

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the research, the researcher presents the background of the problem, statement of problems, research purposes, research significance, and definition of key terms.

#### 1.1 Background of the Problem

Films are currently popular with many people. Regardless of age and gender, almost everyone likes watching films. Currently, the world of cinema has experienced rapid progress starting from quality, depiction, and many other things that have progressed. Apart from that, films are often used as a tool to communicate or convey a message. In the context of human life, communication does not only occur through words but also visual signs ranging from images to symbols. These signs have the power to represent complex meanings, often depicting psychological and emotional aspects that cannot be expressed in words alone. Film is a field study that is very relevant to fields involving signs, this is because films are built with many signs and symbols (Holis, 2021). The interweaving of signs in the film feels more complex because, at almost the same time, various signs can appear at once, such as visual, audio, and text. The film is a combination of the concept of signs with social culture in conveying its message.

The researcher chose films as research objects because film have a major contribution in depicting social reality and the many signs and symbols contained in them. The film chosen is the film *Smile*. *Smile* (2022) is a supernatural horror and psychothriller film released in 2022, written and directed by Parker Finn which is also an adaptation of the short film entitled *Laura Hasn't Slept* which was also made by director Parker Finn (Andani, 2022). *Smile* is one of the films made and raises current issues related to psychological trauma (Andani, 2022). This film, directed by Farker Finn, raises the theme of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and the psychological trauma experienced by Rose. Information regarding

this matter was also conveyed by Andani that in the film *Smile*, Parker Finn as the writer and director tried to make a horror genre film with a concept that was very different from the others, presenting horror through a calm and fake smile, horror by relying on the fear of trauma. , and this was Parker Finn's breakthrough in making this *Smile* film (Andani, 2022).

*Smile* from Paramount managed to break the \$100 million mark or around IDR 1.5 trillion globally (Andani, 2022), this event occurred less than two weeks after its release. The success of *Smile* at the global box office is impressive. *Smile* also previously took first place at the domestic box office for the first two weeks. The film's main international markets include the United Kingdom, Mexico, Germany, France, and Australia (Andani, 2022). With this, it can be ascertained that *Smile* is successful, besides that the film *Smile* has become a film that is loved by many audiences globally.

*Smile* tells the story of a therapist who witnesses his patient commit brutal suicide (Andani, 2022). Since then, Rose began to notice the strange and horrifying patterns of events and mysterious smiles on the faces of those around her, and from then on, Rose's long-harbored past trauma resurfaced. This film addresses the issue of mental disorders explicitly (Andani, 2022). The depiction of trauma-related mental disorders, including Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), became an important aspect of Rose's portrayal of life in her narrative. Rose's character is described as having a childhood background marked by shadows and difficulties, which contributed to the development of these mental health challenges.

The discussion about Post Traumatic Stress Disorder made researcher interested in making it a topic of discussion, the researcher here decided to analyze the various signs that signify or indicate Post Traumatic Stress Disorder contained in the *Smile* film, then represent the meaning of these signs and symbols. This is because the researcher believes that not everyone understands every sign presented and here the researcher tries to represent the meaning of the sign. By analyzing these signs and symbols throughout the film, the researcher aims to provide a deeper understanding of how Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is

represented in Smile's narration through the various signs in it, the researcher only analyzes the various signs through pictures, dialogues, or others just to show signs that refer to the phenomenon of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

This research is important to do because, the topics presented in this research have never been mentioned in previous research. In previous studies, many previous researchers may have discussed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder trauma, but the topic that discusses various types of signs that refer to the types of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder signs has never been mentioned by previous researchers. In this study, researchers used several previous studies related and relevant to this study, then used as a reference. The following will be explained in full about previous studies:

The first research by Aini, Syawalya, and Putra in the journal *Tuturlogy* entitled "Story About May: Representation of Coping Trauma in the Film *27 Steps Of May*" (2021). This study aimed to analyze how the portrayal of trauma coping in the film *27 Step Of May*. This study used qualitative descriptive research with Stuart Hall's semiotic approach that analyzed data that explained the meaning of signs through denotational meanings, connotations, and myths. The results of this study illustrate May's healing process to get out of the dark trauma she experienced for eight years. The trauma arose because May experienced sexual abuse until finally found a bright spot and May slowly recovered from her trauma.

