

Semiotics Analysis of Human Value in the Film "The Giver"

**Doni Anggoro Ari Santoso¹, Rofiq Noorman Haryadi^{2*},
Maharanny Setiawan Poetri³, Irfan Rifai⁴, Denok Sunarsi⁵**

¹ Universitas Indraprasta PGRI

² Sekolah Tinggi Ekonomi Bisnis Syariah Bina Mandiri

^{3, 5} Universitas Pamulang

⁴ Universitas Pasundan

* rofiq.stebis@gmail.com

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze how the value of humanity in the film *The Giver* uses Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis approach. Described structured and conceptualized to be able to obtain valid and easy to understand data. The description of the data and the explanation of the aspects of the keywords above form a description of the information on research findings in order to obtain the concept of analysis regarding the human value that is to be sought for its existence. This research also aims to provide education and new insights about films that have messages and concepts about life that are different from usual. The film *The Giver* was chosen because it was deemed sufficient to have criteria as a film that deserves to be analyzed because it has a storyline and sketches of life that are anti-mainstream from others. This research uses semiotic analysis of Roland Barthes who studies the signs that will describe the denotative, connotative and mythical meanings of the story. This film analysis research process requires a high level of focus and commitment in order to obtain the conclusion data to be achieved. The results of this study illustrate how the human values in the film *The Giver* are not applied or violate human norms which are the fundamentals of a human's life.

Keywords: *Semiotic Analysis, Roland Barthes' Semiotic Analysis Model, Human Values, The Giver*

Introduction

In today's modern era, means of communication and information have progressed very rapidly because human needs in all aspects of life are increasing, giving rise to new products to meet their needs. The world of entertainment has become an indispensable need in order to get the satisfaction of feelings and thoughts by stimulating the soul through the frequencies and vibrations that are emitted by audio-visuals through screens called TV and Cinema, the stimulation is obtained from films that are shown through TV and Cinema. Films have the power or power to influence human thinking through very interesting scenes and direct the audience to get involved in the nuances of the ongoing situation. The audience is led to the perspective that the film wants to direct so that it enters the atmosphere of the film and gets the desired adrenaline.

According to (Hariyanto, 2022) film is defined as a thin film made of celluloid for a negative image (to be photographed) or a positive image (to be played in a cinema). The shape, type and size of the film is made through chemical processes, electronic processes, or other processes. There are films produced without sound or silent films and sound films. The finished film is shown with a mechanical, electronic and/or other projection system. Film has a big role in the development of national culture and national development (Kriyantono & Sos, 2014).

Film is basically an audio-visual tool that attracts the attention of many people, because the film can contain scenes that feel alive also because of the combination of sound, color, costumes and beautiful panoramas (Maulida & Sriwulandari, 2020). Films have an allure that can satisfy the audience. The special reason why someone likes movies, because there is a human element seeking entertainment and taking time. The main reason people watch movies is to look for values that enrich the mind. After watching a film, someone uses it to develop a fictional reality as a comparison to the real reality they face. Films can also be used by the audience to see things in this world with a new understanding (Mudjiono, 2020). Film is a short story that is displayed in the form of images and sound that is packaged in such a way with camera games, editing techniques and existing scenarios (Butler, 2012). Films move quickly and alternately so as to provide continuous visuals. The ability of films to paint live images and sound gives them their own charm. Films are able to present information, describe processes, present complex concepts, teach skills, shorten or extend time and have a considerable influence on attitudes towards film audiences (Arsyad & others, 2011). Therefore, film is one of the mass media used for entertainment, documentation, and educational purposes. Films in their components use a lot of symbols, signs, icons that will challenge the recipient to try to digest the meaning of the essence of the film.

The power and ability of films to reach many social segments has led experts to say that films have the potential to influence their audiences. Since then, many studies have looked into the impact of films on society (Sobur, 2002).

Many people can catch the message of a film easily. But many also have difficulty in this regard. Especially those who watch only with the intention of their entertainment. The messages, symbols, which are depicted either expressly or implicitly in a film, then the role of the film in describing or telling a story, as well as the meaning contained in it which has been explained by the author above can be known by using semiotic analysis which is a science in communication (Haryadi et al., 2022). The notion of semiotics is related to the notion of semantics because the two notions include meaning and significance in communication between humans. Semiotics is not only related to language signs, but also relates to non-language signs in communication between humans. We can say that semiotics is the science of meaningful communication signs (Parera, 2004). Semiotics is the science of signs. The study of signs and everything related to them, how they function, their relationship to other signs, their transmission and reception by those who use them. Semiotics studies the systems, rules, conventions that allow these signs to have meaning. Van Zoest in Sobur defines semiotics as "the science of signs and everything related to them: the way they function, their relationship to other words, and their acceptance by those who use them" (Sobur, 2002). According to Langer, all animals that live in the world are dominated by feelings, but human feelings are mediated by conceptions, symbols and language. Animals respond to signs, but humans use more than simple signs by using

symbols. Sign (sign) is a stimulus that signifies the presence of something (Sendjaja et al., 2014).

