

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

5.1.1 Objectives of the study

This research aims at studying secondary school students' perceptions about the Chonburi Joke Riddle's current situation to evaluate the rating of the game. Also to check their understanding about the social value behind this traditional entertainment and to illustrate the overall expectations of respondents so that all the findings will formulate a reasonable forecast of the game's future and produce practical suggestions for the conservation of Chonburi Joke Riddle in the most sustainable manner.

5.1.2 Subject, Materials, and Procedures

The study was primarily designed to capture the heterogeneous quality of the secondary school students in Chonburi as they are currently influenced by two main streams of conservation: primitive and innovative. As Phanat Nikhom district has been well-known for the original conservative style, Phanatpittayakharn School was selected to be the target school in that area. Meanwhile Muang district has always been well-known for the adaptive conservation style, Chonburi Sukhabot School was then chosen to be the other target school in the Muang district area.

The researcher applied various techniques to collect data. The main source was from questionnaires and the supporting sources were from observation and interviews to enhance the in-depth details about this folk culture. One limitation was that joke riddles were only organized occasionally. Therefore, the data collection was implemented in different phases. Starting with observation during the Buffalo Racing Festival in October 2008 in Muang District, Chonburi, the researcher observed a real joke riddle event and tested the questionnaire on 10 teenagers at the festival. Then there was another observation and an interview with a student joke master at the Chonburi Sukhabot School Fair in November 2008. After that another interview with a student joke master from Phanatpittayakharn School was also done. As soon as the questionnaire results were verified, they were distributed to the target groups in both Phanatpittayakharn School and Chonburi Sukhabot School. As this study was a

survey type, to deal with the worst case scenario that there might be only a few people who knew the game, the researcher intentionally distributed the questionnaire in excess of the sampling size to ensure enough qualified respondents to meet the minimum numbers of people according to Yamane's sampling table.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

5.2.1 From questionnaires

5.2.1.1 *Demographics and general issue of the subject*

Originally, the researcher expected that there might be only about 50% of respondents who knew the game but actually from the findings, there were 85% and most of them were female. The average age of respondents was 14 years old and they were mainly from M3. Most respondents (79%) could create simple joke riddles while a few (9%) was not interested in creating any. Moreover, different genders responded to participating roles in the game differently. The findings reflected that female students participated in the game as watchers and players more than male students. On the contrary, male students participated in organizing the game more than female students.

In comparison between two target schools, there were more female respondents in Phanatphittayakharn School and more male respondents in Chonburi Sukhabot School. In respect of Thai grades, most respondents (73%) got 3.00 or better. About respondents' interest in Thai poems, respondents were interested in *klorn*, *karp*, *khlong* and *chan* respectively. Regarding their ability in Thai poems, respondents reflected that most of them were able to create *karp* and *klorn* ranging from 'a bit' to 'good', only a few people could not create any poems. However, there were a lot of people unable to create *khlong* and *chan* in both schools. The findings also revealed that respondents from Phanatphittayakharn were more interested in Thai poems and their abilities in writing *karp* were more positive than those from Chonburi Sukhabot except for *klorn*.

According to the number of years of experience in Chonburi Joke Riddles, there were more respondents from Phanatphittayakharn (30%) with at least one year experience than those from Chonburi Sukhabot (15%). None of the respondents from the latter target school had over 5 years experience. On the other hand, about the

frequency of participation in the game, the respondents from Chonburi Sukhabot participated in the game more often than those from Phanatphittayakharn.

The last point in general was about the channel to access the game. Most respondents learned about joke riddles from school and some from friends and family.

5.2.1.2 Benefit of Chonburi Joke Riddle

Overall perceptions of respondents about the benefits of the game reflected that they agreed that Chonburi Joke Riddle was beneficial to them in many ways. The top three benefits most chosen were brain exercise (95%), entertainment (94%), and learning new vocabulary (92%). However, some respondents were either not sure or disagreed with the following points; improving skills in poems (42% not sure, 2% disagree), increasing self-esteem (40% not sure, 5% disagree) , and improving logic (35% not sure, 2% disagree).

