

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the context of the study, formulation of the research question, purpose of the study, significance of the study, scope, and limitation of the study, and definition of key terms.

A. Context of the Study

Nowadays, a movie seems to be the most sophisticated and impactful art form globally. Rahmah (2019) stated a movie is a unique art form that has a tremendous impact on its audience since it combines art, music, writing, drama, and technology, it becomes entertaining to watch. It may help us better understand our lives, the lives of others around us, and even the workings of our society and culture. Kim et al (2021) stated many nations implemented social distancing procedures under COVID-19, forcing cinemas to restrict or even close their doors and encouraging people to stay at home, increasing the rise in OTT platform membership.

One form of entertainment choice that is commonly done at home is video streaming membership. The consumption of OTT or over the top video is steadily increasing, with forecasts predicting that the internet streaming business will be worth \$247 billion by 2027. Watching memberships or movies online is one method to become engaged in developing a new lifestyle pattern. According to a McKinsey Company survey released at the end of March, up to 45 percent of respondents were spending more for in-home entertainment during the pandemic. On the other side,

85 percent of respondents cut back on outdoor entertainment expenditures. (McKinsey, 2020; Suciati & Putra, 2022)

Netflix, Disney+, Prime Video, Hulu, HBO Max, ESPN+, Starz, Sling TV, YouTube TV, and Peacock are the greatest OTT streaming platform services that fans utilize to get their favorite video content (Wilbert, 2022). According to Databoks (14/02/2022), Disney+ had reached over 118,1 million members worldwide in the fourth quarter of 2021. Disney+ had the most distinctive distribution. Disney+ appears to prioritize family, comedy, adventure, and animation films. It also includes some action, drama, documentary, and fantasy films. It demonstrates that practically everyone now watches movies daily.

A movie is the most effective medium for delivering messages and information to a large number of people assembled in one place. As a mass medium, movies are also an excellent tool for cultural learning (McQuail, 2010). By watching movies, audiences learn a lot about culture, both the culture of their civilization and the culture of other nations. As Sobur (2003) points out, audiences may readily learn about other people's cultures at little or no cost and in their spare time. As a result, the movie holds an essential place as a cultural representation.

In the field of movies, cultural history is regularly brought up. Language and cultural interactions arise as a result of cross-cultural communication during this period (Nurhayati, 2019). The symbols of culture that appear in the movie are used to promote the culture or to deliver a message. To get the meanings of the symbols can be analyzed through semiotics concerns with studying the systems, norms, and regulations that permit these indications to be meaningful. Benny (2011)

said that semiotics is the science that analyzes signs or the study of symbols in humans. The symbols shown in the movie are representations of reality that allow a movie to construct and represent reality based on codes, conventions, and ideologies of its culture (Sobur, 2003). However, not all cultures that arise in each nation are assigned; just the culture of the people of the major nations is portrayed in the movie. Indeed, the culture shown in the movie is one based in Western countries. Therefore, watching a movie that highlights a new culture as information and knowledge is quite fascinating.

Walt Disney is one of the most successful companies in movie production. The most popular animated films in the world are animated films produced by The Walt Disney Company. One proof of the popularity of animated movies produced by Disney is the number of views on a YouTube channel called Walt Disney Animation Studios, which always reaches more than one million views. The popularity of Disney animated films is directly proportional to its consistency in producing animated films every year. In March 2021, Walt Disney released an animated film with a background inspired by the diversity of non-Western cultures, including the legendary legends of developing Southeast Asian countries such as Thailand, Vietnam, and Indonesia.

The researcher was interested in analyzing *Raya and the Last Dragon* since it was the first handmade Disney film with an intense portrayal of South-East Asian culture. *Raya and The Last Dragon* movie, being a Disney Princess movie by bringing various cultural variety from others, presents many audio-visuals that are recognizable to the people of Indonesia. This movie portrays numerous arts and

traditions comparable to those present in Indonesia, such as *gamelan*, *wayang kulit*, the roof of the *gadang* house, and the long sword that resembles the main character Raya's *kris*. Furthermore, the name "Raya" is derived from Indonesia and means "large." Each culture incorporates elements from many locations of cultural diversity. *Raya and the Last Dragon* is the 59th Disney movie. Since it was released in March 2021, this movie has been at the top of the box office for three weeks. This movie has a lot kind of unique elements. The story of Raya is not based on any specific legend or myth, but it is inspired by actual women. Raya is the first South-East Asian Disney princess.

