

ABSTRACT

Caprina, Arumia. *“A Study of American Two-Liner Jokes Biggest Joke Book in the World (A Semantic Approach)”* A thesis submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for Sarjana Degree of The English Department, Faculty of Letters, Airlangga University, 2004.

Jokes are inseparable elements in our daily life for they have already taken an important role in the society as medium in communication. That is why, jokes are not only parts of language, but they also parts of human beings lives. As a second language learner the writer tries to make a study of jokes, which are written and created by an English native speaker. Many researches have found that linguistics elements have a great role in the creation of the joke itself. Through this study of jokes the writer would like to analyze jokes by using one of those linguistic elements. The writer chooses to use a semantic approach in her study for it has a closed relationship with word play and meaning. The writer would like to find out whether those semantic theories can be applied in American two-liner jokes to create humorous effect. In her study the writer uses three of the semantic theories: lexical and structural ambiguity proposed by Fromkin and Rodman, and Hurford and Heasley and truth conditional semantics proposed by Tarski. The purpose of doing this study were not only to satisfy her own curiosity, but she also would like to find solutions for non-native speakers at English to overcome many difficulties in understanding similar jokes. Because the study does not need any respondent, the writer uses qualitative approach. The data of the study is taken from a book entitled *Biggest Joke Book in the World* compiled by Mat Rissinger and Philip Yates. The writer choses thirty jokes, which applies either lexical ambiguity, structural ambiguity, or truth conditional semantics. From the analyses of the two-liner jokes in *Biggest Joke Book in the World* the writer finds out that those semantic theories either lexical ambiguity, structural ambiguity, or truth conditional semantics can be applied in joke to create humorous effect, which makes the jokes hilarious and funny. The writer also finds out that from the three semantic theories the application of the lexical ambiguity is greater compared to that of the structural ambiguity and truth conditional semantics theories.

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INTRODUCTION

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