Then the second study by Cahya in a thesis entitled "Representation of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in the Film *27 Steps Of May* (John Fiske's Semiotic Analysis in the Film *27 Steps Of May*, University of National Development "Veteran" East Java (2020). Research focused on the portrayal of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in the movie *27 Steps Of May*. This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type. The results of this study include the level of reality of the idea of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is most prominently shown through the expressions, costumes, and also gestures of the two characters, and the level of representation of the idea of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is most prominent in lighting techniques, shooting angles, and sizes. , and editing techniques, then at the ideological level of the scene are

associated with the concept of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder according to Carlson and Ruzek (2006).

Furthermore, the third research was conducted by Irmayanti in her thesis entitled "Multiple Personalities and Past Trauma in *Soulmate* Film (Semiotic Analysis)", Hasanudin University (2007). This research focuses on how the director constructed the portrayal of multiple personalities and past traumas in the character Cempaka in the film *Soulmate* using Pierce's semiotics. This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type. The result of this study is that the tagging used in this film is oriented towards the character of Pierce's sign, namely icons, symbols, and indexes. Where the choice of tagging helps the writer uncover the meaning of the construction done by the director. The analysis revealed that the index is the most dominant tagging option used in this film. While icons and symbols are not widely used, they still help in clarifying the meaning that existed before.

The difference between previous research conducted by Aini, Syawalya, and Putra with research conducted by researchers here lies in the discussion of problems, objects, and theories used. Previous research has focused on coping with depictions or focusing healing efforts on May's trauma. In addition, previous research in explaining the meaning of signs through the meaning of denotation, connotation, and myth was carried out using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. While researchers only use Charles Sanders Pierce's semiotic theory. In addition, the object is also different, researchers use the film *Smile* while previous researchers used the film *27 Steps Of May*.

In the second study conducted by Cahya, most of the problems analyzed were the same, focusing on the portrayal of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in films. However, the object and theory are different, the object used by the researcher is the film *Smile* using Charles Sanders Piece semiotic analysis, and the previous researcher used the film *27 Steps Of May* using John Fiske's semiotic theory which in previous research focused more on the level of reality, representative level and ideology level.

In the third study conducted by Irmayanti, the discussion of the problems analyzed is different from the research that will be carried out by the researcher, although using the same theory, namely using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic analysis, in this third research the focus is on how the director constructs the depiction of multiple personalities and past trauma in Cempaka character in the film *Belahan Jiwa*. While the researchers themselves in this study discussed the signs and symbols that refer to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in the film *Smile*. So even though we use the same theory, the focus of the problem is different.

From the explanation above, researchers are interested in dissecting and conducting analysis and then representing in depth all the signs in the film to reveal and answer the questions that arise. Guided by the subject matter related to various types of signs and symbols that represent and indicate Post Traumatic Stress Disorder experienced by the character Rose. Using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic approach, researchers parse and explain the signs constructed and created in film. So in this discussion, researchers will discuss various types of signs and symbols that refer to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder through their symptoms, then represent the meaning of these signs and symbols.

### **1.2 Statement of Problem**

Based on the background of the problem can be formulated into the research questions as follows:

1. What are the types of signs of psychological traumatic Stress Disorder shown in Parker Finn's *Smile* based on Representamen, Object, and Interpretant?
2. How are the representations of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in the film *Smile*?

### **1.3 Research Purpose**

Based on the research above, the objectives of this research include:

1. To find out the types of signs that show Post Traumatic Stress Disorder(PTSD) based on Representament, Object, and Interpretant in Parker Finn's *Smile*

2. To describe the representation of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder(PTSD) in the film "*smile*" analyzed using the semiotics of Charles Sanders Pierce.Pierce.

