

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a discussion of research on semiotics written by Roland Barthes. It consists of research background, statement of problem, research purposes, research significance, conceptual framework, previous studies, and definitions of key terms.

#### 1.1 Research Background

"Dia de los Muertos" is a day that commemorates death, or what is called the day of the dead. On the day of "Dia de los Muertos" everyone believes that all the spirits of the dead will come back to their respective homes to party and have fun together. When other people are saddened by the anniversary of the death of their family, but in contrast to the culture in Mexico, in Mexico, the day of death is not meant to be mourned, but to celebrate together and have fun.

Culture is everything that is produced by the human mind (mind). Every human being lives in a certain socio-cultural environment and that culture always enforces the socio-cultural values that are embraced by members of the community. Film always records the reality that grows and develops in a society and then projects it onto the screen, Sobur (2017, p. 126).

The "Dia de los Muertos" festival is celebrated by Mexicans on November 2, which is 1 day after Halloween. The celebration of "El Dias Los Muertos" comes from a ritual that has been carried out since 3,000 years ago. With the belief in society that

death is not the end of life, but death is a transition from one life to another where communication between the dead and the living persists, this celebration is still ongoing from generation to generation to this day, Philipp (2013, p. 5).

The Coco movie tells the story of a 12 years old boy named Miguel who loves music and loves to sing. Miguel is a cheerful, friendly, kind hearted child and he is very kind to the people around him. He work as a shoe shiner. Miguel is one of the descendants of the Rivera family who is famous in his village, namely shoe maker.

However, the Rivera family is a family that really hates music, because the music was banned from the time of his great grandmother named Imelda, she is Coco mother. Mama Coco is the figure of an old grandmother who has a past that made her hate music so much, when she was a child she was abandoned by her father, Hector. His father went to town to become a famous musician, but unlucky when Hector was going home to meet Coco he was killed, he was killed by his own best friend, Ernesto De La Cruz, all of his family did not know about his father's death which they remember only Hector is a man who is not responsible for his family because he has left his family just like that.

Until in the end with all the prejudice, his wife named Imelda made a decision that was filled with hate speech, namely that she would forget all memories with her husband, including things that smelled of music, therefore since Imelda has implemented no music in her family. it continues today to his great-grandson named Miguel.

However, Miguel is different from the others, Miguel has the soul of a musician, he really likes music and really likes Ernesto De La Cruz and Miguel aspires to become a famous musician like Ernesto De La Cruz. One day on the day of commemorating the death (Dia de los Muertos) Miguel was invited by his grandmother named Elena to a place where all the photos of people who have died are stored and the place is called Ofrenda. Ofrenda is an altar that is installed in homes and certain places in Mexico, namely to commemorate and honor their deceased ancestors, Ashari (2018). In front of Ofrenda, Miguel was lectured by Elena that he should be able to respect his ancestors, but when his grandmother had not finished telling his story Miguel tried to leave and did not listen to his grandmother's story.

Rituals of death are part of a culture. With a variety of cultures created in this world from commemorating holidays to commemorating the day of death, everyone has a different way of one culture with other cultures. And from one nation to another. As if in Indonesia, there are death rituals, one of which is the final honor ceremony before being buried, the cremation ceremony, and holidays such as Nyepi, Vesak and so on.

Coco movie is an animated film inspired by the “El Dias Los Muertos” festival. As mentioned earlier above that Miguel has a different personality from all his family, he has the soul of a musician and does not follow the realm of his family, when Miguel runs away from his grandmother he tries to become a musician and he will take part in a competition that is held in the plaza, but when he was about to go to the plaza he was

caught red-handed by his grandmother that he was holding a guitar, and it really made his grandmother angry with him, the debate started at that time Miguel said words that he shouldn't have said "I don't care about that stupid Ofrenda" then he said taken by his grandmother and destroyed, Miguel immediately wept and left his house.

