

THE CONNOTATIVE MEANING OF THE SYMBOLS IN ISLAND KOREAN DRAMA

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze symbol using Roland Barthes' semiotics on Island Korean drama. This research explains symbols that appear in the Island Korean drama. The data sources are 7 selected pictures taken from Island Korean drama. Data collection by: (1) searching for Island Korean drama on the Telegram and web, (2) downloading Island Korean drama, (3) watching the drama, (4) selecting and screenshotting scenes that are directly related to symbol. Meanwhile, the data analysis procedures are: (1) understanding the dialogue on Island Korean drama, (2) describing the connotative meaning of symbol of each scene, (3) drawing a conclusion. This research shows that symbols have connotative meanings in Island Korean dramas that emphasize something that is a convention of society in South Korea.

Keywords: *Symbol, connotation meaning, Roland Barthes, Island.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Drama serves as a window through which its audience can see the people's cultural values as well as a mirror of social life from which readers can deduce and recognize the customs and manner of life of every nation (Keshta, 2000: 53). This interpretation aligns with Morgan's (1987: 7) depiction of drama as an art form of communication. According to Keshta (2000: 53), the drama portrays the complete life cycle, from conception to death. In drama communication, signs or symbols are very important as they relate to meaning in semiotics and communication. Semiotics is the study of sign processes and meaning-making. A symbol is the representation of one object, with another object frequently in literature often a way to communicate deeper meaning without expressing literal terms. Semiotics can be used in media research, not only as a theoretical framework but also as a method analysis. Therefore, the researcher is interested in analyzing the symbol in Island Korean drama.

Drama that simulated the real world are sometimes accompanied by common words. Since then, the authors try to expand their imagination with many linguistic tricks. A stylistic feature that is said to have an aesthetic or creative effect on the viewer. The Island Korean drama offers uniqueness in various aspects, encouraging authors to study it. Firstly, the unique and mysterious plot combines fantasy, romance and mystery rarely seen in other dramas. Second, the complex characters and their emotional development make for a special appeal. Third, the stunning filming locations and epic cinematography provide an exceptional viewing experience. Fourth, the drama has contributed to the creation of the Hallyu wave or Korean phenomenon by introducing Korean culture to a global audience. Through this research, the researcher wanted to understand the impact, appeal, and cultural reasons why the TV series *Island* became so popular around the world.

In *Island* Korean drama, researcher used Roland Barthes' semiotic theory to explore the symbol that appear. The researcher collected data by watching the *Island* Korean drama, taking screenshots, and identifying each symbol in each scene. This research uses qualitative approach to gain in-depth understanding and explore the symbol in *Island* Korean drama. Because semiotics is a subjective method of symbol interpretation, qualitative research is appropriate, and semiotic analysis is ideal for use in qualitative analysis to disclose invisible inferred communication. The selection of the *Island* Korean drama as the object of research and the use of symbols as an analytical tool was chosen because the *Island* Korean drama caught the attention of researchers who showed about the culture and myths that exist in South Korea.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses a few theories, definitions, and earlier research that is relevant to the topic of this study. The symbolic and connotative meanings of semiotics are related theories that are connected to analysis. The Korean drama *Island* will serve as the research's data source.

2.1. Semiotics

According to Barthes, "semiology attempts to take in any system of signs, such as pictures, gestures, sounds in music, and objects, regardless of their materials or boundaries. They serve as a significant system. Semiology is a subfield of linguistics that focuses on the major signifying units of speech, (Isfandiyary, 2017).

Language scientist Saussure defines "semiotics" as "the study of the role of signals as part of social life." Chandler (2007) defines semiotics as the study of anything that "represents" something other than what we usually think of as "signs." Signs can be semiotic objects, words, images, sounds, gestures, or other forms of communication. (Lestari, 2022).

Chandler (1994) defined semiotics as the theory of the creation and interpretation of meaning. The use of behaviors or items that function as "signs" in connection to other signs gives rise to meaning. Meaning is generally not intended to be a part of any

specific process, text, or object. Instead, meaning emerges from the act of communication itself. (Poole, 2013).

Connotative is the same as the mode of operation of the ideology he calls "myth." It seeks to succinctly and clearly convey and defend the time's dominant values. Implicit connotations can be deduced from the text. The connotative is the part of the sign that defines the relationship between the sign and the symbol in unclear, hazy, or confusing contexts. As stated by Barthes (1968), the connotative is simultaneously active, explicit, and invisible at the level of the communication itself. This is contrary to what many people believe (Moglen et al., 2019).

2.2 Symbol

According to Barthes (1993), a symbol is an item that serves to represent an idea about an object, such as a picture, shape, or sign. A sign is something used by someone to stand in for something else in a specific relationship or role. (Wulandari, 2020).

John Fiske (2010) explains that myths are stories that cultures use to elucidate or comprehend specific facets of nature or reality. According to Barthes, myth is a culture's conception or understanding of reality. Barthes sees mythology as an amalgamation of related concepts. Barthes (1993; 115) adds that myths are also called folk beliefs. Balto is quite professional. A set of ideas that are commonly held in a culture and through which its members conceptualize or comprehend a specific subject or aspect of their social surroundings are referred to as "myths." (Nadira, 2018).