The film that became the author's concern for semiotic analysis research is a film entitled *The Giver*. This film is full of meanings, symbols, and moral messages from the literary, dramatic, linguistic and cinematic aspects. *The Giver* is a 2014 American film adapted from the novel by Lois Lowry. *The Giver* is a 2014 science fiction drama film directed by Philip Noyce. This film tells about a system of life orders that was created to make humans live in peace by applying rules that limit all activities of human life. All memories of the past are erased and all feelings and freedoms are removed in order to create a peaceful and cooperative life order. But through these rules humans become like puppets who do not have free will as they are, humans are directed like sheep who do not know anything. The order of life applied in *The Giver* is a system that aims to make life more peaceful but at the expense of the crucial aspects that are inherent in humans from birth. In the perspective of Religion, especially the Divine Religion, it is like opposing the work of God's creation. Feelings, emotions and free will are the fundamentals that make humans important and special, with the removal of these important things, the essence and color of a life disappears.

From the description that has been described above, the researcher took the title "Analysis of Semiotics of Human Values in *The Giver* Film". In this research study, the researcher tries to examine the human side that is shown in the film.

Method

This study uses a qualitative research approach, because this research describes and describes a subject that requires various understandings and observations in order to obtain valid data results and has a purpose to be disseminated. Qualitative research itself is research that is quite widely used because it has a concept that is relatively easy to understand for people who have an artistic and social spirit.

According to Bogdan and Taylor cited by (Moleong, 2017), qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior. Qualitative research is research aimed at describing and analyzing phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, thoughts of people individually and in groups.

The research technique uses a semiotic analysis approach of Roland Barthes which studies the signs and meanings of a film that can be picked up. In this case, analyze the human values and the meanings and messages contained in the film. The use of the semiotic method is considered appropriate and effective, so it is widely used. Semiotic analysis is also a method of interpreting research data which usually includes literary works.

Results

In this stage, the researcher will describe and describe the contents of the research findings that will lead to the conclusions and research messages. The discussion will explain the meaning of denotation, connotation and myth based on Ronald Barthes' semiotic method. Researchers will describe various scenes or scenes related to the film in general and specifically followed by the meanings contained in it.

Order of Life

The research findings will discuss the lives of the communities in The Giver film.

a. Scene, social life

The beginning of the film begins with the voice of the Narrator who is also the main character named Jonas. Introducing a world that has its own rules in order to achieve a peaceful community. Many rules were created, making humans equal to one another, nothing special but all balanced. Memories of the past are erased and everything related to them.

In this section, researchers will focus on the social life of the people in The Giver.

Table 1. Scene minutes (00:50 - 01:20)

Visual	Dialogue / Sound	Type of Shot
	Narrator (Jonas): From the ruins, we started all over again creating a new community. A community full of equality and truth, including the rules for equal living. We learned all the rules when we were kids. Rules like, use the right words, dress appropriately, take your daily injection of medicine, obey the curfew and never lie.	Extra Long Shot: The picture is taken from a great distance, so the object looks smaller.
		Long Shots: The picture is taken from a distance, so that all parts of the object and the background are clear.
		Medium Close Up: From a short distance the object is taken only half of the body.

1) Denotation

In the cut of the scene above, you can see pictures in black and white and the objects are clearly visible and combined with the narration of the narrator who explains community life.

2) Connotation

Showing the same life and balanced but not colorful, a life that is peaceful and quiet but less interesting and has no sense of life.

3) Myth

The black and white color is a picture of good and bad that people usually use as symbols of these two elements. In Chinese culture, black and white is usually symbolized by yin and yang.

b. Scene, individual life

The scene shows the individual life of the main character (Jonas) who hangs out with his friends (Fiona and Asher). Individual life in the film is not highlighted enough because it emphasizes social life in the community.