After he ran away from his house he still tried to take part in the race in the plaza then he entered the tomb of De la Cruz and he intended to borrow the guitar but when he took it and he strummed the guitar something unexpected happened. At first he thought he would be caught by the guards around the tomb but he was not seen by anyone except Dante the street dog who liked to be with him. It turns out that Miguel has been cursed and he is in the world of the dead, when Miguel runs and goes into a hole he is helped by a woman, after he says thank you he realizes that the one who helped him just now was a human who had become a skull, and when also Miguel saw a lot of living skulls everywhere.

Miguel is lost in the land of the dead and must get the blessing of one of his deceased family members to be able to return to the world of the living in just one night. Miguel's goal is none other than looking for his great-grandfather, a famous musician who has died so that Miguel gets the blessing to be able to return to the land of the living and get the blessing to become a musician.

In Coco's movie from the beginning we are presented with many visualizations of the images contained in the film from the beginning of the story using a picado pipel which explains the beginning of Coco's life with her mother until in the end she has

the decision to never play music or sing again in her lifetime. since her husband left her and her child, Coco. Until the last offspring, namely his great-grandson named Miguel.

In the movie, the writer finds a lot of interesting things to discuss because apart from having differences in one family that makes them fractured and less harmonious, but on the other hand there is a positive value, namely there is a child who wants to reunite music with life in his family. And the child was willing to sacrifice his life to reunite the harmony of his family with music.

The writer chose Lee Unkrich's movie, *Coco*'s an interesting research material to study from this animated film the figure of Miguel's a different character from the others, and he has goals and dreams that he must achieve, he always tries to get what he wants. In addition, the writer will also find out more about the "Dia el Muertos" festival and the myths or beliefs that exist in the Rivera family, namely those contained in the festival.

In this study the writer wanted to see what activities were carried out during the "Dia el Muertos" festival and what myths were contained in it, in this study the writer used the semiotic approach of Roland Barthes. The writer will use 3 approaches, namely connotation, denotation and myth. Because when the "Dia El Muertos" festival takes place there are things or taboos in it.

The writer chooses the Coco movie. Film 3D animated fantasy United States of America 2017 by Lee Unkrich with a duration of 105 minutes as research material by analyzing activities in the "Dia el Muertos" festival and what beliefs they believe in on the day of the dead using denotations, connotations and myths in Roland Barthes' semiotics. The sign of semiotics can be seen from the activities they do, such as visiting cemeteries and arranging Ofrenda. The writer chose to use Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis, because the meaning of a sign is related to myth.

In his book entitled Elements of Semiology, Barthes (1964, p. 15) distinguish denotation and connotation, which refers to the opinion of Louis Hjelmslev by using the term order of signification. In semiotics, denotation and connotation are two terms that describe the relationship between signifier and signified. Denotation and connotation are always described in terms of the level of representation or level of meaning. Denotation is the first order of signifiers. At this level there is a sign consisting of a signifier and a signified. In a sense, denotation is what we think of as a literal, permanent, meaningful dictionary of words that is ideally universally agreed upon. Meanwhile, connotation is the second order signification which contains an associative change in the meaning of the word. According to Barthes, this only applies at the theoretical level.

According to Barthes, (1991, p. 120) myth is a signification in the level of connotation. If a sign is adopted repeatedly in the syntagmatic dimension, the adoption part will look more appropriate than other applications in the paradigmatic dimension.

Then the connotation of the sign becomes naturalized and normalized. The naturalization of a myth is a cultural formation. Myth is a second order semiological system. A sign in the first system becomes a signifier in the second system. For Barthes, sign is the first system, or language, as object language, and myth as metalanguage. The significance of a myth erases the history or narrative of a sign and fills the empty space with new meaning.

According to Barthes, (1964, p. 4) in his book *The semiotic approach* is denotation, connotation and myth that will be used to solve the problem in this paper, because the semiotic sign seen from *Coco* shows a film with a myth about the "Dia El Muertos" festival which describes events or events related to death, because Therefore, the researcher chose to use Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis, because the meaning of a sign is related to myth.

According to Barthes, (1991, p. 142) in his book, any object can become a myth; Icons, symbols, movies, songs and stories. The writer chooses the film as the object of myth. Film is a visual communication that emerges as a cultural person. There are areas for romance, horror, thriller, drama, action, hero, and sci-fi films. So that people can easily find it today. The author chooses *Coco's* film as the object of research. *Coco* films have animation, adventure, musical, fantasy and mystery genres. This genre tells about an adventure accompanied by a mystery story.

