

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Nowadays watching movies already becomes a hobby for almost everyone. The society is already fond of movies. Therefore, the competition between many movie productions becomes very tight. They will advertise their movies in many ways to make people watch their movies. One of the ways to advertise movies is by using movie posters. A movie poster is an important element in advertising and selling the movie because the audience is expected to look at the movie poster first before they decide which movie that they are going to watch.

Generally, besides a picture and a title, a movie poster also has at least one tagline which is a slogan for a movie. The tagline which we usually find in a movie poster is used by the movie production to convey what the movie is all about (Dirks, Great Film Tagline). The tagline has a big important role in a movie poster because the tagline can also become another element why people choose to watch a movie. A good movie poster also has a great tagline; therefore, people can get a clear clue of the movie and want to watch it.

In this thesis I will discuss how semiotic elements of romance movie posters reflect the stories of the movies. I choose this topic because I am interested in studying semiotics of movie posters. By studying it, we can get more understanding on the concepts or the messages in the movie posters. Sometimes some movie posters are really vague and hard to understand. It is because the semiotic elements which are badly composed in the movie poster cannot convey what the movie is all about. Thus, I also think that a tagline is very important to support an attractive movie poster in advertising the movie.

The data for this thesis are movie posters which belong to the romance genre. I will analyze two romance movie posters that have one tagline each for this research. They are Notting Hill and Fireproof movie posters. A romance movie is a movie which focuses on passion, emotion, and the romantic and love relationship of the leading characters who do what it takes to make them become together. Furthermore, romantic relationships, daily tensions, temptations, and differences in the relationship have become parts of the plot of romance movies (Dirks, Romance Films). I find that this kind of movies is interesting because it involves many emotions which are expressed by the characters. The emotions are delivered to someone through facial expressions, body gestures, postures, and voice tones (Vedder). In my opinion, these elements can be considered to be signs since they contain some meaning behind them, which are the emotions which someone feels. Thus, in my opinion, in order to make a romance movie poster attractive and communicative, a romance movie poster needs semiotic elements and an appropriate tagline.

In this thesis, I analyze the semiotic elements in two romance movie posters. The analysis belong to a semiotic study, which is a part of Applied Linguistics. Semiotics is “the study of signs” (Chandler 1). In Eco’s Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language, Peirce declared that “a sign is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity” (Eco 14). I think a movie poster is also a sign because it takes the form of words, images, postures and so on. Those semiotic elements in a movie poster can be considered something that “stands for something else” (Chandler 2). Thus, in my opinion, a good movie poster should consist of semiotic elements which can lead the viewers of the movie poster to understand the movie concepts.

There are two dominant model of analyzing signs. The first one is the dyadic model proposed by a Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure. The dyadic model states that a sign is formed by **signified** and **signifier** (Chapman 147). The other model, the one I will use in this thesis, is proposed by Charles Sanders Peirce. He is an American philosopher who proposed the triadic model and relativity theory. Peirce’s triadic model presents the relation of **representamen**, **interpretant**, and **object**. The relativity theory states that a sign can be divided into three elements of semiotics, namely **icon**, **index**, and **symbol**. These two theories are quite different but they support each other in a semiotic study.

The significance of this topic is to give some information concerning the semiotic elements in romance movie posters. The thesis will help the readers to be aware of the signs in movie posters so that they can have better interpretations about the movies. By reading this research, the readers can get an understanding on the semiotic elements in a movie poster which support the movie. Hopefully,

my thesis will also give some useful information about semiotic elements for the students of the English Department to make good and communicative theatre posters for their drama performances.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The semiotic study on some romance movie posters elaborates the following problems:

1. What semiotic elements are found in each romance movie poster?
2. How does the poster reflect the story of the movie?

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purposes of this study are to:

1. find out what semiotic elements are found in each romance movie poster.
2. find out how the poster reflects the story of the movie.

1.4 METHODS OF RESEARCH

In doing the research, first, I did a library research to find some books of semiotics and choose the theories which will support the thesis. I also read some academic journals about semiotics taken from the Internet. Second, I limited the genre of the movies to be discussed. Afterwards, I analyzed two romance movie posters. Finally, I drew some conclusions from the research.

1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The first chapter is the Introduction, which consists of the Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Methods of Research, and Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two contains the Theoretical Framework, which is about the theories that I use to analyze the data. Chapter Three is the Analysis of Romance Movie Posters as Linguistic Signs. Chapter Four is the Conclusion of the research. Finally, the thesis ends with the Bibliography.