A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF EMOTIONAL-PERSONIFIED CHARACTERS IN THE ANIMATION NAMED INSIDE OUT

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Abstract - In general, this qualitative study highlights on how the emotional characters in the famous animation named Inside out are personified as a human replica. Throughout a framework of gender stereotypes and personified characters have been conveyed and represented pragmatic meanings interrupted by social expectation regarding gender stereotypes. Not surprisingly, many activities processed in media have been counted as a symbol which audiences may understand those activities through their perception surrounded by gender and information that they are familiar with. In addition, this research will highlight on the pragmatic meanings which is represented through the activities of each character. To sum up, the study found that all personified characters carry many pragmatic meanings which govern our social expectation. Moreover, gender and ideology still overspread on our society, especial in the mainstream media. All personified characters distinctly represent how humans expect on the roles of gender and label on what people should respond through their gender.

Keywords - Personification, Semiotic analysis, Mythology and Gender Stereotypes

I. INTRODUCTION

Generally, texts are constructed in order to transmit meanings to audiences or readers. It seems that text can be taken in account as a kind of a vehicle of meaning. Briggs and Cobley (2002) stated that we interpreted a meaning of texts through our perception of the world, so it contributed to the production of our 'common sense' and understandings of the world. In the past, texts were usually referred to written or printed forms. The authors can communicate how their thoughts to readers by explaining the description mostly through writing, such as newspapers, books and journals. However, in the recent years, by the introduction of new technologies, texts can be referred to every product published through media. Danesi (2002) suggested that semiotic is fundamental tool to explore a hidden meaning which is concealed behind the sign and symbol. In recent years, there are many novels are constructed as a movie or animation, such as Harry Potter, Peter Pan, Maleficent and so on. In addition, one of the crucial elements in novel is characterization because characterization is a kind of a collection of codes which are able to convey a lot of meanings. They rather have an influence in a story, and they are the main factor which directs other elements. Card (1988) defines that characters in the fiction are human being, and readers want their characters to seem like real people. They would like to know your characters as well as they know themselves. In written texts, when the authors attempt to persuade the audience, they might avoid to use some words or sentences which may lead the reader to misunderstand a meaning. However, characterization in media seems more challenged for the producer, because the using of symbol can be interpreted through different cultures. In addition, characterization in media contexts needs to be deconstructed and explain how the producer personifies characters.

II. DETAILS EXPERIMENTAL

2.1. Materials and Procedures

Semiotic analysis

One of the well-known theoretical approaches to investigate the relation between signs and meanings is semiotics. The term semiotics or semiology is descended from the Greek word 'semeion', which means sign. As we know that signs are the symbolic systems which work together to manipulate the particular meanings. Heath and Bryant (2000) claimed that semiotics, in an attempt to, was the analytical method to decode a meaning which was hidden behind a symbol.

This theoretical framework was coined by Charles Sander Peirce (1966), an American philosopher and logician. He claimed that "the universe is governed by signs". Signs are normally used to represent the concepts or objects. For understand how a sign works, Peirce offered a triadic model of sign's construction: representamen, the object, and the interpretant. Getting along with

In the communication, people usually use systematic codes verbally and nonverbally. Not surprisingly, there is an inexplicit link between an object and the meaning, which it conveys. Moreover, in the world of technology, media rather plays a significant role in people's decision. In the same meaning, media can represent or reproduce which effects on our decision making. In addition, semiotics can be used to analyze meanings which are hidden behind the reproduction produced by media. "Semiology is an attempt to create a science of the study of sign systems and their role in the construction and reconstruction of meaning in media text (Rayner and Wall, 2008)". Semiotics allows us to understand the relation between the text itself and the signs that are contained within it. Bignell (2002) stated that "the power of semiotic approach lies partly in its applicability to

much wider field of meaning-making which includes fashion, theatre, dance, literature, and architecture"
Chanler (2008) concluded that the obvious distinction between Saussurean and Peircean model than Peirce's model of the sign also highlights on an objective referent rather than the sign itself. The concept of signified defined by Saussure does not concern with an external referent, but an arbitrary mental representation. It seems than the triadic Peirce's model of sign can operate effectively rather than the saussure's model can. The representamen presented by Peirce is similar with the concept of signifier; however, interpretant has a quality unlike that of the signified: a meaning of sign can be varied through external factors.