Table 2. Scene minutes (01:28 – 02:35)

Visual	Dialogue / Sound	Type of Shot
	Narrator (Jonas): My name is Jonas, I don't have a last name, we all don't have one.	Big Close Up: The head of the object is visible and does not cover the panorama behind it.
	Asher: Jonas! Fiona: Sorry we're late, I have to take Asher to say goodbye to the Teachers.	Long Shots: The picture is taken from a distance so that the object and the background are clear.
	Jonas: I accept your apology.	Medium Long Shot: The picture is taken half the body from a great distance, but the object and the background are still clearly visible.

1) Denotation

A teenage boy was riding a bicycle thinking something facing up and thinking that he was different from the others, then a girl and a boy appeared. The two of them pedaled their bicycles over to the teenager who was thinking earlier.

2) Connotation

Jonas seems to be thinking about something different from everyone else, something he sees and feels but other people don't see. And a greeting appeared from his friend who chased him to be able to go to his destination together.

3) Myth

Daydreaming is something that is considered bad by various groups, especially people of eastern culture. Daydreaming is thought to invite jinns and possessions.

Human Values

Explanation of the meanings that exist in film scenes related to human values as a whole.

a. Scenes, freedom

The freedom that is owned by the community in the film world of The Giver which is clearly visible does not exist because all people must obey and comply with all the regulations that have been set.

The scene is about Jonas and his friends going to school to be able to get a job and that is the day when they will finish their education and will immediately attend graduation celebrations.

Table 3. Scene minutes (05:20 – 07:10)

Visual	Dialogue / Sound	Type of Shot
	Asher: I guess, here it is. Our last night as young children.	Medium Long Shot: The picture is taken half the body from a great distance, but the object and the background are still clearly visible.
	Fiona: I guess things would have been different.	Medium Close Up: From a short distance the object is taken only half of the body.
	Jonas: no, tomorrow what will change is only regarding our work. And do not change our true selves.	Extra Long Shot: The picture is taken from a great distance, so the object looks smaller.
	Jonas' father: Jonas, how are you feeling today?	
	Jonas: I guess I feel, terrified.	

1) Denotation

Shows three teenagers talking and seen smiling. then the next scene a teenage boy seems quiet then people are busy sitting in a room.

2) Connotation

Jonas and his friends look happy and at the same time confused about the future of their friendship as they will be graduating soon and getting different jobs. Jonas was a bit worried about what job he would get because he always seemed different from the others.

3) Myth

Feeling fear is a feeling that usually comes from disturbance, usually often influenced by invisible spirits.

b. Scenes, memories

In this scene, the researcher focuses on the memories that have been erased in the movie *The Giver*. Precious memories of a fun and colorful life.

In the scene, Jonas and the giver (*The Giver*) are talking about memories that have been removed. Jonas will acquire the memory of the giver through mind transfer using a unique method of holding hands. Jonas will also acquire quite interesting memories of being in a snowy world for the first time and playing on a slide.

Table 4. Scene minutes (16:30 – 18:50)

Visual	Dialogue / Sound	Type of Shot
	The Giver: I will transmit all the memories I have so far. Memories of the past.	Extra Long Shot: The picture is taken from a great distance, so the object looks smaller.
	Jonas: I would be very interested to hear your life story.	Long Shots: The picture is taken from a distance so that the object and the background are clear.
	The Giver: No, no. It's not about my life. You will learn the secrets of world history.	Medium Close Up: From a short distance the object is taken only half of the body.

1) Denotation

Two men are in a room with a different architecture from the others. They talk and share memories. Then you see a smiling man playing a slide.

2) Connotation

The Giver gives Jonas a memory about a memory that has taste and excitement. Memories of sledding on the cold, comfortable snow. Jonas felt happy and happy to be able to feel the excitement of playing the slides.

3) Myth

Rooms that are different and unique in shape often bring up different perspectives regarding their meaning and purpose. Usually unique people have a house like that.

c. Scenes, truth

Focusing on the real truth about the world, about colors, emotions, happiness, sadness, simplicity, uniqueness and difference. Describes the real world, not the world that exists for obedience.

The scene shows Jonas and the Giver in the process of learning and living out interesting and fun memories. Then Jonas accidentally found a map about the truth of their world which was actually covered by a kind of boundary pillars with other worlds, these pillars were memory barrier pillars.

Table 5. Scene minutes (25:18 – 33:10)

Visual	Dialogue / Sound	Type of Shot
	Jonas: Wow, it's as red as Fiona's hair The Giver: Yes, there are red, green, blue, many other colors.	Medium Close Up: From a short distance the object is taken only half of the body. Medium Long Shot: The picture is taken half the body from a great distance, but the object and the background are still clearly visible.
	Jonas: this is a kind of map. Triangle rock! This is so real my friend Asher saw it!. Look at all these towers, what is their function? The Giver: how can your friend see the triangular stone?	Long Shots: The picture is taken from a distance so that the object and the background are clear.
	Jonas: he's a pilot, he said when he saw him.	

