REPRESENTATIONS OF BROTHERHOOD
AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN DANNY BOYLE'S
SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE MOVIE (2008) :
A SEMIOTIC APPROACH

RESEARCH PAPER

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Movie is an audio visual media that may represent many cultural background where a society live in. Movie is built from many signs, including many sign systems that work in a coordination to reach an effect to be expected (Van Zoest in Sobur, 2004:128). There are many correlations between movie and society, they are about competitions and conflicts which exist in there. The competitions and conflicts can be built from cultural, social, industrial, or institutional background. And movie consists of communication symbols in which every symbol has own meaning. One of the movies that uses many symbols is *Slumdog Millionaire* (then being abbreviated as *SM*) movie.

SM movie is produced in 2008. The film premiered in America November 12th 2008 and around the world in January 2009. Slumdog Millionaire is a movie that have genre drama *SM* movie is produced by Fox Searchlight Pictures and Warner Bros. Pictures and written by Simon Beaufoy.

That movie is directed by Danny Boyle. His complete name is Daniel Boyle. He was born on October 20th, 1956 in Radcliffe, Lancashire, England, UK. He is a British film director and producer. He is a graduate of

Thornleigh Salesian College in Bolton and at Bangor University. He has directed several successful movies. They are : *Shallow Grave* (1994), *Trainspotting* (1996), *A Life Less Ordinary* (1997), *The Beach* (2000), *28 Days Later* (2002), *Millions* (2004), *28 Weeks Later* (2007) (producer), *Sunshine* (2007), *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008).

The story of this film is about a young Indian named Jamal Malik that narrated following a phenomenal quiz "Who Wants to be a Millionaire!" in Indian version. He has answer the questions up to the last question then has been postponed to the following day because the time is up. After finished that first day, he is brought by policemen to the police station to interrogate about the possibility of deceitfulness in answering the questions, because of his background as only a tea messenger and not educated. Jamal is tortured when he is interrogated by the policeman but he explains that he really don't know the answer of those questions, even the easiest question. He comes to that program not to win, he just wants to look for his love, Latika, so that Latika can see him at television station and she can find where Jamal is.

Then Jamal narrates about his experiences during his life that according to the policeman it is "a logical curiosity" in answering the questions. This movie runs with reverse plot and started in the story of little Jamal. It explains that Jamal has lived in a corner of Mumbai dirty settlement with his older brother, Salim, and his mother. He is always defeated by the elder brother and then their mother left them died because of a religion disturbance. Afterwards Jamal and his elder brother meet Latika and they are

friends until they are adopted by somebody which actually a mafia hostager that order children to beg. One day there is an ancident that make them escape from the mafia, but what a pity Latika because she cannot escape. In the other place, Jamal and Salim live in discursive places and work as thieves, guides, restaurant workers, etc. When they move adult, they return to Mumbai and want to find Latika.

Then they succeed to make Latika free from the hostager. but obviously, Salim has different plan after he kills a procuress that named Maman as a command from Javed, the other bigger procuress. After that, Salim works for Javed and extradite Latika to Javed. While Jamal is chased away by Salim after they quarrels. In that story, Jamal then works at a call center as a tea messenger. One day he is ordered to replace his friend as an operator and he tries to look for the existence of Salim and Latika by phone it and he gets it. Then with unintentionally he also can enters in "Who Wants to be a Millionaire!" Indian version and he can enters in a television program to get attention from Latika and Salim.

In the second day of the quiz, Jamal returns to get his last question which actually cannot be answered by him. Finally, he tries to phone Salim. In the other place, Salim's handphone is given to Latika and Salim orders Latika to meet Jamal soon. After lifting the telephone and it is Latika, Jamal looks happy. At the end of the telephone, Latika says to Jamal to meet her soon, but before he answers it, telephone has been hang off. Although Latika cannot helps Jamal to answer the question, finally he can answer it with

speculation and he wins 20 million rupee. at the end of the story, Jamal is waiting for Latika at a railway station like his promise to Latika. And finally at that station they meet in a hug with a love.

SM movie is a phenomenal movie after its premiere. At the beginning of its production, this movie is unpredicted to be a box office movie. *SM* movie makes its own history as a box office Hollywood movie because of its uniquely. The response from movie critics outside India is very positive because they argue the movie gives more choice of movie genre based on its mixed story about English and Indian. The other contradictive responses are from American and European mass media which said that the movie has a problem in its storytelling.

Responses from inside India is also very various. Some film critics have responded positively to the film. The negative response comes from an author and critic Salman Rushdie. He argues that the plot is a patently ridiculous conceit, the kind of fantasy writing that gives fantasy writing a bad name. At the same time, others objected to issues such as Jamal's use of British English. A few notable filmmakers such as Aamir Khan and Priyadarshan have been critical of the film the fact that some parts of the movie similar with films which have been made by Indian film makers before having not received equal recognition. Beside that, the wealth of the casts of that movie is also a problem because they still live poor.

But in the facts, the responses from around the world are in the top level on February 2009. This movie won eight out of ten Academy Awards

for which it was nominated. They are : Best Achievement in Cinematography for *Anthony Dod Mantle*; Best Achievement in Directing for *Danny Boyle*; Best Achievement in Editing for *Chris Dickens*; Best Achievement in Music Written for Motion Pictures, Original Score for *A.R. Rahman* ; Best Achievement in Music Written for Motion Pictures, Original Song for *A.R. Rahman* (music) and *Gulzar* (lyrics) For the song "Jai Ho"; Best Achievement in Sound for *Ian Tapp, Richard Pryke, Resul Pookutty*; Best Motion Picture of the Year for *Christian Colson*; Best Writing, Screenplay Based on Material Previously Produced or Published for *Simon Beaufoy*.

