an adjective or a noun. However, the word object in data 6, the word croak in 7, the word mummy in data 8, the word stretch in data 9, the word ring in data10 and the word sick in data 11 only has one function. Although in the dictionary each word above may belong to more than one part of speech yet in the joke each of them only belongs to one part of speech. That is why; it is easier for the reader to understand this kind of joke.

As I analysed the jokes in the previous chapter, I can see that the writers of the jokes often uses a child character to misunderstand an ambiguous expression in the joke. We can see that eleven jokes use the children characters such as in data 2, 4, 7, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 22 and 23. When someone talks to children, they will respond to it based on what they know although the context is different from the speaker. The misinterpretation of a child is used by the writers of the jokes to produce a humorous effect. The writer of the joke uses a child as one of the characters because of their innocence and their lack of knowledge. That is why, in the joke, this child is used to be the character who can create misunderstanding.

After analysing the ambiguity which occurs in the joke, I come to the conclusion that ambiguity plays an important role in a joke. The writers of the jokes deliberately use the ambiguity to create misunderstanding. In English, there are so

many words which have more than one meaning and may belong to more than one part of speech. Besides, the words or phrases in English sometimes have identical sound. These facts help the writers in making jokes.

I also find that all jokes that I have analysed can be found in the daily conversation with other people. It shows that whether or not we realise it, we can create misunderstanding in our communication which further will make our communication irrelevant. This misunderstanding can be caused by the ambiguous expression which is used which further we may think it is funny because of the two different interpretations occurring in our communication.