

Semiotic Analysis of Gesture in “Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts” Film

Tengku Winona Emelia

Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara

Indonesia

tengkuwinonaemelia@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study deals analyzing the Semiotic Analysis of Marlina. The objectives of this research to investigate main character Marlina. In this research used qualitative methods was be designed by applying descriptive phenomenon design. The researcher took a full of the total Marlina performed on film *Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts*. The researcher took a full of the total Marlina performed on film “Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts”. In collecting the data, the scripts found the searching through the national network services. This research offers a broad semiotical determine of gesture on the film, Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts. This films aim to bring the audience to understood using of semiotic or gesture. Therefore, negative emotions such as mysterious, suspense, terror, and disgust, that are represented in films. This research focuses on gesture and main characters, Marlina, who lead this film to be a mysterious. This research is the result of an exploration into the literary reviews of the gesture and a semiotic analysis a paranormal, Marlina. The steps of analyzing the data were watching the movie, reading the script, and displaying the semiotic and gesture on film by translating each word from Indonesia to English. This research concerned with the presence of material bodies in the performing sign and code of gesture by using signified and signifier theory. The results show that there are a few gesture and semiotic problems related to reality’s ability to actually take place within, non-fictional representations identified by gesture of signs.

Key words: *semiotics, gesture, main character*

Introduction

Semiotics (also called semiotic studies; not to be confused with the Saussurean tradition called semiology which is a part of semiotic) is the of meaning-making, the study of signs and sign processes (semiotic), indication, designation, likeness, analogy, metaphor, symbolism, signification, and communication. Semiotic is closely related to field of linguistics, which, for its part, studies the structure and meaning of language more specifically. The semiotic tradition explores the study of signs and symbols as a significant part of communications. As different from linguistic, however, semiotic also studies non-linguistic sign system. The semiotic tradition explores the study of signs and symbols as a significant part of communications. As different from linguistic, however, semiotic also studies non-linguistic sing system.

Semiotics is frequently seen as having important anthropological dimensions; for example, Umberto Eco proposes that every cultural phenomenon may be studied as communication. Some semioticians focus on the logical dimensions of the science. However, they examine areas belonging also to the life science-such as how organisms make predictions about, and adapt to, their semiotic niche in the world. In general, semiotic theories take sign or sign systems

as their object of study: the communication of information in living organisms is covered in bio-semiotics (including zoo-semiotic).

The word of semiotic comes from the Greek *semeîon* which means 'sign'. Many semioticians define the definition of semiotic but shortly definition of semiotic is 'study of sign'. Semiotics involves the study not only of what we refer to as 'signs' in everyday speech, but of anything which 'stands for' something else. In a semiotic sense, signs take the form of words, images, sounds, gestures and objects. Contemporary semioticians study signs not in isolation but as part of semiotic 'sign systems' (such as a medium or genre). They study how meanings are made and how reality is represented. Types of semiotic study in this paper is social semiotic. Literature semiotics focuses on how people regulate the use of semiotic resources, in the context of literature, and most of them relate to social phenomenon.

Klaker (1998:1) says that in most cases, literature is referred to as the entirety of written expression, with the restriction that not every written document can be categorized as literature in the more exact sense of the word. Literature is a social institution, using as its medium language and literature. Language is the medium of expression in literature. Literature help up grow, both personally and intellectually. It provides an object base for knowledge and understanding. Literature has communication in education. For example, in the school, the teacher asked students to make poetry and drama and then literature create beauty because someone can create art, like painting and then if we talk about education, the teacher asked students to draw something. Without knowing, it was included, it was literature. A movie, also called a film, is a story conveyed with moving images. It is produced by recording photographic images with camera, or by creating images using animation techniques or visual effects. Film is considered to be an important art form, a source of popular entertainment. Film also uses language as power of communication, where movie need dialogue in spoken conversational to exchange between two people for encoding and coding meanings. Many people like watching the film, but sometimes they do not get a real meaning from the dialogues in spoken conversational exchange.