5.2.1.3 Knowledge About Chonburi Joke Riddle

Even though the respondents themselves suggested that they had certain ability in Thai poems, this part of the questionnaire was designed to test how much they know about the game in relation to Thai poems. The findings revealed that respondents were able to identify three types of joke riddle more correctly, i.e. pictorial joke riddle, revert word joke riddle and proverb joke riddle whereas the other three types of joke riddle were less correctly identified. They were binding joke riddle, tonal joke riddle and one word joke riddle. *Karp* and *chan* were the two kinds of Thai poems that respondents from both schools had difficulty in identifying. However, in comparison of the two target schools, respondents from Phanatphittayakharn School had significantly better scores than those from Chonburi Sukhabot School.

5.2.1.4 Expectations Towards the Conservation of Chonburi Joke Riddle

This study focused on the expectations in four dimensions: value, anticipation, obstacles and suggestions. The findings showed that most respondents agreed that Chonburi Joke Riddle should be conserved (81%), it was enjoyable game (78%), and it should be promoted (74%). They had a positive anticipation of the game in that there was still some hope (65%) or a bright future (28%) for Chonburi Joke Riddles. The

study found that the most chosen factors as obstacles to the game were: 1) most people didn't know how to play this game (65%), 2) it was not popular (48%) and 3) its date and time were unpredictable as well as it lacked PR (both 44%). Lastly, the respondents suggested that the game should be modernized and schools become involved in the conservation.

5.2.2 From observation

From the two actual observations, the joke riddle had been purposively conducted in two distinct styles: one as a contest, and another as a demonstration. Both observations had their focus on five key elements: riddle master, audience, player, riddle, and atmosphere. Even though the general rules of the game were basically the same in every event, their organizational styles could vary depending on the skills of the joke riddle master. The audience had total freedom to watch or leave the game or even become a player. There was an exception for the joke riddle contest in which the players had been set prior to the actual event and could not be changed through out the competing session. Once a person decided to participate as a player, he or she had to read the joke riddle clearly, figure out 'the flag' and state exactly the correct answer. The joke riddle was another key element that could make the game interesting. Too difficult a riddle might drive the participants away whilst too easy a riddle might diminish the challenge of the game and devalue its benefits. It was not one particular element that contributed to the atmosphere of joke riddling but a combination of everything.

5.2.3 From interview

Unlike questionnaire and observation, the interview part allowed respondents to answer open-ended questions freely. Even though the two interviewees had different years of experience, one for over five years and another for about a year, they raised interesting points in the same direction – positive expectations towards the Chonburi Joke Riddle. As a matter of fact that they both shared the joke riddle master role might be the reason. The findings were presented under three topics: 1) obstacles, 2) benefits and value, and 3) suggestions.

First, in respect of obstacles, there were variety of more interesting activities for teenagers which could easily draw their attention away from traditional entertainment like the joke riddle, especially as the opportunity to participate in Chonburi Joke Riddle is rare. Moreover, the nature of this game is thought-demanding and time-consuming, which is opposite to the nature of youth, who enjoy speed and get bored easily.

Secondly, regarding the benefits and value, it was mutually agreed that the Chonburi Joke Riddle was fun and rewarding. One way, it served society is that it promoted the local lifestyle and preserved Thai culture; and the other way, it served individual needs in that it improved logical and creative thinking as well as built up skills in public speaking and entertaining audiences.

Finally, the suggestions for conservation of joke riddling were to organize it more regularly, to preserve the original format but adapt some modern content, to use digital technology to call the attention of youths such as making the Chonburi Joke Riddle a computer game, and to promote it via the internet to make it more widespread.

5.3 DISCUSSION

According to the study results, the current situation of Chonburi Joke Riddle is changeable. Even though most respondents know that the game exists, only a few people know how to play it. It is unlikely that a traditional entertainment will survive in this changing world without sufficient development. There are things to be eliminated as well as things to be promoted but the challenges are what and how.

