

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

My thesis topic is **Semiotic analysis of “The Boy in Striped Pajamas” DVD’s cover**. I am interested in analysing the DVD cover because according to <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0914798/awards>, this film was the best European movie in 2008. “The Boy in Striped Pajamas” was written by an Irish novelist, John Boyne in 2006. According to <http://www.johnboyne.com/>, it was the bestselling book of the year in Spain in 2007 and 2008. It has also reached the top rank on the New York Times bestseller list, as well as in the UK, Ireland, Australia, France, Denmark and German.

In 2008, Mark Herman made this story into movie together with David Heyman as the producer. This movie was released for the first time in The United Kingdom on September 12, 2008.

According to www.efm-berlinale.de, Europe is the “second home” for film industries after Hollywood (par. 2). European movies are famous for their criticizing genre. Most of European movies are made on purpose and the purpose is to criticize the government, history, or social life (par. 5).

My data is in the form of picture and I believe that a picture has the function to communicate ideas to people. According to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, picture is considered as imagery, that is “pictures, photographs, or object that represent an idea” (975). According to www.eleance.com, Lauren Harris said that, “....., Covers are important to make the buyer can receive a better knowledge of the film's plot. The story line is the key point to a movie, so people will want to figure the basics of the plot out quick,” (par. 2). Based on the quotation, it is clear that a DVD cover has the function to represent the story of the movie.

I have observed a lot of movie stores and find that covers are the media to show the story of the movies. For example, if the movie genre is action, usually there are pictures of muscular guys firing guns, flying and burning cars, fire, helicopter, etc. The more attractive the covers are, the more people will be interested in the movies. Thus, the covers not only have the function to communicate with the people in the movie stores of the movies are about, but also to attract people to buy the DVD.

In writing my thesis, I choose semiotics as my approach to analyze the DVD cover. According to Chandler, in semiotics everything can be considered as a sign (par. 3), the DVD cover that I am analysing is also a sign. The linguistic approach that deals with signs is semiotics. Specifically, the semiotic theory that I apply is Saussure's theory because I just analyze the cover in the first order level. I believe that in the cover, there is a concept that serves as the red line of why the cover is created as such. By applying the theory I try to reveal the concept of the cover.

The concept in the cover also has a function to communicate the author's ideas, perception, philosophies or even beliefs. Thus, the significance of my study is to make the readers realize that a picture from a DVD cover has a meaning, which is not only to communicate what the movie is about, but also the beliefs and philosophy about certain things. People tend to look at the DVD cover as only a piece of art but actually it may have more meaning than what is shown. From my analysis I hope that people will realize that a cover has an important role, it is not just a piece of art, but deeper than that it shows author's ideas, perceptions or beliefs.

(724 words)

1.2 The Statement of The Problems

In this thesis, I would like to analyze three problems :

1. What are signifiers in the cover?
2. What are the signifieds?
3. How do the signifiers and signified reflect the concept of segregation?

1.3 Purpose of The Study

In this thesis I intend:

1. To show the signifiers of the cover.
2. To show the signifieds of the cover
3. To show the concept of segregation through the signifiers and signifieds.

1.4 Method of Research

The method applied is library research. The steps that I took on this research were first found and read Saussure's theory in the library and in the Internet. Then I gathered the supporting theories to do the analysis. Finally, I analyzed the cover according to the theories that I got and wrote my analysis.

1.5 Organization of The Thesis

The thesis is divided into four chapters. The first chapter is the introduction which contains the Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research and Organization of the Thesis. The second chapter is Theoretical Framework. The data analysis is

presented in chapter Three. The fourth chapter is the Conclusion. The thesis ends with the Bibliography and Appendix.