

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The writer is going to review some theories related to the study in this chapter. They are the theories of Semiotics and its approach, Signs, Symbol, Icon, Index, Codes, and the Review of Previous Studies.

2.1 Sign

Chandler (2007) in his book *Semiotics the Basics* states that humans are surely *homo significant* or meaning maker. Human makes meaning through their own creation and interpretation of "sign". There are two dominant contemporary models of what constitute a sign, namely Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure who offers dyadic or two part model of the sign, and second is the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce who offers triadic model of the sign. These will be discussed further.

2.1.1 Saussurean Model

Chandler (2007) proposes the explanation about linguistic sign as follows:

A linguistic sign is not a link between a thing and a name, but between a concept (signified) and a sound pattern (signifier). The sound pattern is not actually a sound; for a sound is something physical. A sound pattern is the hearer's psychological impression of a sound, as given to him by the evidence of his senses. This sound pattern may be called a "material" element only in that it is the representation of our sensory impressions. The sound pattern may thus be distinguished from the other element associated with it in a linguistic sign. This other element is generally of a more abstract kind: the concept. (Chandler, 2007, p. 14)

The linguistic sign is, then a two-sided psychological entity, which may be represented by the following diagram:



Figure 2.1 Saussure's Model of the Sign (Saussure cited in Chandler, 2007, p.14-15)

Based on the diagram above, a sign can be defined as follows:

Within the Saussurean model, the *sign* is the whole that results from the association of the signifier with the signified. The relationship between the signifier and the signified is referred to as "signification", and this is represented in the Saussurean diagram by the arrows. The horizontal broken line marking the two elements of the sign is referred to as "the bar. (Chandler, 2007, p. 15)

Chandler gives one linguistic example to ensure Saussure's theory that is the word "open" (when it is invested with meaning by someone who encounters it on a shop doorway) is a sign consisting of:

- A signifier : the word "open"
- A signified concept : that the shop is open for business

According to the example, it means that a sign must have both a signifier and a signified. Someone cannot have a totally meaningless signifier or a completely formless signified. A sign is a recognizable combination of a signifier with a particular signified.

Saussure explained those two principles clearly which is cited in Preucel's book as stated below:

For Saussure, the term arbitrary does not mean that a signifier is subject to the free will of the speaker since the individual cannot easily alter the sign after it is adopted by a linguistic community. The term simply means that it is "unmotivated, i.e. arbitrary in that it actually has no natural connection with the signified". It thus has a meaning closer to the word, "convention". And for the linearity of the signal, Saussure explains that unlike visual signals, such as a ship's flag, that may exploit more than one dimension simultaneously, auditory signals are capable of expressing only a single dimension. The elements of an auditory signal are presented one after another in a chain-like fashion. This feature can be seen in the representation of the auditory signal in writing where a sequence of graphic signs is substituted for a succession of sounds in time. (Saussure cited in Preucel, 2006, pp.29-30).

According to the explanation, it can be concluded that Saussure emphasizes that sign has two sides, signifier (sound pattern) and signified (concept). These things cannot be separated from each other because one thing can be defined as a sign if it has signified and signifier. Saussure assumes that the important components which build the meaning of sign are the signified and the signifier.

2.1.2 Peircean Model

In contrast to Saussure who proposes dyadic model of sign consisting of signified and signifier, Peirce proposes triadic model of sign consisting of representamen, interpretant, and object.

A REPRESENTAMEN is a subject of a triadic relation to a second, called its OBJECT, for a third, called its INTERPRETANT, this triadic relation being such that the REPRESENTAMEN determines its interpretant to stand in the same triadic relation to the same object for some interpretant (Peirce, 2000, p.38).

Peirce (cited in Chandler 2007, p.29) states, “to qualify as a sign, all three elements are essential. The sign is a unity of what is represented (the object), how it is represented (the representamen) and how it is interpreted (the interpretant).

The interaction between the representamen, the object and the interpretant is referred to by Peirce as “semeiosis”.