The entire tale unfolds on the uncharacteristically dry island of Sumba, in eastern Indonesia, some 600 miles north of Australia. Not long after Marlina (veteran actress Marsha Timothy) has lost her husband, their isolated home in the arid countryside is invaded by a group of rowdy men led by the creepy and dictatorial Markus (EgiFedly). They start loading up her cattle and plan to rape her, using the fact that she hasn't paid off a previous funeral yet as an excuse for their appalling behavior. (The following paragraph contains spoilers for the film's first 25 minutes.) The thugs' smug arrogance is as clear as Marlina's distress and mounting anger. The men are evidently used to bossing women around and treating them like slaves, even commanding the widow to make them dinner. After some hesitation, she obliges Markus' gang by serving them a strong chicken soup but with a secret, lethal ingredient for that extra kick. The result is shown in a particularly striking wide shot of Marlina's living room, as the men keel over one by one in the background while a dead-calm Marlina faces the camera in the center of the image. But their oblivious leader is at this point still alive and in the bedroom, waiting for Marlina to come to him so he can have his way with her. Without saying a word, she mounts him, cowgirl style, and then uses a machete to

sever the head from the criminal's body. Quick and clean. The act closes with another mesmerizing image, as Marlina sits down, exhausted and empty, in her living room, next to the remains of her husband, who's been sitting in a squatted position in a semi-dark corner the entire time. The couple's entire backstory is suggested through one simple gesture, when Marlina lays her head on his cold shoulder.

Gestures are a way to express feelings and thoughts non-verbally. They can also be used together with words to provide more emphasis. Gestures allow individuals to express a variety of feelings, "from contempt and hostility to approval and affection," according to gesture.com. Most gestures are made with the hands, from the thumbs-up sign to the disapproving finger wag. Gestures can be made with other parts of the body as well.

In the life people like watching a film, film serves as a media entertainers and information. And the film is conductor information for the public, any genre and the theme of film must expect to leave the moral easy to understand. But the fact the use of gesture in a film can cause error interpretation in a sentence a conversation. This is because gesture in every state has different meanings. They have problem in determining the gesture on the film, because most of audiences are often confused to determine the gesture in the film. So the audiences cannot accept message of the film. Generally, the audiences just know that move the body happen when saying between many people but move the body can happen between different cultures and lack of humanities. Based on the researcher's experience many people are difficult to determine the gesture.

Every human, of course have some gesture. Other than that story look flat and the story do not give any meaning to the audience. In this research, the problems are many viewers have difficulties in determine gesture in the story, so it is problem that the story did not look amazing and it would make the audience to feel bored to watch a movie. On the other hand, the researcher chooses this film because the story is very interesting to watch and from teenagers until adults like this film. In the film teaches us to love and respect each other. By seeing the woman main character, Marlina, this research aims to use two theories as the tool to analyze this film, as follows: *Semiotic* and *Gesture*. Based on those problems, this research would aim to answer some questions as follows: What semiotic signs are found in "Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts" film? Another question is what messages are conveyed by verbal and visual sign in "Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts" film?

Methods

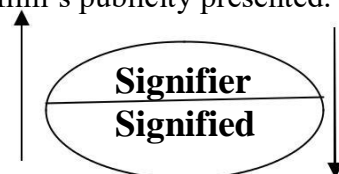
The data in this research was taken from a poster advertisement entitled "Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts". It was published by the film, on <http://www.cnnindonesia.com> which is published in November 2017. This research uses qualitative method. According to Baron & Kenny (1986:1174), a moderator is "a qualitative (e.g., sex, race, class) variable that affects the direction and/or strength of the relation between an independent or predictor variable and a dependent or criterion variable". Given that the sampling frame adopted in the current study contained films from a broader timeframe than what was available to previous content analysis of gesture, the time period of release for films may be a

moderator of the relationship between victim gender and characteristics of violent presentations. To test for the potential moderator effect of time of release.

Firstly, this research would give a little explanation about semiotic. Mysterious films can also use semiotics by the way it uses its characters in the film and how the narrative can tell you about those characters. Using Semiology, it is not the way to analyze a film, by seeing *scene by scene*. Semiology as a qualitative method of research was successfully transferred to media studies by researchers who needed more approaches to explain media phenomena. Barthes works to show new semiotics doctrine that allowed analyzing the sign systems to prove how even nonverbal communication is open to interpretations through connotative meanings. The aim of this research is to describe and to explain how semiology as a method borrowed from linguistics is highly used in media of analytical qualitative studies especially from Roland Barthes' perspective, his approach studied semiotics with a new spirit within media messages or images that appear purposefully to the receiver.

What semiology semiotics is also called semiology that was first defined by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure as the science of signs (Chappman and Routledge, 2009). Semiology as a science is related to the word semiosis which is a term used in semiotics to designate the production and interpretation of a sign (Busmann, 1996). Semiotic theory focuses on the social and cultural meaning of signs and codes (Scholes, 1982). Signs consist of an image, a word, an object or even a certain type of practice. The meaning of signs depends on the relationships between the signifier (the image, word, object, or practice), the signified (the implied meaning), and the referent (what the image, word, object, or practice refers to) (Scholes, 1982). A yellow yield sign is a signifier that conveys the meaning of the signified, to yield to other cars. The referent is the actions referred to, in this case, yielding to other cars. People learn that the colors red and green as signifiers have certain signified meanings between stop and go, with the referent being stopping and starting a car on the street based on a set of cultural codes and conventions (Thwaites, 2002).

