

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter present the discussion on background of the research, statement of research problem, research purpose, research significance, definition of key term, and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background of the Research

Words serve as powerful tools in daily communication, shaping our interactions and experiences. They facilitate relationship-building by fostering understanding and empathy, enabling us to express emotions effectively and resolve conflicts. Additionally, words facilitate knowledge transfer and influence actions through persuasion and motivation. They also impact self-esteem, creating a sense of belonging and reflecting cultural identity. Thus, it's crucial to use words mindfully, promoting fairness and positivity in our interactions while recognizing the inherent power they possess. It is often used to communicate messages that are not only informative, but also interesting (Sultanatta & Maryam, 2019). Playing with words in the world of media, especially in today's digital age, is often fascinating, not only in face-to-face interactions. Social media is a collection of online platforms and applications that facilitate communication, information sharing and social interaction among users around the world. These digital tools enable the creation, sharing and exchange of content including texts, images, videos and ideas in real time. Social media are defined as a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technical foundations of Web 2.0 and enable user-generated content to be created and shared (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Creative wordplay can create viral content on social media platforms, spark intense interactions and even trends. In this case, it serves not only as a means of communication, but also as a tool that can influence the way people think about certain issues or the way they perceive something.

Spreading an issue through social media is one of the most effective ways of doing this in this day and age, because it can be done quickly and thoroughly. The spread of information is certain to have a reaction on the part of its recipients. The information can be stored, retrieved and transformed by means of 'mental programmes', the results of which are behavioural responses (Soul, 2024). Therefore, especially in these social media, pros and cons are created on an issue that is informed. Today, it's not surprising to see social media being used for both support and resistance. This requires more understanding on the part of the recipient of information in order to continue digesting the meaning of the information received.

Comprehending the complexity of linguistics is challenging, and one of the biggest obstacles is the interpretation of signs and implied meanings embedded in language. The meanings that are expressed indirectly can lead to many mistakes in their meaning and understanding, as meanings that are written indirectly require a deeper process in order to be understood (Haraway, 2018). It is important to recognise that not everyone can easily reach this level of understanding, although some people may have the ability to translate such meanings directly. This aspect is all the more important as the misinterpretation of signs or meanings can have a significant change and impact on the purpose and intent behind the message being communicated.

The thesis made by the researcher focuses on the discussion of the decomposition of complex meanings and signs in the media of the poster as a medium that does not only contain information, but also contains many signs. A poster can be a comprehensive description of how it's designed, made and intended, often accompanied by relevant quotes. A well-written description provides essential information about the poster's visual elements, such as colors, fonts, images, and layout. It also provides information about the intended audience and context. In addition, to maintain academic integrity and lend credibility to the description, citations are used to acknowledge the sources of information, ideas, or images

borrowed from other works. The poster should be concise, clear and attractive. It should use persuasive language to attract the audience's interest. (Gusfitri, 2021). That is why posters have always been a tool that makes it easy to do many things. They can be used for advertising, information, even social and humanitarian activities. This is why it is disseminated on social media. It is therefore accessible to a large number of people and has a very wide reach.

Nowadays, everything is digital and it's not only possible to communicate in the traditional way, but social media is one of the to continue to communicate. Social media is a collection of online platforms and applications that facilitate communication, information sharing and social interaction among users around the world. These digital tools enable the creation, sharing and exchange of content including texts, images, videos and ideas in real time. Social media are defined as a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technical foundations of Web 2.0 and enable user-generated content to be created and shared (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). They are used to develop social connections using highly available and scalable publishing methods (Sajid, 2015). The term social media refers to the various digital platforms and online communication channels that facilitate social interaction, the sharing of content and the networking of users. These platforms allow people to use a variety of forms, such as text, images, video and live streams, to connect, share information and engage with each other. Social media has had a significant impact on the way people communicate and consume information. It has also influenced social, political and cultural aspects of society. Social media platforms include popular networks. The most popular social media websites today include Twitter, blogs, Facebook and Instagram. Instagram is more popular than the other social networks. Basically, Instagram is a mobile-based application that allows users to take photos or images to document daily activities, events, hot news, music, meme even more than sharing them instantly with friends on different social. Instagram has experienced strong and steady growth despite the fact that the application was only launched in 2010 (Ting, 2015). As media digital age has had a profound impact on communication and information sharing through