1) Denotation

Jonas held a red apple and looked at it and said it was red. Then Jonas looked at the map and studied it.

2) Connotation

Jonas was surprised and enthusiastic about the color of the apple being red because it was the first time seeing the color and it was fun. Then Jonas looked confused and curious about the map he found.

3) Myth

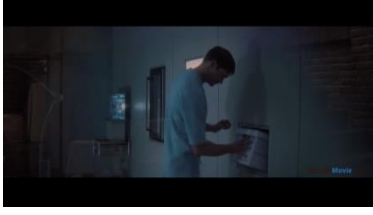
Apple is a fruit that appears quite often in fairy tales, for example in the children's fairy tale about Snow White who ate an apple given by an evil witch.

d. Scenes, crime

The crime that appears in the movie *The Giver* is about killing innocent babies just because their weight does not reach the desired standard. This crime is very inhumane and violates the norms that exist in human life.

Scenes of Jonas' father doing his job of killing and disposing of babies that don't qualify for rearing. Jonas was shocked and saddened by what he saw through the projector.

Table 6. Scene minutes (54:30 – 56:25)

Visual	Dialogue / Sound	Type of Shot
	(baby cry) Jonas' father: oh, I know this hurts, I know. But we have to inject it into your vein, because your hands are too small. We're almost done. Done!, Not so painful right?	Medium Long Shot: The picture is taken half the body from a great distance, but the object and the background are still clearly visible.
	Jonas: he doesn't move. The Giver: He doesn't know what he's doing.	Medium Close Up: From a short distance the object is taken only half of the body.
	Jonas: dunno what he's doing? He killed it! The Giver: but he doesn't know what that means.	Medium Long Shot: The picture is taken half the body from a great distance, but the object and the background are still clearly visible.

1) Denotation

It appears that a man (Jonas's father) is injecting something into the head of a baby who is seen crying and kills the baby. Jonas who saw it looked sad and confused.

2) Connotation

Jonas's father did his job killing babies and throwing them away with no guilt at all, this made Jonas angry about what his father had done to kill innocent babies. Jonas became very sad and angry about their living system.

3) Myth

Drug injections can give health or evil depending on the drug. Children are generally afraid of injections because they are afraid of the very sharp needles.

e. Scene, mutiny

The focus of the scene is on the rebellion carried out by the main character (Jonas) who is fed up with the system being implemented because it is so wrong. As well as Jonas trying to save his younger brother Gabriel who was about to be thrown away by the officers. Jonas' struggle also seemed very tiring because he was being chased by the security team and in

the end Jonas made it to the barrier pillar and freed all the people trapped in the world through the memories that had returned.

The scene shows Jonas' struggle in his rebellion against the system and confronting his friend Asher who is a security pilot. Jonas's struggle lasted until he finally succeeded.

Table 7. Scene minutes (1:01:10 – 1:28:10)

Visual	Dialogue / Sound (no dialogue)	Type of Shot
	Asher: Jonas, what are you doing?	Long Shots: The picture is taken from a distance so that the object and the background are clear.
	Jonas: Asher, please, let us go.	Medium Close Up: From a short distance the object is taken only half of the body.
	Asher: I can not. I should..	Big Close Up: The head of the object is visible and does not cover the panorama behind it.
	Jonas: do what ? Asher: make you nothing.	Long Shots: The picture is taken from a distance so that the object and the background are clear.
	Jonas: Asher, if you were my friend, if you were really my friend, would you believe me? Trust me now!	Extra Long Shot: The picture is taken from a great distance, so the object looks smaller.
	Narrator (Jonas): I hope to be there when all the memories come back. Those memories are the truth. The elders and their rules are lies. So I won't apologize. I know Fiona is safe and I will see her again. I hope one day Fiona and I will be together again. The Giver led us here. To this house, this house turns out to be real. From far behind me, from where I left off. I thought I heard music too, maybe it was just an echo, but that was enough. The echo led us all home.	Extra Long Shot: The picture is taken from a great distance, so the object looks smaller.

1) Denotation

Jonas got on his bicycle and left and was chased by members of the security because Jonas broke the rules and had to be arrested. Jonas managed to escape and restore all memories to the residents and then Jonas went to a house he saw.