Generally, the audience does not want to know about specific things such as symbols or myths or ideologies hidden in *Coco's* film. Here the writer wants to give

an understanding that how important the use of symbols in a film is, because the use of symbols in a film is unavoidable. Many viewers usually just enjoy the storyline. They are only interested in adventure stories, characters, love stories, musical dramas, technology used and how the story works.

### **1.2 Statement of Problem**

Based on the above background this research is about investigation into the symbols and myths in the movie titled Coco. Myths occur when people have their own interpretations of things that often appear around us, of course including in movies. In fact, some people don't even care. They think the film is just for entertainment. Inside Coco are some hidden messages from a celebration. So, this analysis focuses on symbols and myths in Coco's movie.

Based on this background, the writer can formulate the problem as follows:

1. How is the Festival Denotation “Dia El Muertos” in Coco movie ?
2. How is the Festival Connotation “Dia El Muertos” in Coco movie ?
3. What are the myths in the Coco movie ?

### **1.3 Research Purposes**

Based on the formulation of the problem above, the research objectives are:

1. To find out the denotations of the “Dia el Muertos” festival in Coco movie.
2. To Find out the connotations of the “Dia El Muertos” festival in Coco movie.
3. To analyze what are the myths contained in the Coco movie.



This study aims to develop a study of symbols and increase the writer's knowledge in understanding and analyzing symbols in movie.

#### **1.4 Research Significance**

Visual representation will provide an interesting experience in understanding the message of literary works the author hopes that the results of this research can be read by the wider community and the various sciences that are present in a film will be a means for ordinary people to love literature more. Visual representation will provide an interesting experience in understanding the message of literary works.

Theoretically, this research becomes an object to provide information about myths and symbols in a film. Practically, this research can trigger other writers to know about the symbols and myths contained in literary works such as films. Then, this research becomes a reference for other writers.

#### **1.5 Conceptual Framework**

Film is one of mass communication media. Therefore, most films are multi-social interpretations. Many messages contained in a film when watched are then interpreted by the audience. Some people view films only as works of art and entertainment, but films are a space for freedom of expression in the learning process, and other groups tend to interpret films as empirical realities that honestly record social values that occur in a society, Ardianto (2007, p. 136).

This assumption has an academic basis, because films are basically meant to entertain. Films in general reveal many realities that occur in the realm of society.

Facts in reality depicted by a film are no longer strange if in reality the world is considered something that is avoided (taboo) to be discussed in general. Film is a tool to convey things that are considered taboo as entertainment from the reality that surrounds society. Because most of the films usually describe the daily life experienced by the community.

One of the goals of semiotic analysis is to provide analytical methods and overcome the occurrence of misreading or misinterpreting the meaning of a sign. In his 1950s thesis, Barthes used semiotics as his theoretical tool. The thesis says that the structure of meaning that is built in media products and genres is derived from ancient myths, and from various events, these media get the same kind of significance as the significance that is traditionally only used in religious rituals.

- Roland Barthes' Semiotics Model

Barthes' theory of semiotics was developed from the theory of signs which was coined by Ferdinand de Saussure. Barthes uses the terms denotation and connotation to show the levels of meaning. The meaning of denotation is the first level meaning that is objective, namely by linking directly to the sign with the reality or symptom indicated. Connotative meanings are the meanings contained in signs with reference to cultural values, connotative meanings are meanings at the second level, Parwinto (2007, p. 163).

Denotative meaning is not something that can be precisely ascertained. This meaning is generalization. The details differ from one medium to another, but the associated general qualities still remain. Meanwhile, connotation is the operative mode in the formation and encoding of creative texts. And of course, all mass media texts and genres are based on connotation, because they are all designed to evoke culturally significant meaning. The connotation is quite strong because it evokes feelings and perceptions about everything, Danesi (2010, pp. 43-44).