Types of Sign

Burke (1968) emphasized that "Man is the symbol-using (symbol-making, symbol-misusing) animal". Especially in the communication, humans construct the systematic symbols to communicate with people belonging to the same group. Infante, Rancer and Womack (1997) claimed that "Communication is a Symbolic process". A sign is something which stands for or represents something else. For instance, a cough is a sign which stands for one type of symptom. If one coughs severely, we are able to assume that they are sick. However, the convention provided by human is usually called as a symbol. In the communication, humans usually invent a set of systematic code, and those symbols are accepted and agreed with to represent an action or object. For instance, shaking hand is accepted as a greeting gesture in Western culture, so this action is accepted by people in a particular society.
According to a wide scientific type of sign developed by Pierce, he separated a sign as three major classifications; icon, index and symbol (Danesi, 2002). This analytical invention can be used to analyze media products effectively. Hawkes (1977) claimed that the separation was based upon "modes of relationship between sign vehicles and what is signified" In addition, three types of signs will be discussed as followed.
An icon is a sign which imitate a referential object. Peirce (1931) declared that "an iconic sign represents its objects mainly by similarity". Moreover, Chanler (2008) supported the idea of iconic sign that an icon is a mode in which the signifier is perceived as imitating the signified. For instance, pictures or portraits are visual icons which are drawn from the reflection of artist. In the recent years, there are many media products which make characters seem like human beings. These kinds of products can personify an imaginary character as a reality.
An index is a sign which the signifier is related or connected to the signified in some ways. Peirce (1931) offered that "an index 'indicates' something; for example, a sundial or clock indicates the time of day". Chanler (2008) noted that "the relationship between the signifier and signified is not arbitrary but is directly connected in some ways. Indexicality is quite closely related to the way in which the index of a book or an index finger directly to what is being referred to" The link between together might be physically or causally: e.g. 'natural signs' (thunder, flavours, smoke), 'signals' (a knock on a door), 'personal trademark' (signature, handwriting)
A symbolic mode is the concept which is the signifier does not relate or imitate to the signified. Peirce (1931) suggested that "a sign usually refers to the object accepted by the majority in the particular society". The convention between each factor is based on the arbitrary assessment. In addition, giving a meaning to the representative object will be based on the convention of each society. For example, in Thailand, Wai is considered as the traditional Thai greeting. Besides, comparing to western culture, shaking hand is mostly used to represent a greeting gesture.
From Saussure's framework of semiology and Peirce's framework of semiotics, we can clearly understand how the symbolic systems work. Moreover, we can more clearly understand the types of sign defined by Peirce. All of these maxims will be used in order to analyse the characters. Next, we will focus on central concepts in the study of sign, denotation and connotation. It seems that these concepts are widely found in every methodical signs.

Denotation and Connotation

Saussure called this kind of phenomena as denotation while Barthes usually refers to this process as the first order of signification. Denotation can be referred to the relationship between signifier and signified within sign. Denotation also refers to the obvious codes constructed and used within a particular society. Chanler (2008) suggested that "denotation simply involves a broader consensus. The denotational meaning of a sign would be broadly agreed upon by members of the same culture". For example, a photo of school can be always represented to the place which has a lot of students and teachers. This picture comes up immediately when we see the picture. However, the meaning of school can be different depended upon the individual interpretation. The difference will lie in their connotative meanings. Likewise, Leeds-hurwitz (1993) suggested that the term *connotation* usually refers to "the conventional, second, implicit meaning of a sign imposed by a specific culture".
Coming into a modern form of media, Barthes's work mainly focuses on the second order of signification, Connotation. He (1977) claimed that denotation and connotation will be different explicitly in a photo. The reproduction on film of the object is usually called as denotative meanings. However, when the signs meet the feeling or emotions of individual, it can be called as connotation. A photo of school can be interpreted differently depended upon individual

perception. A school can become a symbol of intelligence and wittedness. Moreover, the selection of what to include in the picture can be translated into various meanings, such as camera angle, quality of film and so on. In addition, Denotation can be referred to what the picture represents; however, connotation is how an object relate to an arbitrarily code.

Rayner and Wall (2004) implied that the idea of connotation can be extended to analyze the tone of voice, gesture and so on. Some actions, gestures, appearances can hide some connotative meanings. Readers or audiences can interpret the meanings through their varied cultural experience. For example, talking loudly can be a sign of good conversation in Chinese culture; however, in some cultures, this action might be a sign of rudeness and impoliteness. In addition, connotation usually takes a place in every stage of communication, and it requires a complicated knowledge to decode meanings.

In addition, denotations are assertive; however, connotations vary because the meaning of sign can be change through how people give a meaning to those signs. Media producers, especially, not only try to present the fabulous design of denotation; however, they have to pay attention on the connotative meaning, which might lead the audience to interpret other meanings. Next, we will discuss one of the well-known models of semiotics in order to analyze the signs the field of media.

