

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, I would like to give my personal opinion and comments on the findings elaborated in Chapter Three. After analysing the sixteen riddles, which are taken from five different websites in the Internet, it is revealed what words or phrases make the riddles ambiguous, what kinds of ambiguity are found in the riddles and what causes the ambiguity. Furthermore, it is also shown how the ambiguity in the riddle contributes to the script incongruity which produces humour.

From the sixteen data that have been analysed, I find that there are nineteen ambiguities in this analysis. The lexical ambiguity is the kind of ambiguity which is most frequently used by the riddle-makers, as there are twelve data having lexical ambiguity. The second most frequently-used type of ambiguity is syntactic ambiguity. There are six data containing syntactic ambiguity. In addition, there is only one riddle containing the type known as referential ambiguity.

In my opinion, the riddle-makers tend to use lexical ambiguity in their riddles. It can be seen that lexical ambiguity is more frequently used than the other types of ambiguity. In my opinion, this is absolutely a good thing because when a riddle-maker uses more words in the types of lexical ambiguity, it means that he or she is rich in vocabularies. Furthermore, it also shows the riddle-maker's creative skills, as it is not an easy thing and it needs high creativity in making a good riddle. On the other hand, for the readers, riddles with lexical ambiguities demand that the reader has a wide vocabulary. In this case, it is clear that there is a good academic side to riddles containing ambiguity.

The next point is the causes of the three types of ambiguity. There are two causes of lexical ambiguity. The first one is homonymy, while the second one is literal and figurative meaning. I find that homonymy is the major cause in this finding, seeing that there are seven data containing homonymy and five data containing ambiguity of the literal and figurative meaning. Then, for the syntactic ambiguity, there are four data using certain function words, one data using a construction containing the coordinator 'and' and one data using gerund + object or participle modifying a noun. Lastly, one data used an indefinite referring expression as the cause of the referential ambiguity.

In my opinion, the possible reason why the riddles which I analyse mostly use homonymy is because there are many words in the English language that can have more than one meaning. This is indeed an advantage for a riddle-maker to use a homonymous word to mislead the readers. If it is compared with the literal and figurative meaning, using the ambiguity of a figurative and literal meaning is more difficult because there are not so many words having figurative meanings.

When doing my analysis, I also find a special case. There are some riddles which have more than one kind of ambiguity. This finding shows that it is possible for a word or a phrase in a riddle to have more than one kind of ambiguity. We can see this condition in data 6 and 13, in which they have more than one kind of ambiguity.

In my opinion, it is also another extraordinary thing for the riddle-makers to use more than one kind of ambiguity to be applied in their riddles. This is absolutely not an easy thing to do. Making a riddle with one ambiguous word is not an easy thing, let alone to think of many ambiguous words with different types of ambiguity in one riddle. Thus, as the readers, we have to appreciate this more, as it reveals how creative the riddle-makers are.

Furthermore, in the humour analysis, I find that there are fifteen riddles that have two scripts of incongruity and only one riddle that has four scripts of incongruity. Thus, it can be said that one story commonly only has two scripts of incongruity, which leads to humour. However, data 6 shows that it is possible for a riddle to involve more than two incongruous scripts; in this case, four scripts.

In my opinion, the cause of the existence of four scripts in the riddle is the fact that the riddle has two types of ambiguity: the homonymy, and the literal versus figurative meaning. The lexical ambiguity with the literal and figurative meaning adds another meaning and another possible script to the riddle. This is truly an extraordinary thing as the more complex the ambiguities are, the higher the level of creativity that is needed.

It is also known that people commonly think that a riddle is something that can only entertain or is used just for fun. Through this analysis, it is proved that a

riddle, in fact, has an academic side, with ambiguity as its significant aspect. Thus, the analysis of this thesis hopefully can make the readers able to realize how linguistics contributes many things to our daily life. The study of ambiguity can make people not only avoid miscommunication, but also acknowledge its positive use in playful communication. Ambiguity in riddles has an important role in playful communication as it leads to humour.

All in all, considering the significance of the study of ambiguity in riddles, I sincerely hope that in the future there will be other studies that discuss ambiguity in riddles, using theories espoused by other linguists. I also suggest that studies which simply focus on lexical ambiguity as the most frequently-used type of ambiguity should be explored more for analyzing riddles. However, my analysis does not represent riddles in general; therefore, a further research on ambiguity in riddles by using the same theories may still be worth doing to verify the findings of this research analysis which shows that lexical ambiguity is the type of ambiguity that is most frequently identified in English riddles.

(976 words)