Using a semiotic Barthes following Peirce, with data collection guided Sign Systems, this study examines contributions of the woman mysterious sign of Marlina the murderer in Four Acts to horror films, a genre with a long cinematic history and distinctive signifiers that provide a solid starting point for addressing why characters appear in films. Thereby validating the importance to visual storytelling of this familiar occupational symbol. Elements in a cinematic work are all the ingredients that comprise a film, including not only obvious ones (characters, costuming, set components, dialogue, special effects) but also less conspicuous features that affect how meaning is perceived (music, sound effects, lighting, opening titles and closing credits, camera angles and movement, editing cuts and transitions, pace, stylistic flourishes, and so on.). Every feature that film makers use to construct their works is an element assumed to be integrated for reasons. In addition, academics include elements that affect the perception of the story such as a film's publicity presented.



The sign is the whole that results from the association of the signifier with the signified (Saussure, 1983). The relationship between the signifier and with the signified is referred to as 'signification', and this is represented in the Saussure and diagram by the arrows. The horizontal line marking the two elements of the sign is referred to as 'the bar'.

If we take a linguistic example, the word 'Open' (when it is invested with meaning by someone who encounters it on a shop doorway) is a sign consisting of; (a) A signifier: the word open, and (b) A signified concept: that the shop is open for business. A sign must have both a signifier and a signified. You cannot have a totally meaningless signifier or a completely formless signified (Saussure 1983) A sign is a recognizable combination of a signifier with a particular signified. The same signifier (the word 'open') could stand for a different signified (and thus be a different sign) if it were on push-button inside a lift ('push to open door'). Similarly, many signifiers could stand for the concept 'open' (for instance, on top of a packing carton, a small outline of a box with an open flap for 'open this end')-again, with unique pairing constituting a different sign.

The sign is the whole that results from the association of the signifier with the signified (Saussure 1983). The relationship between the signifier and with the signified is referred to as 'signification', and this is represented in the Saussure and diagram by the arrows. The horizontal line marking the two elements of the sign is referred to as 'the bar'. This research objective for 'Marlina' was not to afraid audience into gesture mysterious, although that did sometimes happen, but to open up horizons for both semiotic and gesture. Firstly, this research offer gesture as a site of critical reflection readers who might be unaccustomed to combining their gesture with film or literary theory. Secondly, this research would to expand on well-known semiotic theoretical analysis that seemed to lock it into perpetual struggle with horror, raising intriguing questions of gendered spectatorship.

In what follows, the writer will briefly review a few of these theories in discussing the experiences of the 'Mysterious Woman' who repeatedly demonstrated that the gesture classroom can engender interpretive strategies beyond the scope of the 'female gaze' first conceptualized by Mulvey (1999) in "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema". Mulvey's influential essay tends to exclude the possibility of a gaze that is not only acutely aware of what horror does with and to women, but also of what gesture might do with and to mysterious.

Results and Discussion

The Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts story is set in 2017, and the shots do actually give a feeling that the characters are actually in 1970's only. Indonesian distaff director Mouly Surya to suggest that her third feature, *Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts* (*Marlina si Pembunuh dalam Empat Babak*), does what it says on the can. This is an austere yet stylish revenge romp as well as a starkly told tale of a determined and strong female character who is mad as hell and is not going to take it anymore. A perfect fit for the Directors' Fortnight in Cannes, which showcases auteur offerings with a genre twist or slightly more mainstream edge, this third film from Sundance and Cinema foundation alumnus Surya (*What*

They Don't Talk about When They Talk about Love) should see interest from art house distributors looking for more accessible fare.

The entire tale unfolds on the uncharacteristically dry island of Sumba, in eastern Indonesia, some 600 miles north of Australia. Not long after Marlina (famous actress Marsha Timothy) has lost her husband, their isolated home in the arid countryside is invaded by a group of rowdy men led by the creepy and dictatorial Markus (Egi Fedly). They start loading up her cattle and plan to rape her, using the fact that she hasn't paid off a previous funeral yet as an excuse for their appalling behavior.

