

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION**

In this final chapter, I would like to conclude as well as give my opinions regarding the findings and discussion in Chapter Four. Furthermore, I would like to explain the limitations of my analysis and provide suggestions for future studies at the end of this chapter.

In analyzing the film, I select eight main screenshots as the main data followed by six other screenshots to support my interpretation. The screenshots are then divided into four main issues. By using Peirce's semiotics theory of types of signs, I find thirteen icons, seventeen indexes, and ten symbols that can be associated with the issue of social inequality through the representation of the upper-class and lower-class families portrayed in the film.

In relation to the social inequality issue, index is the most dominant type of sign compared to icon and symbol. In my opinion, the use of indexes is most probably due to making the plot more understandable and enjoyable for general audiences despite the sensitive topic. Considering that index is a type of sign that possesses a cause-effect relationship with its object, the audiences could observe as well as figure out easily what the film director, Bong Joon-ho, tries to convey or

represent in his film. As a simple example, when the audiences perceive either a semi-basement apartment or a mansion, they could directly interpret that the semi-basement indicates the lower-class family's house, whereas the mansion belongs to the upper-class family. This interpretation could be undoubtedly drawn because of the fixed relationship between the sign and object, which is something that logically happens on a day-to-day basis. In this way, the audiences can recognize and understand the connection immediately, which will then make the film interesting and easy to follow.

Symbol, in connection with the social inequality issue, appears ten times, which is considered quite a big number although not the most dominant. Despite the fact that indexes appear most dominantly, the use of symbols is the most influential in representing the social inequality issue in the film. Based on the findings and discussion in the previous chapter, the symbols consistently lead to the social inequality issue by presenting the contrast between the upper-class and lower-class families, while the icons and indexes do not relate to it directly owing to the fact that they function more as a bridge which clarifies the relationship between signs and their contexts so as to be understood as a symbol.

Yet, not only is the relationship of a symbol and its object arbitrary but also its signification depends on a particular shared culture, in this case, South Korean culture. As a result, its relationship must be learned so that the interpretation cannot be drawn explicitly. For example, *Jjapaguri*, the combination of two South Korean instant noodle products, as well as Hanwoo beef from Korean original cattle are only familiar for South Koreans. Accordingly, only South Koreans are likely to

recognize the oddness of mixing *jjapaguri* with the expensive Hanwoo beef so that they realize that the combination of *jjapaguri* and Hanwoo beef in the film is made purposefully to carry an implicit meaning. For this reason, the film could be more meaningful and intriguing to the audiences since it represents something deeper than what is explicitly shown.

From all of the screenshots, I find the analysis of Screenshots 7, 8, and 10 the most complicated because it takes many steps to finally be related to the social inequality issue. In analyzing the house window of the Parks, Kims, and Ohs respectively, I should initially confirm that the windows are icons that indicate what kind of places they live in. It is later explained that the Parks' glass window wall is an index of an upper-class mansion, while the Kims' semi-basement window indicates lower-class houses in South Korea. The absence of a window in the Ohs' dwelling place is indexical since it refers to the lower-class society who shelter in inappropriate places. After acknowledging their social classes through their houses separately, I have to connect the amount of sunlight that comes through their house windows with the symbolism of power they own in society. Therefore, I could interpret that the upper-class society like the Parks is more powerful than the lower-class people like the Kims and Ohs. Subsequently, I could associate these signs with the issue of social inequality.

Furthermore, I find that all the screenshots and issues analyzed in this thesis show one common thread, namely emphasizing the contrast between the upper-class and lower-class families. This implies that the upper-class and lower-class societies are definitely opposites. Presenting the opposites between the upper-class

and lower-class is indeed a smart way of getting to the idea of social inequality. By comprehending the opposites between both classes, this analysis suggests that in the film the upper-class society is always depicted to be more superior to the lower-class society due to the socioeconomic resources they own, such as wealth, power, and income. This wide gap between the rich and the poor consequently would in the end harm the inferior or lower class since they have no other choice but to live in a harsh condition, which is depicted clearly in the film. If the gap becomes wider, it would definitely be more and more difficult for the lower-class people to free themselves from their deprived life.

What is more, the contrasting portraits between the upper-class and lower-class families in the film in fact reflect the real social conditions of South Korea, which leads to the fact that the film is a social criticism. The issue of social inequality shown in the film is considered a controversial and sensitive topic for the South Koreans that could provoke a feeling of discomfort in the audiences. Although the film is considered to bring a serious topic, the film director is able to cover it with the comedy genre which makes the film seem not heavy but entertaining. Yet, the film also shifts the genre to horror, thriller, and heartbreaking tragedy which involve violence and death. As a result, it could be appealing and interesting for general audiences owing to the fact it succeeds in creating a different experience and sensation due to the genre-mixing.

However, I consider there are some limitations regarding my analysis. I merely focus on four main signs out of the many signs in the film due to time constraints. Besides, the approach that I use to analyze the signs is only from the

semiotics point of view using Peirce's theory. Hence, for future research on *Parasite* using Peirce's semiotics theory, I suggest that researchers could discuss the other signs since there are still many signs that are worth analyzing. Because *Parasite* is a South Korean film, it must be imbued with South Korean culture so that it is necessary to at least have some extensive knowledge about the culture to be able to grasp the signs. I also recommend watching the movie several times so that no details are missed out and the study could be accurate. In addition, it is possible to combine Peirce's semiotics theory with other theories or approaches to create a more thorough analysis.