2) Connotation

Jonas' rebellion was quite tiring, where he was chased and ran away while carrying little Gabriel. Jonas' struggle was full of challenges until he finally succeeded and freed all the people in his community and Jonas went to a house that looked peaceful with songs. The Giver leads them to the truth and has an interesting and colorful life.

3) Myth

Rebellion often occurs in an area or community because it is considered incompatible with several things. In its history, rebellion has always been defined as criminal and has no good goals.

Discussion

The film *The Giver* as a whole describes how humans are physically and instinctively special creatures and have a deeper purpose in life. Humans as creatures that need all aspects of life to continue to feel life with the colors of happiness, sadness and so on. The life that is applied in the film *The Giver* is a life that maintains peace and equality but eliminates feelings and feelings that are more the essence of life. The memory of history, knowledge, color and emotion is lost in *The Giver*. The elimination of memory or memory aims to create a generation that is empty of various memories so that it is easy to control. Flavor, emotions and colors are also removed because they have unique and different elements from the others and it violates equality and wholeness in a system. In fact, these elements are what make the world beautiful and enchanting.

The order of life in *The Giver* is an empty life, a gloomy and monotonous life, making humans nothing more than objects that can only move and do their job well. The effect of erased memories and emotions makes humans easy to control and a way of controlling society by always monitoring their steps, giving them chemical drugs to keep their emotions out. Various rules are implemented for the sake of creating a peaceful world in accordance with the system implemented.

Human values become something that is not applied, where humans do not have the rights and goals in life that they want themselves but must follow the rules that have been set. The right to free will, the right to emotions that one can feel and emit, the right to acquire past knowledge. All rights that should be owned by humans are abolished. It makes humans empty and lose their specialties. These values do not even exist and are omitted in the film *The Giver* for the sake of creating peace and equality.

Humans as virtuous creatures, special beings should have the rights that are entitled to be obtained as long as they are still on Earth which is a place of learning. Where humans get everything, to be able to feel the beauty and color of the World. The human world, educates, provides, produces for humans what is needed in order to carry out a unique and special life for each individual.

There are many lessons that we can get from the film *The Giver*, where life is not just a matter of peace but colors, emotions, good and bad things are a must that make it

interesting. A completeness that God has ordained to make a harmonious life and can be enjoyed from various sides and perspectives.

Conclusion

Based on the focus of this research, it can be concluded about human values and film messages. Human values are values regarding the life of a human being who has certain qualities and characteristics that are different from other creatures. As has been explained that humans are unique creatures, which require various aspects of life to survive in its corridors as a rational human being. In everyday human life and in general has unique and interesting characteristics in every life. Colorful life, emotion, memory and joy mingled together to form a complementary whole. In the film *The Giver* that was previously described, actually, from an audio-visual perspective and conclusions regarding the contents of the film, there are many deviations from human values that are contrary to human nature. like having to comply strictly with the rules even though humans have personal wills that make them different and unique. This is about the right to have emotions, colors and the right to be different. In this film all differences are eliminated, there is only unity that is intact for the peace of the community. And what violates the norms or values of humanity the most is when the scene kills an innocent baby just because it does not qualify to be cared for and it is very contrary to the personal rights of a human being to be able to live on Earth.

These various deviations are highly discouraged and inhumane when viewed from the perspective of various Ideologies on Earth and from theories regarding the Theological sciences of various Religions. So the researcher presents conclusions based on research findings, that human values in the film *The Giver* are not implemented and are even very contrary to the nature of a human being as they should be.

The message that can be learned from the film *The Giver* are Peace is important but differences make life colorful. The peace that is to be achieved and maintained in the film *The Giver* is a very noble goal and very good when viewed from various sides, but it is wrong to sacrifice the colors and differences of each individual that makes them unique. Peace is really needed, but differences and different colors in life are very important essences in life. Where you can feel different things, whether it's joy or sadness, everything is a unity that makes life beautiful and colorful.

Another message that can be learned from the film *The Giver* is the importance of memory as part of life. Memory is something that is very important and valuable for humans. In memories and the history of human life, memory gives humans an experience of life that is different and unique for each memory obtained. These memories bind humans in feelings and feelings that will not just disappear. A different sense of each memory gives humans an education to live to live in the truth for themselves and for each other.

Lastly, another message that can be learned is that obeying the rules is good but rebelling for the truth is better. In the ending of *The Giver*, the main character (Jonas) rebels against the life system of the community that has been formed. This rebellion is a good thing, because it aims to liberate all people in the community who have been hypnotized by wrong rules, where memory is the key to opening the door to truth.

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