It is undeniable that school and family are the main linkages between the secondary school students and the joke riddle game. It is crucial that these key sources disseminate the game's value on top of the enjoyment and reward that people can probably expect from their participation in the joke riddle. Because different participating roles require different level of understanding and knowledge of the game ranging from the least (the audience) to the most (the joke riddle master), also the future of the game relies on all the parties, it is suggested that all the weakest areas of the game have to be fixed. Most respondents only realize the benefits and value when they obviously sense them such as enjoyment, reward, learning new vocabulary whilst

the intangible value such as improving creativity and logical thinking skills, or building up self-esteem are overlooked. Another problematic area in the joke riddle is related to the knowledge either of the game or Thai poems. Only a few types of joke riddles and Thai poems can be identified correctly. It's interesting to see the scores of joke riddle and Thai poetry knowledge tests. The students from conservative school where students are required to read different types of poems regularly to their teachers had higher scores than those in the other target school.

Nowadays there are many interesting entertainments for teenagers, such as computer games, online societies, music and movie devices, outdoor adventure, and so forth, chances that they turn to the traditional game are few. Unless the realization of the game is value in a deeper sense has been rooted, the tendency of the Chonburi Joke Riddle to fade away is high.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

After the discussion, the following conclusions can be drawn.

5.4.1 Current Situation

Similar to any traditional cultural activities in the world, Chonburi Joke Riddle is facing globalization and striving to survive. Superficially, the game is still known to people in Chonburi these days. However, on looking closely, their knowledge of the game and Thai poems may not be good enough for them to become a joke master. Players and watchers alone cannot ensure the existence of the game.

5.4.2 Future Anticipation

According to rational expectation theory, positive expectation leads to positive outcome. In this case, most people believe that there's still some hope for the game and some even think that a bright future lies ahead. This reflects that secondary school students are still optimistic about the Chonburi Joke Riddle, therefore, there is a probability to boost the popularity of this game. One major obstacle to the game is that the riddles themselves might be out of date. How can one make the content of riddles interesting and still keep the original format of the Chonburi Joke Riddle characteristics?

5.4.3 Practical Suggestions

From the study, here are four practical suggestions for schools and community to take into consideration about conservation of the Chonburi Joke Riddle game.

5.4.3.1 Modernize the Game Content While Maintaining the Original Format

Because the uniqueness of Chonburi Joke Riddle is its original poetry format, it should be conserved as it is. However, it is crucial to adjust the content to serve the interest of the present or else it will be easily seen as something out of date since its format is already in a traditional style.

5.4.3.2 Get Educational Institutions as Well as Communities Involved

As the study was conducted in schools, it seems like only ‘schools’ are responsible for the future of the Chonburi Joke Riddle. But in fact schools alone will not make it last. There should be a collaboration of schools, higher educational institutions, family and the communities to take part in conserving this traditional entertainment as local heritage for the next generation. With the efforts of many schools in Chonburi to promote this game nowadays, there’s a good potential to make this game famous again.

5.4.3.3 Make Use of Digital Technology and Internet

Even though previously, the game was communicated in a ‘face – to – face’ style, now that digital technology and the internet have already become a part of people’s lives, it is reasonable to consider using this technology to promote the Chonburi Joke Riddle as well as to increase the opportunity for participation without time constraints.

5.4.3.4 Organize More Regularly

One of the obstacles that most people mentioned was about the unpredictable dates and times of Chonburi Joke Riddle events. If the game is well promoted and people already know how to play it but the opportunity to play the game is rare, then it will soon be forgotten. Not surprisingly, there were some comments from respondents

that people should take conservation more seriously and organize the game as often as once a week.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

For further study to get a better understanding about the real situation of the Chonburi Joke Riddle in a broader horizon, it is recommended that the following studies should be considered and conducted:

- 5.5.1 Expectations from other perspectives such as from teachers, community leaders, or family members in order to justify the real situation of the Chonburi Joke Riddle.
- 5.5.2 The characteristics of riddles to see what people find interesting or out-of-date.
- 5.5.3 The qualifications of joke riddle masters.
- 5.5.4 The factors that promote the Chonburi Joke Riddle game.
- 5.5.6 A comparison of modern game popularity and the Chonburi Joke Riddle.
- 5.5.7 Role of higher educational institutions.