Walsh (2002) claimed that the recent video games visualized an objectification of women as prostituting a crass view of sexuality and men as violent thugs. Moreover, there are many researchers attempt to investigate how gender portrayals of video game characters. Dietz (1998) concluded that male characters in the games were mostly characterized as aggressive, and over one quarter of games depicted women as sex objects and visions of beauty and obstacles. Dill and Thill (2007) studied violence, sex, race and age in the top-selling PC games. They explained that male characters were never portrayed as highly sexualized, and most games represented male characters as a main character. Unlikely, only ten percent of main characters were represented as female. Comstock and Scharrer (2005) investigated the images and text in the advertisements of the three top-selling video game magazines. She concluded that most of the ads contained violence, and males were portrayed as more muscular than females. Females were described as more attractive and sexier than males. To sum up, Male characters are always represented as violence and power. Most male characters are portrayed as a symbol of aggressive and power. However, female characters are underrepresented than male. Female characters are depicted as more attractive and sexier than males.

Gender and stereotypes

Since we were born, we were surrounded with gender-typed information. For example, girls will associate with pink colour, and boys will belong to blue or red colour. In addition, young children can toidentify clothing colour based on how they define attributes of sex. Cunningham and Macrae (2011) investigated the linkage between gender-related stereotypes and colour in young children. Throughout six experiments, they concluded that young children's surroundings are saturated with gender-stereotyped information. Most children still understand their performance through a sexual-oriented reproduction. It means that we learn gender-related stereotypes from everything around us. Not surprisingly, it means that gender stereotypes become one of the very crucial contribution in order to construct some understanding of the world and directly manipulate people's interpretation.

Methodology

In this qualitative study, the researcher attempts to analyze media text by adopting semiotic theory as a main analytical tool. By examining textual and visual analysis of semiotic approach, the five emotion characters in the animation, Inside out.

Semiotic analysis will adopt to analyze what quality each character represents. As we understand that character can convey a various meaning to audiences, and they are considered as a sign which is compared as a vehicle of meaning. In addition, their performances can be interpreted as a meaning (i.e. speech, appearance, action), and their activities can connote some concepts behind them. In this part, the characters will be analyzed through denotation and connotation. First, thoughts can be decoded by observing on their performances or actions because every performances or speeches can signal the intention of producers. Especially in this animation relating to human emotion, when the producer portrays the emotion characters, they must realize on many factors, such as culture, actuality and validity. In the same meaning, it is very complicated to personify a human emotion to become an actual human. In addition, the personification must be done reasonably and carefully.

Gender stereotypes, will be analyzed through each speech and action. Basically, gender stereotypes are generalizations about the role of each gender. So, a gender stereotype is socially constructed. It derives from the social expectation of people regarding what and how each gender behaves. Social construction can influence on the personification of the characters. Each performance of characters might hide some concepts regarding gender stereotypes.

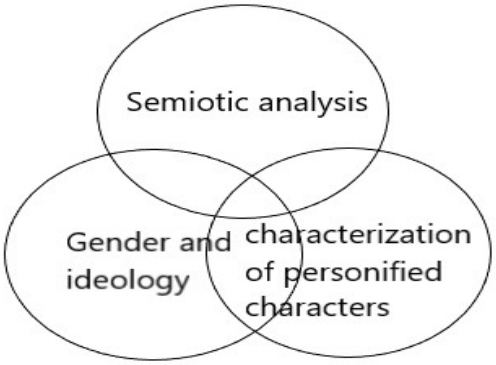


Fig. 1: A combination among semiotic analysis, gender and ideology and characterization

In the next section, by using all analytical approaches, findings and discussion will be analyzed what quality of each personified character is represented in the animation named Inside out.

Finding and discussion

In this part, by using the all sorts of sign available, the researcher founds that all emotion character conveys a various meaning to us. In addition, the result of the data analysis will be discussed regarding three major aspect of the literature review which consisting of: 1. indirect characteristic, 2. semiotic analysis, and 3. gender stereotypes.