the rise of social media. As a collection of online platforms and applications, social media enables users worldwide to communicate, create content and interact in real time. Social media has impacted society in a variety of ways, influencing communication, information consumption, social, political and cultural aspects through various forms such as text, images, videos and live streams. Social media continues to develop and shape the way to connect and engage with one another in the modern world.

Instagram is a popular social media platform that allows users to share photos and videos and interact with others through various features such as Direct Messaging, Stories and Reels. Instagram gives users the opportunity to communicate their experiences through photos (Weilenmann, 2013), and is a relatively new form of communication (Hu, 2014). Instagram is an online photo album that was launched in 2010 (Hochman & Manovich, 2013) it allows users to take photos and videos with their mobile devices, to do some basic editing by applying digital filters, and to share them on a variety of social media platforms. This is because every moment counts, or at least that's how it seems to be in the eyes of the users of social media (Hochman & Schwartz, 2021). A key idea behind the application is to share photos and videos using a hashtag (#). This allows other users to find the photos (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016). Users can also tag a picture or video during the publishing process, either on their own to provide a description or by following a predetermined tag dictionary (Schwartz & Halegoua, 2015). Therefore, social media like Instagram is a place where posters spread so quickly. Some people can use Instagram as a means of entertainment through what they post on it, but in fact Instagram isn't just limited to that proposition. For example, one account, *@flyers_for_falastin*, is using Instagram as a means of resistance through the posters that they are publishing and spreading all over the world.

flyers_for_falastin is one of the accounts or platforms on Instagram that use posters to carry out humanitarian activities, and this account is focused on raising the issue of Palestinian independence. *flyers_for_falastin* is a Belgium based

initiative to spread awareness about the occupation and genocide happening in Palestine. a group of four friends who initiated this project in October 2023, driven by a sense of powerlessness and the desire to take action. As well as online, they also collect posters and upload them to their Instagram account. They also work with public spaces such as bars and restaurants as a place to display printed posters, which combines the functions of posters and flyers, so that posters to the visual domain and flyers to the function of dissemination, which are printed in small sizes and contain information, so the name of this account is *flyers_for_falastin* but contains posters. The account *flyers_for_falastin* is one of the accounts that is so effective in spreading current information on the Palestinian issue through posters. Initially created at the beginning of 2023, this account only had 30 thousand followers and now, by July 2024, it has 103 thousand followers and also 1,040 posts.

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict intensified dramatically with Hamas's attack on October 7, 2023, which led to a severe escalation of Israeli military actions against Palestine. Reports indicate significant civilian casualties, including women and children, with accusations of genocidal intent against Israel. According to Ghassan Abu Sittah, a doctor at Gaza's Al Shifa and Al Ahli Arab hospitals, the attacks on hospitals demonstrate a strategy aimed at exterminating the Palestinian people, a sentiment echoed by Al Jazeera. Experts liken the situation to a second Nakba, citing evidence of incitement to genocide, intentional destruction of Palestinian communities, and widespread use of powerful, indiscriminate weapons (Nijim, 2020). This situation reflects the broader definition of genocide, which involves actions intended to destroy a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group, directly or indirectly, through various means such as killing, inflicting harm, and creating life-threatening conditions.