The director's regular cinematographer, Yunus Pasolang, works wonders in the modest home's small and dark interiors, using a single source of slanting light to pierce the darkness, like the dramatic chiaroscuro in Caravaggio's paintings. Beyond the fact the first act was set indoors and at night, the palette choices also reflect a thematic meaning, as what happens — and what could have further happened — to Marlina in part one is nothing but a display of some of the darkest human behavior imaginable. This stands in stark contrast to the visuals in the following acts, which are set during the day and outdoors. Because of Sumba's largely horizontal landscapes, with their arid, yellow and brown grasses, and Zeke Khaseli and Yudhi Arfani's score, some Western-genre influences creep into the material, though this time, instead of a cowboy, we get a widow who is out for revenge. She's traveling (spoiler ahead) to a police station where she reports what has happened and she brings a witness: Markus's head. The latter causes a driver to refuse to take her on board, though this is nothing she can't settle with her now-loyal companion, the machete.

By seeing main character of Marlina, this research analyzed the semiotic signs used gesture on the film by examining semiotic theories. Semiotic study can analyze not only written and spoken language but can also analyze visual element of the advertisement. The focus of this research is to analyze the semiotic signs and the gesture by verbal and visual signs, especially in "Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts" film, which has a very amazing story and based on the true events. *The Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts* film also has much semiotic signs which can be analyzed in this research. The audience should know the meaning of the semiotic signs in this film such as the meaning of gesture, the verbal and visual aspect. This research will cover the signs, codes and conventions in a film that can tell a lot about the gesture that the creators are trying to convey. Some film makers are aware of the use of signs, codes and conventions in their work, though some are not. In that case the symbolism, which makes it a little harder to interpret, and so forth.

The study of these signs, codes and conventions in this film are called gesture and semiotics or semiotic analysis. Semiotic analysis is a way to explain how an audience makes meaning from codes. All meaning is encoded in that which *creates* the meaning. No object or word is without meaning. Some cannot read or see something without associating it to a certain idea, the meaning. People have been taught how to decode what they see, read and hear. However, what is important to realize is that the decoded meaning was not created by the person decoding it, instead, the meaning already existed. They merely took the signs and applied their pre-existing knowledge. For example, if people read the word 'failure', he or she decodes it by relating it to the value your culture assigns to the

concept of failure and its antonym, success. This is why most researchers from West interpret it very differently to someone from an Eastern. Although it doesn't mean we cannot create meaning on our own, the meaning proximately comes from some pre-established cultural notion.

It can be proved in picture below:

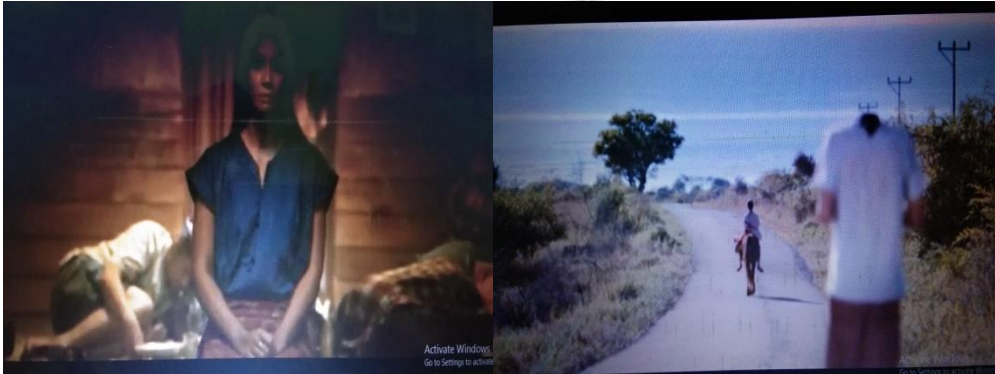


Figure 1

This picture can also analyze that this film several gesture of mysterious; evil spirits, the scary appearance of hanging bodies, paranormal investigators, and dark atmosphere by playing scary music. Connecting denotation theories, these are the literal signs and codes: a means of a woman mysterious. In this film, it is not meant to appear like the thing itself. However, it always represents *more* than just the thing. When we see a toxic and sword, we also associate this with our cultural ideas of 'woman', 'aversion' or 'the hate', or even kill somebody with kindness. Those things are called as iconic sign code. Nevertheless, besides these codes, there is another named *Enigma Code*, that has been explained before in theoretical framework. This iconic sign can also explain about paranormal, in this film, named Marlina. When we see a paranormal, we also associate this with our cultural ideas of 'predicting future' or even 'scary'. Nevertheless, Enigma Code in this film, Marlina is depicted as a person who is not scary but mysterious.