#### **1.4 Research Significances**

This research can be useful and also provide insight into knowledge, both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the results of this study can make a scientific contribution, especially knowledge of sign systems in the semiotics of Charles Sanders Pierce's theory in analyzing a theme related to the theme of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder(PTSD), and analyzing films with semiotic studies Charles Sanders Pierce based on Representation, Object, and Interpretant, and can be a reference material for students who want to conduct further research on this subject.

On the other hand, practically, this research is also useful for students who are interested in the analysis process of Representation, Object, and Interpretation in semiotics as a reference for future manuscript researchers or academics and this research can also contribute to any reader who is looking for a new study in analyzing sign symbols in semiotics as well as analyzing a theme related to the theme of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder(PTSD) in a film. In addition, this research can also provide benefits in the form of additional science and knowledge in analyzing a film using Charles Sanders Pierce's semiotic theory.

#### **1.5 Definition of key**

By providing these definitions, the researcher aims to ensure clarity and a common understanding of the key terms used throughout the research, fostering accurate interpretation and avoiding potential confusion or misconceptions. To ensure a clear understanding and prevent any potential misunderstandings regarding key terms in this research, the researcher provides the following definitions:

1. **Semiotic:** According to Peirce, Semiotics says that the science that builds semiotics always makes humans think through signs. That is, man reasoned through signs. For him, logic is the same as semiotics

and semiotics can be applied to all types of signs ( Sutanto, 2005. p. 11-22). Such signs shape human perception.

2. **Representament:** Pierce (in Desmedt, 2011) defines a representamen as "something that represents another thing: its object." The representamen is a pure potentiality before it is interpreted: a first. A sign (Representamen) is anything that can be absorbed by the five senses and refers to something.
3. **Object:** The object is what the symbol signifies (Pierce in Desmedt, 2011). Signs can only symbolize objects; they cannot give him with information. Signs can convey information about an item if the interpreter is already familiar with it through earlier observations (experiences formed from other signs, which are always from previous history).
4. **Interpretant:** The thinking idea of the person employing a sign and deriving it to a certain meaning or the meaning one has in mind about the thing to which an object is referring sign (Mabrukahah, 2018). The indication that a person has in mind regarding the thing to which a sign refers.
5. **Representation:** Danesi (2010) defines representation as the use of signs (images, sounds, and so on) to re-display something that has been absorbed, imagined, or perceived in physical form. A concept that can refer to a symbol, model, or image that resembles someone or something. In this research, the focus is on the representation of signs and symbols that indicate or represent PTSD in the film "Smile".
6. **Film:** Javadalasta (2011) defines the film as a series of images that move and form a story known as a movie or video, which is in the form of audio-visual media consisting of pieces of images that are united into a unified whole and have the ability to capture socio-cultural reality, certainly making the film able to convey the message contained in it in the form of visual media.

7. **Smile film:** Smile (2022) by Parker Finn is a film that carries the supernatural horror and psychothriller genres (Andani, 2022). This film is one of the films made and is based on issues that occur in the present related to psychological trauma. Smile is also an adaptation of a short film titled Laura Hasn't Slept which was also made by director Parker Finn. Smile tells the story of a therapist who witnesses his patients brutally commit suicide.
8. **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder(PTSD):** Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a mental illness that can develop after a person experiences or witnesses a traumatic or extraordinarily unpleasant event. Dr. Pittara (2014) provided the explanation for this term. PTSD typically develops following a traumatic incident such as an accident, natural catastrophe, physical or sexual violence, or a life-threatening encounter. Increased sensitivity to stimuli, acute and persistent emotional reactions to situations suggestive of trauma, excessive anxiety, difficulties sleeping, repeated nightmares, and intrusive thinking are all signs of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.