The main character Raya is described as a powerful woman battling for trust. Finding solutions on a historical map that depicts the location of the last dragon resting in the water to find Sisu's location. Furthermore, several people Raya met along the journey joined the struggle. They collaborate to battle an evil power known as Drunn. To reunite and restore peace in Kumandra.

The phenomena associated with the movie mentioned above are intriguing to investigate, particularly for those who study media. The researcher is interested in this study because of the complexities of representation in portrayal and continuity, as well as changes in the metaphors, patterns, and functions of cultural diversity representation. The researcher assumes there are still many cultural contents in "Raya and the Last Dragon Movie". Particularly cultural content as authentic material for language learning can thoroughly enhance students' language skill development and intercultural speaking ability (Hilliard, 2015).

Several studies have been carried out on movies using different semiotic

approaches. Semiotics is defined by Ferdinand de Saussure in his *Course in General Linguistics*, as the study of signs as part of social life. Implicit in Saussure's definition is the principle that semiotics relies heavily on the rules of the game or social codes that apply in society so that signs can be understood collectively (Piliang, 2012). Saussure with the dyadic model, states that the sign consists of a signifier, namely the form or image of the sign, or in other words the physical form of the sign; and signified, namely the concept that is represented or mental concept (Birowo, 2004). Furthermore, Roland Barthes is the successor of Saussure's thought. In his theory, Barthes uses three things that are the core of his research, namely denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings. While, Charles Sanders Peirce, the founder of modern semiotics, defines semiotics as a relationship between signs (symbols), objects, and meanings. Peirce uses the term icon for similarity, index for cause-and-effect relationships, and symbols for conventional associations (Morrisson, 2013).

In writing this study, the researcher looks at several studies previously and will include them in this research as a reference to carry out research development. The first previous study was conducted by Adhe Muflihatul Ulya and Eritina Putri Ekandari (2018) entitled "*Representation of Chinese Culture in Movie 'Tofu'*". This study used a qualitative approach and the study was analyzed using the semiotics theory of Roland Barthes. The results of this study showed six scenes representing the beliefs and customs of the Chinese, namely the worship of ancestors, the *Ciam Si* forecast, the depiction of the human god, and the philosophy of *yin yang* and *mahjong* game.

The second previous study was conducted by Arjuna Bangsawan and Anik Juwariyah (2019) entitled “*The Representation of Javanese Culture in the “Knight Kris” Animated Movie*”. This study used a qualitative approach and the study was analyzed using semiotics theory by Charles Sanders Peirce. From this research, it is hoped that the public will know what Javanese culture is displayed in this film.

The third previous study was conducted by Nada Salsabila and Diah Ayu Candraningrum (2019) entitled “*Representation of Local Wisdom of Middle Eastern Culture in Film “Aladdin (2019)” Produced by Walt Disney Pictures*”. This study used a qualitative approach and the study was analyzed using semiotics theory by Charles Sanders Peirce. From this research, it is expected that the public knows that the capital of the Middle East is what is shown in this film, such as building architecture, clothing, and others.

The fourth previous study was conducted by Sherly Pujiarti (2019) entitled “*Representation of Mexico Culture “Dia De Los Muertos” in the Film Coco*”. This study used a qualitative approach and researched semiotic signs using Roland Barthes theory to see how the animated movie Coco represents Mexican culture “Dia de Los Meurtos”. Another result of this study showed *Papel Picado* as the representation of Mexican culture.

The fifth previous study was conducted by Purnama Hanan Murod (2021) entitled “*A Semiotic Analysis of Hala Movie*”. This study used a descriptive qualitative approach and the study was analyzed using semiotics theory by Charles Sanders Peirce. The results of this study showed that there were many signs found based on their’ types including iconic signs such as poems and social media,

indexical signs such as diegetic sound and background pictures, and symbols such as hijab and greeting. Lastly, this study reveals that semiotic signs may be used to understand a wide range of meanings. The context of Islamic culture is important in determining the meanings of each sign.