This thesis is about linguistics that uses the theory of semiotics by Roland Barthes to analyse the meaning contained in posters, especially in relation to text and images using (S-S) or signified and signifier. According to (Barthes & Miller, 1990),

semiotics aims to capture various sign systems, e.g., substances and borders, images, various body movements, various sounds in music and various objects to integrate them into a system of meaning. Barthes referred to semiotic signs as sign functions in relation to their context of use because these signs simultaneously use and convey meaning. Barthes also stated that the sign is involved in a threefold relationship, namely that of denotation, connotation and myth. Semiotics is concerned with the integration of many different sign systems. In this sense, a sign can be anything which communicates a meaning, such as a word, a picture, a sound, a gesture or a physical object. Signs serve as valuable tools for revealing hidden or implicit meanings. The purpose of semiotics is to understand the ability of the human species to create and understand signs, according to Sebeok (2001), This understanding enables the creation of representations which are the result of the study, classification and unveiling of complex symbolism. The theory of Roland Barthes, including the denotation, the connotation and the myth, is used in this research because of the alignment between the object of research and the theory. A poster, which undoubtedly has a lot of signs, can be analysed not only by the theory of Barthes, but also by other theories such as Ferdinand De Saussure, Charles Sanders Peirce, etc. However, Barthes has been chosen because it is in line with the researcher's aim of studying the relationship between literal meaning and non-literal meaning, dictionary meaning and second meaning, and reality and cultural meaning. Another reason is that the understanding of the researcher himself tends to lean more towards or understand more Roland Barthes's theory.

Understanding poster becomes a media of resistance that can convey the symbolic resistance is one of the effective ways. Symbolic resistance, according to Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991), is how less powerful individuals or groups use cultural symbols to challenge or question existing power structures. This may happen through the acceptance or rejection of cultural preferences associated with the dominant class or group, and through the use of language, lifestyle or other symbolic acts. On the other hand, Žižek (Žižek, 2002) argues the concept of symbolic resistance is about how symbols and cultural representations are

represented and linked to ideological domination, hegemony and power, to the point of influencing film, media and popular politics. However, it turns out that the function of symbols is not limited to the reflection of existing power. It can also be a source of resistance and subversion. As well as being used to maintain existing power, symbolism has the potential to become a tool of resistance and social change, and can also be used as a weapon to challenge and subvert existing power structures. Symbolic resistance becomes an important tool in struggling for greater social change. Often unknowingly use these symbols in our daily lives.

posters can be used for any purpose, including fighting against the existing situation, which includes the practice of colonialism. The posters found on the *@flyers_for_falastin* account are about resistance to colonization and oppression in Palestine. For example, there's a poster with a non-verbal message: “ History did not star on October 7th “, which shows the resistance to history as it is found in Bourdieu's theory of resistance. Of course, it also has a connotative meaning that says that the assumptions used by Israel as a means of self-defense in this matter are not an excuse that will continue to be echoed. So that the reaction and influence that the myth does for the article is not to justify what is the assumption of Israel's reason for the attacks that continue to take place. Researchers are therefore interested in making it an object.

There are several previous studies that have examined signs and used the theory of Roland Barthes. Firstly, there is a thesis by Rifa Nadira (Nadira, 2018) titled 'Roland Barthes' denotation, connotation, and myth in the change of four Starbucks logos: a study of semiotics'. The main subject of the study was the change of the Starbucks logo, which took place on four different occasions. The results of this study are several findings regarding the denotation, connotation, and mythical meanings of the changes in the Starbucks logo. For example, the fourth change in the Starbucks logo is found in the figure of 'Siren', who initially has no clothes on her upper body, which is covered by her hair. The color of the logo has changed from brown to green. The meaning and connotation of each logo has changed. The

myth lies in the figure of the 'Siren' and in the color. The color symbolizes development, luxury, simplicity and other things.