Not surprisingly, most symbolic systems used in the animation associate with gender and stereotypes. Thiraphika (2016) focuses on the systematic symbols which are portrayed in the movie named Love of Siam. He argues that most symbols used in the movie are mostly consistent with how we perceive toward Queer community (i.e. gay and bisexual). Responding into this aspect, the five elements of indirect characteristic helps us to understand that the first is an appearance of the character. They are usually represented by using different colors and toilettes. Furthermore, all of them usually signify and connote the sophisticated emotion concept of gender stereotypes and age. All characters are usually portrayed through the variety of colorful themes which reflect how humans understand and label how masculine and feminine should be dressed. For masculine characters, they mostly wear long brown pants and shirt; hence, darkened colors are most associated with a man dressing. Furthermore, for feminine characters, Joy and Disgust wear a long dress with a brightened color. Not surprisingly, femininity is mostly associated with a symbol of beauty. On the slightly difference, Sadness properly dresses like an old-fashioned woman who wear a white old sweater and long blue pants; in addition, she most denotes a quality of old-fashioned woman.

Second, the speech of the character is represented by using the different pattern of speech which connotes the concept of gender stereotypes and their perception. Furthermore, the pattern of the characters' speech also denotes their perception of the world. Almost of them represent the quality of immaturity (i.e. Joy, Anger, Fear and Disgust). In addition, four of them have an obviously pattern which audiences are able to perceive that they have a childish mindset. On the other hands, one of them represents a quality of elderly (i.e. Sadness). Undoubtedly, she will always reflect and behave more like an elderly mindset.

Third, an action of the character is represented by their responses in each situation. All of the actions connote their intention regarding perception and intention. Not surprisingly, most actions expressed by each character denote that four of them (i.e. Disgust, Joy, Anger and Fear) act like a child which is frightened when they are facing with some troubles. In addition, it means that children cannot handle when they are standing among the trouble circumstances. On the contrary of, Sadness seems very claimed and good controlling when she has to stand among troubles. Undoubted, Sadness denotes that human life mostly concerns with a sad situation, and we will understand our life through learning with a tragedy situation. Every stages of human life most are most associated with a sad emotion. Since we were born, it seems that humans certainly understand a sad emotion. Not surprisingly, she is the most influence emotion in human being.

Fourth, thought of each character is represented by their speech and action. In addition, they signify the perception and intention of each character. Most of them express their thought through many activities which they perceive. Initially, Joy attempts to protect Riley in every step because she feels that Riley must be happy all the time. In every step, all actions must be enrooted on happiness which joy always represent the symbol of joyful. Disgust usually protects and controls when Riley is facing with a disgust scene; likewise, Disgust always needs Riley to be safe socially and mentally. It means that human usually wants to be safe from what we do not prefer. Next, Fear general expresses when he feels unsecured; in addition, he will immediately respond when Riley is facing with an unsteadied situation. It seems that fear emotion is a regular emotion enrooted in human' perception; hence, we cannot avoid that human was usually born with the influence of fear. Moreover, Anger is associated directly when Riley cannot reach her desire. Every stage which Riley cannot achieve what her need, Anger strongly stimulate with an uncontrollable situation. Finally, Sadness seems much differentiated with others because she has a slightly logical thought when she responds. Closing with elderly mindset, she will always keeping ask for the reasons throughout the movie among others. In addition, she mostly contents a quality of elderly mindset.

Fifth, their effects on other characters are qualified by their perception and intention which influences on the character's personality. At the beginning of the

movie, single emotion is perceived by all characters. Additionally, it means that immaturity feels that life must be easy and ended by happiness all the time. Joy, Disgust and Anger have an extensively influence in the beginning. Undoubtedly, it causes various severe problems to Riley, the main character. However, after a long journey between Sadness and Joy, they totally understand that all emotions must be consisted with each other. As a human being, human might content various emotions in a single time. Hence, being human might be very sophisticated because we cannot predict how we perceive in a single moment.

However, the analysis of visual and textual also has drawbacks. The meaning of text can be varied depended on the individual's interpretation toward these emotion characters. In addition, semiotics tends to be suggestive rather than substantive. In the same meaning, symbols are the convention which represents the idea or object, so meanings can be shaped by each society. Semiotic approach attempts to focus on the understanding how the meaning is constructed rather than what the actual meaning is. In addition, meanings can be varied through many factors, such as culture or individual.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In this study, the researcher adapts semiotics to emphasize on the character in media. For further study, an interesting researcher is able to adapt this framework to emphasize on other characters because they can hide some perceptions behind them; for example, some movies might be reproduced in the different time, and each character might be interpreted by producers in the different ways. In addition, each character can convey the different meaning to audiences. The further researcher can compare the similarity and difference between old and new version which can lead to investigate some aspects between two perceptions. Furthermore, this study also adapts a concept of gender stereotypes to investigate how social expectation influences on our performances. It seems that this framework can support us to understand how each society perceive and interpret each performance toward gender-related framework. For the further researcher, the investigation toward gender stereotypes can help us to understand how each culture has various meanings regarding a sexual-oriented performance.

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