In semiology, the meaning of denotation and connotation play an important role when compared to their role in linguistics, the meaning of denotation is direct, namely the special meaning contained in a sign, and in essence it can also be called a picture of a sign, Berger (2000, p. 59). In a general sense, the meaning of denotation is the actual meaning. This denotation usually refers to the use of language with a meaning that is in accordance with the meaning of what is spoken. Connotation works on a subjective level so that its presence is not realized. It is easy for readers to read connotative meaning as denotative meaning, Sobur (2006, p. 128).

## **1.6 Previous Study**

This research has some relationship with the previous studies. The first research by Alisha Husaina (2018) the title Analysis of the Coco film in Roland Barthes' Semiotic Theory which explains the culture in the "Dia El Muertos" festival using Roland Barthes' approach. While this research focuses on the Coco film by Lee Unkrich with using Denotation, Connotation and Myth by Roland Barthes.

The second research by Fira Maulida Nur Hidayah (2021) the title Semiotic Analysis of the Representation of Family Disharmony in Coco Film in Roland Barthes' theory which explains the estrangement or disharmony in a family using Roland Barthes' approach. While this research is focused on Coco's film Lee Unkrich using Denotation, Connotation and Myth by Roland Barthes.

The third research by Elisabeth Aprilia Nadeak (2019) the title Lexical and structural Ambiguity is found in the film script "Coco" in Ullmann's Theory which explains the ambiguity contained in the Coco film script. While this research is focused on the Coco film by Lee Unkrich using Denotation, Connotation and Myth by Roland Barthes.

The fourth research by Rivali Mutaqin Masyur (2019) the title An analysis of directive illocutionary act in Coco Movie by Lee Unkrich in George Yule's theory which explains the hidden meaning of a word (illocutionary) in the film Coco. While this study focused in Lee Unkrich's Coco film using Roland Barthes' Denotation, Connotation and Myth.

The fifth research by Deswita Rahmadania (2019) the title Language style of main character in Coco Movie in Martin Joss Theory which explains the style of language used by the main character in Coco film. While this research is focused on Coco film by Lee Unkrich using Denotation, Connotation and Myth by Roland Barthes.

This research is different from the research above. Even though it use the same theory, but the data is different. The writer takes the language of the film and the dialogue of the film script to find the denotation, conotation and myth in Coco movie. Therefore the title of this research is Denotation, Conotation and Myth of “Dia El Muertos” Festival in Coco Movie (2017).

### 1.7 Definitions of Key Terms

#### - **Semiotics**

**Semiotics** it comes from the Greek word semeion, which means sign. In general, semiotics is referred to as the study of signs or significance. Meanwhile, the significance itself, according to AJ Greimas and J. Courte, is knowledge that only emphasizes certain aspects of the range of sign knowledge, Baidhowi (2009, p. 24). Semiotics has its roots in classical and scholastic studies of the arts of logic, rhetoric, and poetics, Tinarbuko (2008, p. 16).

Understanding semiotics briefly is a way or method to analyze and give meaning to the signs contained in a text or message. The text referred to in this connection is all forms and systems of signs (signs) both found in mass media such as television shows, films, print media caricatures, radio, advertisements, and so on, Parwinto (2007, p. 155).

**Denotation** is the first level meaning that is objective, namely by relating directly to the sign with the reality or symptom indicated. Connotative meanings are

the meanings contained in signs with reference to cultural values, connotative meanings are meanings at the second level, Parwinto (2007, p. 163).

**Connotation** is the creation of the second layer of meaning that is formed when the symbol. Denotation is associated with psychological aspects, such as feelings, emotions, or self-confidence. Because basically connotative markers are built from a sign denotation system. In this case, denotation focuses more on the closeness of meaning, Sobur (2017, p. 127).

**Myth** is something that is difficult to explain because it involves a very wide area of meaning. Myth is a communication system, because it carries messages. Therefore, myth is not an object. Myth is not a concept or idea, but a way of significance, a form. Myths are not only in the form of messages conveyed in verbal form, but also in various other forms or a mixture of verbal and nonverbal forms. For example in the form of films, paintings, photography, advertisements, and comics. Everything can be used to convey a message, Sobur (2017, p. 224).