This research will be going through to analyze another picture from that film:



Figure 2

Based on that picture, semiotically of gesture, connecting the codes to the action, the act usually is the introduction of the characters and a setting where characters must endure the mysterious. The setting is usually a new strange place

which influences the characters to be isolated. Another action sees Marlina and friend are going to kill the boy in paranormal as the identification of the gesture is introduced but not made aware by some of the other characters which leads them getting injured or suffered by the mysterious women. By seeing the whole act, this research also sees some mysterious opposition. The mysterious opposition is a kind of code. Almost in every film, audience usually meets many mysterious opposition, like good person and bad person.

Relating the theories and the films, the symbolic code is related to mysterious oppositions on which the structure of a story or text rests. The story under the discussion is structured on the basis of gesture opposites, the mysterious oppositions. The story is concerned with two characters, Marlina and friend, who is entirely gesture opposite to each other in their approach, outlook, and personalities as they belong. This film also revolves around mysterious gesture opposites, like Evil.

Back to the signified and signifier theories, it has told that it is used for representing and interpreting something by a sign. Based on that statement, this research will continue to analyze another picture below:



Figure 3

In analyzing this picture, actually, Marlina wants to go from the place. She isn't experiencing it but she wants to free from criminal. Like dreams, it sometimes affect human's physical movement. People usually scream, or in her case, Marlina the threat the driver bring to outside from place it, but he doesn't want it. Marlina put the sword on his neck and threat. This case is called the *Cure for the Common Code*. Specific semiotics studies a relatively fixed placed field of communicative, explained the extent that the field is ruled by an underlying code correlating signs to their meanings. In exploring dreams connecting semiotic theories, it was told that dreams are intriguing phenomena of the mind.



Figure 4

By seeing the picture above, connecting the two friends of the Sumba, they want to out from there. In other explanation, it can say that the reason of Marlina hold a sword and head, she wants to take leave from here. in *The Marlina the Murderer in four Acts* is depicted as mysterious woman, Marlina is explained by the cognitive images in Semiology. This means that the semiotic mechanism is using theatrical custom or culture tradition to subliminally emotional reactions, transferred by gesture motif. Therefore, this research begins to note to the possibility that such medieval roles as engaged her friend.

Conclusion

After researching *The Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts* film, this research would give a conclusion in this part. Based on the foregoing analysis semiotic film entitled "Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts" film, there were some aspects, which formulated in the types of gesture. In reality, when they are propitiated, they are allowed into a person's life; propitiation is when we give them permission to become a part of our lives. From the visual and sound aspect, this research understood the genre of the film was mysterious. There was also an analysis about gesture which was carried by the action of the one main characters. By seeing the main character, Marlina, using semiotic theories, sword is not a verbal sign that can be interpreted differently depending on the discourse, situation or culture. It can also communicate ideas about an individual's personality, social status, or religious belonging. Connecting to reality based on *Marlina the Murderer in Four Acts* film, instead, the way how people watch films and the way they perceive everyday reality are approximately similar, in that Marlina is determined by conventions or codes. Reality is itself a complex system of gesture or signs interpreted by members of the culture, exactly the same way as are films.

At the end of this research, the writer would like to say that there are many semiotic signs and gesture in researching literary works, including films. Instead, of talking about mysterious films, the audiences, even the writers cannot forget, that mysterious is for some people pleasurable. Moreover, they allow their audiences to channel their own aggression and anger. They also provide lessons about the consequences of deviating from social norms, in considering the particular fears exploited by particular mysterious films. In fact, in researching, to understand the underlying concepts and themes behind the film will provide different interpretations.

References

- Baron, R.M., & Kenny, D.A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51, 1173-1182.
- Busmann, H. (1996). *Routledge Dictionary of Language And Linguistics 1st Ed.* New York: Routledge.
- Chapman, S., & Routledge, C. (2009). *Key Ideas in Linguistics and Philosophy of Language*. Edinburg. Edinburg University Press.

- Klarer, Mario. 1998. *An Introduction to Literary Studies*. USA: Books
- Mulvey, L. (1999). *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema in Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, eds. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen. New York: Oxford UP
- Saussure, Ferdinand de. (1983). *Course in general linguistics*. Edited by Charles Bally et Albert Séchehaye, with the collaboration of Albert Riedlinger (1916). Translated and Annotated by Roy Harris (1983). Open Court Classics. 1986.
- Scholes, R. (1982). *Language Arts & Disciplines*. Yale: Yale University Press.
- Thwaites, T. (2002). *Introducing Cultural and Media Studies: A Semiotic Approach*. New York: Palgrave
- <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/hiburan/20171114150650-220-255562/ulasan-film-marlina-si-pembunuh-dalam-empat-babak>. accessed on 10 September 2018