After reviewing the previous research, the researcher concluded that many similar studies about movies have been done in terms of the fact that they all study movies from the semiotic perspective. However, they are a bit different in terms of the object and theory adopted. The differences between this research among the previous studies were in the focus, object, and theory used in this research. Specifically, the previous studies analyzed *Knight Kriss*, *Aladdin*, and *Hala* movies by using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics theory. While on this research the researcher will analyze cultural content in the movie "Raya and the Last Dragon" by using Roland Barthes' theory. The previous studies analyzed cultural content from different countries, such as "Tofu" movie is about Chinese Culture, "Knight *Kriss*" movie is about Javanese Culture, "Aladdin" movie is about Middle Eastern Culture, "Coco" movie is about Mexican Culture, and "*Hala*" movie is about Islamic Culture. While in this study, the researcher will focus on South-East Asian Culture in "Raya and the Last Dragon" movie.

Based on the backgrounds above, the researcher is interested in researching and analyzing cultural content in the movie. The researcher carries out the research with the title "*Semiotic Analysis of Cultural Contents in Raya and the Last Dragon Movie*". It will facilitate the audiences to know the cultural contexts and the meanings of the movie.

B. Formulation of Research Question

In this research, the writer would like to focus on the following problems:

1. What are the cultural contents reflected in “Raya and the Last Dragon” movie?
2. How are the meanings of the denotations, connotations, and myths of each cultural content reflected in “Raya and the Last Dragon” movie?

C. Purpose of the Study

Based on those problem statements, the objectives of the study are:

1. To find out the cultural contents of “Raya and the Last Dragon” movie.
2. To describe the meanings of the denotations, connotations, and myths of each cultural content reflected in “Raya and the Last Dragon” movie.

D. Significant of the Study

The result of this study is expected to provide some significance for the following reasons:

1. Theoretical

This research is expected to be helpful to the world of semiotics and can contribute to the development of cultural content.

2. Practical

Practically, the finding of this research is hoped to be useful as follow:

a. For readers

The researcher expects that this study can enrich the readers' knowledge, science, and experience through the movie and is expected to give a better understanding of the cultural content found in *Raya and the Last Dragon* movie.

b. For other researchers

The researcher expects that this research will be helpful to the improvement of literary studies. Moreover, this research can serve as an inspiration and secondary data for other researchers who is interested to conduct a research about cultural content in other movies, so there will be various movies examined and many values will be obtained and used.

E. Scope and Limitation of the Study

This research was limited to just focusing on analyzing the cultural contents in the movie entitled *Raya and the Last Dragon*. Meanwhile, the limitation is the researcher cannot make a direct interview with the director and the scriptwriter of the movie so that this study is based on the researcher's point of view and may be rather different from the director's purpose. However, the researcher will analyze the cultural contents by using Roland Barthes theory.

F. Definition of Key Terms

The writer clarifies the key term as the limitation of this study to avoid a misunderstanding between the researcher and the reader.

1. Semiotic

According to Chandler, semiotic is the study of signs consisting of words, sounds, and even body language. (Chandler, 2007). Semiotics investigates the content of the signs, how they are used, and how sign meanings are constructed at the level of a single sign as well as the larger structures and systems generated by signs.

2. Cultural Content

Cultural content is a collection of related values and beliefs that are acquired rather than inherited. It is made up of those values and beliefs, customs, traditions, and ideologies that comprise a people's overall way of life.

3. Movie

A movie is an educational media that can demonstrate to the human audio visual, therefore those such a device is more likely to embrace education. A Movie or motion picture includes photographs, diagrams, or pictures in a series that are projected on a screen by a projector for the process of turning in a screen that causes the appearance of the screen looks like natural movement. The analyzed movie in this research is *Raya and the Last Dragon* movie, an animated fantasy Disney movie in 2021 which tells the story of a girl named Raya in the land of Kumandra.