Second, there is Amilah Salsabila's (Salsabila, 2020) thesis entitled *The sign and the myth of sarcastic in the @sarcastic_only meme*. Her research focuses on denotative and connotative meanings of social media memes, especially Instagram. The source of data in the study is the Instagram account *@sarcasm_only*. The aim is to analyze the denotative and connotative meanings through verbal and non-verbal signs of memes in the account. Therefore, the researchers use the theories of Roland Barthes and John Heiman. This research method is a qualitative descriptive method. The researcher collected sarcastic memes related to women. The memes are analyzed and interpreted in the description. Fifteen memes are analyzed. The researcher is interested in analyzing them because there are many implicit meanings conveyed to the readers. On the basis of the results of the study, the researcher has found the elements of the phenomenon that make up the meme, whether it is rude, complimentary, indirect or direct. Although memes provide information about women's characters and habits, or simply as entertainment and satisfaction in making them, whatever it is, they are all inseparable from the negative sides that must be avoided. One of these is to corner the other party through memes.

The third is Nurhasanah Purba and Khairunnisa Tambunan (2021) *Semiotic Analysis of Roland Barthes on Wardah Advertising Version "I Face of Indonesia"*. An article that uses Barthes' semiotic sign map to examine and describe the meaning contained in an advertisement, namely the Wardah advertisement version "I face of Indonesia". Qualitative methods were used to describe the object studied according to the data obtained. The results of this study indicate that Wardah's "I face of Indonesia" advertisement is an advertisement that has motivation and solutions to the problems faced by many women in Indonesia, namely certain insecure (lack of confidence) in its delivery to the Indonesian people. Women who are potential consumers of Wardah's "I face of Indonesia" version. This advertisement has two interrelated and complementary meanings, the denotative and the connotative. In

the advertisement, there is a choice of signs to represent a phenomenon. These signs are raised until they are interpreted by the public to form a discourse in the advertisement.

This study differs from previous studies. The object of this study is different, although it has the same problems as previous studies. The object is the posters that were published by the Instagram account *@flyers_for_falastin*. These are posters that contain support or resistance to the conflict that has taken place in Palestine. Of course, there are symbols in the posters that need to be understood by the viewer or reader. So that there are no misunderstandings about the message.

1.2 Statement of Problem

This research aims to identify and explore how a poster can be used as a tool of resistance through symbolic means to raise awareness of the issue of Palestinian genocide. The following research questions can be formulated on the basis of the problem background:

1. What are signifier and signified of symbolic resistances that employed in *flyers_for_falastin* posters?
2. How are denotation, connotation and myth in *flyers_for_falastin* posters?

1.3 Research Purpose

The research Purposes may be as follows, depending on the statement of problem to which the answers are to be found:

1. To analyze the signifier and signified of symbolic resistance employed by the *flyers_for_falastin* in the posters they uploaded.
2. To analyze the meaning of denotation, connotation and myth contained in the posters uploaded by *flyers_for_falastin*.

1.4 Research Significances

The researcher intends that the results of this study can be useful and bring some benefits for the use of language theoretically and practically.

- a. **Theoretically**, the Theory of Semiotics used in this research is to develop several theories that have existed. The theory of Roland Barthes, which is related to the denotative, connotative, myth and combined with the theory of Bourdieu and Žižek, which is related to the symbolic resistance, the theory to look for the sign and myth in the structure of resistance that writing in the poster.
- b. **Practically**, the research is intended for anyone who is interested in a poster in *@flyers_for_falastin* and wants to have a better understanding and in-depth analysis of posters and can itself give a contribution to other fields. This research is intended to give a wider knowledge about how the pictorial text like poster has the meaning which refers to the symbolic resistance and the relationship between text and image in poster and can be analyzed by semiotic study. and maybe someone wants to make a poster with understanding of the theory because posters are not only for advertisement or information but have an implicit meaning in them which is sometimes misunderstood by some people. It gives the idea that it is easy to understand posters once you know their content. The researcher hopes that this study will be an encouraging addition to those interested in this area of research, as well as an alternate reference or supporting addition to existing research. The theoretical contributions made by this research are useful in several areas, especially for those studying Linguistics, because some additional information is given to the reader. In order to make the process of analysis easier, the researcher decided to use many theories. These theories will help the researcher to have a better explanation of any data from an object. Creating or using posters is no longer used for advertisement or information but there are other purposes, for example, to be an alternative for doing a

resistance. As this study uses a semiotic approach, the researcher can analyze the meaning that appeared in the posters. The interpretation of the symbolic resistance effect will be in relation to the meaning of the posters of the text, and as a final result, the whole meaning of the posters will have emerged. The researcher hopes that this research can be useful for the students of English Literature as a reference for the analysis of the posters or for semiotics.