There are four points that make the writer interested in analyzing this movie. The first point is about the characteristics and the characterizations in that movie. The director gives strong major characters to keep the story line not static and interesting. The characterization of that movie may give the real portrait of the society. One thing that is also interesting in characterization is about the director that use young man as the major characters.

The second point is about plot of the story. *SM* movie is appeared in a reverse plot, so it is an unique point that can be seen in that movie. Reverse plot is more interesting to be seen by film watcher because they cannot guess the next story easily.

The third point is setting of the movie. *SM* movie is a Hollywood movie but the setting of the movie is in India, it can be a new trend to mix some different movie cultures in a movie. The use of India is also a

breakthrough from Hollywood to make a movie. From the setting, we can find the other side of Mumbai's life.

The last point that makes this movie interesting to be analyzed is about the symbol which exists and shown in the movie. Based on the genre of the movie, drama is a genre which contains many aspects to be analyzed, including symbols. Representations of the symbols are such object that can be analyzed by this movie.

Based on the explanation above, there are many symbols that can be analyzed in this movie. Some of symbols are symbols to represent brotherhood and equal opportunity. Those symbols may represent many hidden meanings and motives. That is why the researcher is interested in analyzing the representations of brotherhood and equal opportunity in Danny Boyle's *SM* movie by semiotic approach to find out the symbols of the representations of brotherhood and equal opportunity. Semiotic approach is The theory and systematic study of signs and symbols, or more precisely the production of meanings from sign systems, linguistic or non-linguistic, especially as elements of language or other systems of communication, and comprising semantics, syntactics, and pragmatics. From those reasons, the researcher takes a title for this study "**Representations of Brotherhood and Equal Opportunity in Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire* Movie (2008) : A Semiotic Approach**".

B. Literature Review

The movie *SM* is an interesting movie included many symbols in there that can be analyzed through semiotic approach. But, as long as the writer knows, there are no previous studies in The movie *SM*, at least among students in region Central Java Universities.

But, there is a study of *SM* movie. The writer find an essay which discuss about the movie. The essay entitled "*Slumdog Millionaire* Analysis : Topics in Rehabilitation" (2009) written by Alyssa St.Pierre from University of Maine at Farmington Spring. In that essay, St.Pierre explain about the setting and scenes of the movie deals with psychological impact to the characters and analyze them by rehabilitation application theory. The conclusion of her essay is all of the movements of Jamal, Salim, Latika from one place to another is a rehabilitation process to build a mental foundation to live.

Different from that previous study, this research focuses on semiotic study about how brotherhood and equal opportunity represented in *SM* movie.

C. Problem Statement

Based on the background of the study, the problem of this research that want to solve is *"How are brotherhood and equal opportunity represented in Danny Boyle's Slumdog Millionaire movie?"*

D. Objective of the Study

The objective of the research of *Slumdog Millionaire* movie are :

1. To analyze the movie based on the structural elements.

2. To analyze the movie based on semiotic perspective.

E. Benefit of the Study

The researcher expected many benefits from this research, they are :

1. Theoretical Benefit

To give some contribution to the larger body of knowledge or the development of knowledge particularly studies in movie *Slumdog Millionaire* by Danny Boyle.

2. Practical benefit

To give deeper understanding in literary field as the reference to the other researcher, and to enrich the literary study.

F. Research Method

1. Types of the Study

The type of this research is qualitative research. It means that the researcher does not use statistics to collect, to analyze, and to interpret data.

2. Types of the Data and the Data Source

In this research, the researcher takes two kinds of data :

a. Primary Data

Primary data is the main data obtained from the pictures and the moviescripts of the movie.

b. Secondary Data

Secondary data is the supporting data taken from literary books, criticisms, articles and journals related to the movie.

The types of data that taken from the movie are : captures of the movie, the speeches of the characters in the movie and setting of images in the movie.

3. **Object of the Study**

The object of this research is the movie *SM* directed by Danny Boyle and written by Simon Beaufoy. The movie was produced by Fox Searchlight Pictures and Warner Bros. Pictures in 2008.

4. **Technique of the Data Collection**

In this research, the researcher uses library and digital research. The data are collected by watching the movie and collected from the books related to the topic. The first step is watching the movie *SM* to identify the data and take notes the data. Beside take notes, the researcher also captures the scenes, notes the setting of the scenes. Then it continued by reading the related references to learn more about the data. After that, the data is analyzed by using the relevant theory and references from the articles, journal and digital references from internet which is containing the meaning of each data.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The technique of data analysis is descriptive in which the researcher uses semiotic approach and draw a conclusion.

G. Research Paper Organization

This research consists of five chapters. *Chapter I* is Introduction, which consists of background, literary review, research objectives, research limitation, research benefits, research methodology, and the last s research organization. *Chapter II* comprises of the Underlying theory which present the notion of semiotic, the types of sign and the elements of semiotic. *Chapter III* is Structural analysis of the movie, which is involves the structural elements of the character and characterization, setting, plot, point of view, style, theme, and discussion. *Chapter IV* concerns in Semiotic analysis of the representations of brotherhood and equal opportunity. The last is *Chapter V*, which contains Conclusion and Suggestion.