2.3 Drama

Drama is the term for a story that is or is performed by actors. It is derived from the Greek word "draein," which means "to do" or "to act." According to Mario Klarer (2004), this is one of the literary subgenres of English literature that emerged from the religious aspect of human nature. "Theatrical roots are found in religious ritual practice." (Amalia Hafizhah, 2018)

Drama serves as a window through which its audience can observe the people's cultural values as well as a reflection of social life from which readers can deduce and recognize the customs and manner of life of any nation. This understanding is consistent with Morgan's (1987: 7) description of drama as a communication art (Shakfa, 2012).

2.4 Previous Study

There has previously been research on symbols in the island, but it focused on a different topic. The first was an analysis of denotation, connotation, and myth in the movie *Gentlemen* (Putri Wulandari, 2020). This research used qualitative descriptive method. The result of this study is finding the meaning of denotation, connotation, and myth in the movie *The Gentlemen*. The second, Melisa Theodora L.G. (2020) has analyzed about Analisis Semiotika pada Film *Parasite* dalam Makna Denotasi Konotasi dan Pesan Moral. This research used qualitative approach. The writer

determines the meaning of denotation, connotation, and moral message in the *Parasite* film. And the last, Selvi Yani Nur F. (2021) has analyzed of Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes Pada Film *Nanti Kita Cerita Hari Ini (NKCHI)* Karya Angga Dwimas Sasongko. The research used qualitative research method. The study results convey the meaning of denotation, connotation, and myth in the film *Nanti Kita Cerita Hari Ini (NKCHI)*.

This study and previous research share a number of similarities despite the differences in research methods and theory. This study is distinct due to the theory used and the data source. According to Roland Barthes' theory, the first study examined the meaning of denotation, connotation, and myth in the film *The Gentleman*. The second study examined the moral message, denotation, and connotation in the movie *Parasite* using Roland Barthes' theory. The previous study examined the film *Nanti Kita Cerita Hari Ini (NKCHI)* for myth, denotation, and meaning. This study uses Roland Barthes' theory to analyze symbol in the Korean drama *Island*. What sets this study apart from previous study is the different data sources. This study differs from previous studies is that the writer analyzed the symbols of sentences (speech) in all characters and scenes as primary data.

3. METHODS

In this study, the descriptive qualitative method is employed. Sharan and Elizabeth (2016) state that the methods and techniques most appropriate for collecting and analyzing data are specified by the qualitative, interpretive, or naturalistic research paradigm. Qualitative inquiry, which focuses on meaning in context, requires the use of data collection tools that are sensitive to underlying meaning when gathering and interpreting data. The best people for the task are humans, especially since the main components of qualitative research are observation, analysis, and interviewing (Ari Astutik, 2023). So, this research uses *Island* Korean drama as the main data, which is analyzed using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory to classify symbols. The data used in this research consisted of verbal and non-verbal data, which were obtained from *Island* Korean drama. The selected scenes are scenes that contain symbol.

In qualitative research, data collection is a crucial process to gather and analyze data. The data collection technique used in this research is documentation, where the *Island* Korean drama is taken from Telegram and web. To collect the data, the researcher searched the drama and downloaded. Then, the researcher watched the drama and selected scenes that are directly related symbol, whether in verbal, dialogues, and screenshot them. After selecting the scenes, the researcher described the connotative meaning of the symbols.

Data analysis is an important part of the research process, which involves collecting and analyzing data to find the necessary information. In this research, the data analysis technique used is documentation, specifically Roland Barthes' semiotic theory in finding and describing symbols. The data is displayed in the form of screenshots, and each screenshot includes the connotative meaning of the symbol.

4. RESULTS

This paper focuses on describing the symbol and connotative meaning in Korean drama *Island*. The writer just took 7 data were analyzed. The following will explain in detail of the result of study.

Data 1



- **Symbol**
In the first data, leech symbolizes habits, thoughts or feelings negative. Since leech is sometimes used for medicinal purposes, it can be used to remove negative things from your life.
- **Connotative**
The connotative meaning of leech is portrayed as the incarnation of the demon and a terrible sign.