1.5 Definiton of Key Term

Some of the terms that are very important to describe related to the research, including semiotics, signifier, signified, denotation, connotation, myth, symbolic resistance, and poster.

- a. **Semiotics:** Semiotics according to (Barthes & Miller, 1990), semiotics aims to capture various sign systems, e.g. substances and borders, images, various body movements, various sounds in music and various objects to integrate them into a system of meaning.
- b. **Signifier:** Signifier refers to the physical form or representation of a sign.. Signifier basically refers to the concrete or perceivable form that describes or represents a sign (Roland Barthes, 1968).
- c. **Signified:** Signified is the concept, idea, meaning, or interpretation associated with the signifier, playing a central role in unraveling the depth of the message conveyed (Roland Barthes, 1968).
- d. **Denotation:** Denotation is the first order of meaning according to Barthes (1964: 89). Barthes calls the first level of signification or denotation what de Saussure called denotation. This is a process created by everyday meanings that are clear and common sense.
- e. **Connotation:** Connotation is the second order of meaning after denotation, according to Barthes (1964: 89). At this second level, all signs created in denotation become signifiers for the emergence of second level meaning. The context, both personal and cultural, which can be understood or interpreted by the reader, listener or observer, is the signifier at this level.

- f. **Myth:** Myths according to Barthes in Nadira (2018), refers to popular beliefs and cultures. The term myth is used to refer to a concept that has been widely accepted in a place. It is a belief that is accepted by more than one person, because a community conceptualizes or understands certain issues as part of its social experience.
- g. **Symbolic Resistance:** Symbolic Resistance according to Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991), is how less powerful individuals or groups use cultural symbols to challenge or question existing power structures. This may happen through the acceptance or rejection of cultural preferences associated with the dominant class or group, and through the use of language, lifestyle or other symbolic acts.
- h. **Posters:** Poster is a notice (in the form of an announcement or advertisement) displayed in a public place (Gusfitri). A well-written poster description should explain what the poster is about, how it was designed and produced, and who it's intended for. It should be informative, persuasive and include citations for borrowed information. Posters are versatile tools that can be used to advertise, inform and promote social activism.
- i. **Instagram:** Instagram is an online photo album that was launched in 2010 (Hochman & Manovich, 2013). it allows users to take photos and videos with their mobile devices, to do some basic editing by applying digital filters, and to share them on a variety of social media platforms.

1.6 Organization of The Paper

To present this thesis systematically and make it easier for readers to understand its contents. The researcher presents it into five chapters with the following arrangement:

CHAPTER I : INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains background of research, research problem, research purpose, research significance, definition of key terms, and organization of the paper.

CHAPTER II : THEORETICAL REVIEW

This chapter contains review on semiotics, relation between semiotics and linguistics, relation between semiotics and poster, semiotics theory of Ferdinand De Saussure, semiotics theory of Roland Barthes, symbolic resistance theory of Pierre Bourdieu, the definition of posters, *flyers_for_falastin* account, and Instagram.

CHAPTER III : RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter contains research design, sample of data, sources of data, data collection technique, and data analysis technique.

CHAPTER IV : DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter contains the explanation of research, it is talking about analyze kind symbolic resistance, denotation, connotation, and myth of Roland Barthes found in posters of *flyers_for_falastin* account in Instagram.

CHAPTER V : CONCLUSION

This chapter contains the conclusion of the research that has been analyzed and suggestions.