Data 2



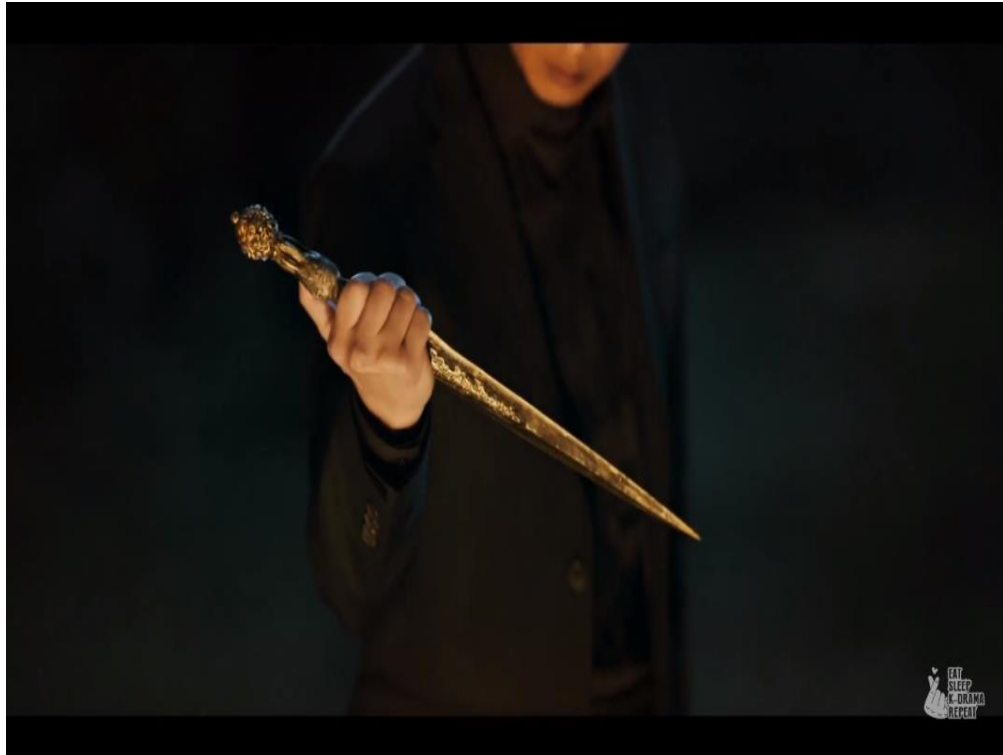
- **Symbol**
In the second data, Secretary Kang is possessed by black smoke. In South Korea, the smoke symbolizes the ascension of the soul, but also the ascension of prayers. It can be an element of mystery or intrigue in life. It can also symbolize a coming change or major alter in life.
- **Connotative**
The connotative meaning from smoke is connoted as a sign of the devil.

Data 3



- **Symbol**
In the third data, secretary Kang was possessed by a demon that made him want to kill Mi Ho. The red eye symbolizes demonic, weeping, and fury. It also represents strong emotions like love, anger, hate, and lust.
- **Connotative**
The connotative meaning of red eye is described as a person who has been possessed by the demon.

Data 4



- **Symbol**
In the fourth data, Van uses a sword to kill a demon-possessed person. The knife symbolizes severity, death, sacrifice, division, or liberation. It also an image of guilt, shame, and personal accountability.
- **Connotative**
The connotative meaning of the knife is connoted as a tool to kill demons that have possessed humans.

Data 5



- **Symbol**
In the fifth data, Van noticed that the *Benjulle* (sacred tree) had disappeared. The hole symbolizes a void or an emptiness. It can also represent your lack of self-esteem and acceptance as if you are trying to fill the void with something outside.
- **Connotative**
The connotative meaning of the hole is connoted as a bad sign.

Data 6



- **Symbol**
In the sixth data, Johan takes out a sword from his trouser pocket. The sword symbolizes strength, protection, authority, power, and courage. It speaks to separation and entering control of the judgment skills. It too an image of knighthood and chivalry.
- **Connotative**
The connotative meaning of the sword is connotations as a tool to eradicate lust demons.

Data 7



- **Symbol**
In the seventh data, painting of a woman covered in red ink. Red ink symbolizes power, passion, and vitality. It is also associated with gods, goddesses, and other supernatural beings. In different cultures, deities who embody love, war, and fire are often depicted with red jewelry.
- **Connotative**
The connotative meaning of red ink is connoted as a sign that death or bad luck will soon come to the person.

5. DISCUSSION

Based on Island Korean drama that have been analyzed 7 scenes are found that are directly related to the symbol, which were classified into 2 types of symbols according to Barthes (1993). The symbols are divided into: 4 symbols in the form of symbols that occur in an event example the loss of *benjulle*, secretary Kang is possessed by black smoke, and a painting that has red ink, and 3 symbols in the form of objects (sword and knife) and animals (leech). It is known that these symbols have different meanings according to the object or sign reference. Roland Barthes' theory can be used in the study of symbols.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on the Island Korean drama that have been analyzed 7 scenes are found that are directly related to the symbols of lust demon, weapons to kill lust demons, and danger of the Savior. According to Shaw in Fadaee Symbol is something that is used for, or considered to represent something else. More specifically, a symbol is a word, phrase, or other expression that has a complexity of associated meanings; in this case, the symbol is seen as having a value that is different from whatever it symbolizes. It can be concluded that there can be different opinions or perceptions to represent symbols, this depends on how the context of drama Island. The researcher shows the appearance of symbol emphasizes community expression of the scenes in Island Korean drama. The result of this research provides important insights into the use of symbols in communication. The discovery of symbols also illustrates the richness and complexity of language and shows that it has a remarkable capacity to express ideas and emotions.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to my parents who always support and pray for me, my thesis supervisor and my journal article supervisor who always provide input to my research to make it better.

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