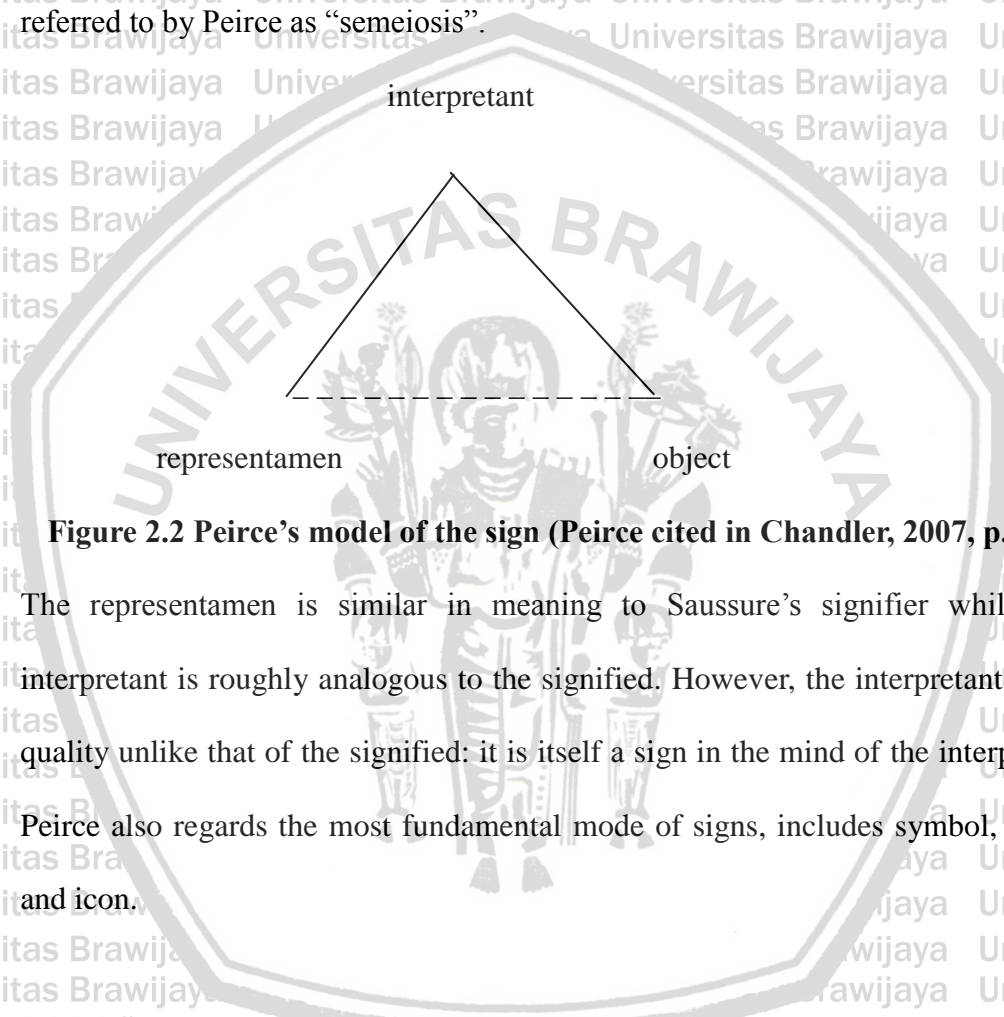


Figure 2.2 Peirce’s model of the sign (Peirce cited in Chandler, 2007, p.30)

The representamen is similar in meaning to Saussure’s signifier while the interpretant is roughly analogous to the signified. However, the interpretant has a quality unlike that of the signified: it is itself a sign in the mind of the interpreter.

Peirce also regards the most fundamental mode of signs, includes symbol, index and icon.

2.1.2.1 Symbol

According to Peirce cited in Chandler (2007), the definition of symbol is based purely on conventional association. “Symbol/symbolic is a mode in which the signifier does not resemble the signified but which is fundamentally arbitrary or purely conventional, so that this relationship must be agreed upon and learned: e.g. language in general (plus specific languages, alphabetical letters, punctuation

marks, words, phrases and sentences), numbers, morse code, traffic lights, national flags” (Peirce cited in Chandler, 2007, p.36). In this case, meaning is the result of convention. According to the explanation stated above, the picture which is stated below is an example of sign which includes into symbol/symbolic:



Figure 2.3 Symbol (Sylvia, 2010)

This image is into symbol/symbolic because an anchor is a symbol of hope in most cultures. Hope is the main theme behind the image. Without cultural knowledge, someone might just see this image as an anchor.

2.1.2.2 Index

According to Peirce, Indexical is closely related with the way in which the index of a book or an index finger point directly to what is being referred. “Index is a mode in which the signifier is *not arbitrary* but is *directly connected* in some way (physically or causally) to the signified (regardless of intention), this link can be observed or inferred: e.g. “natural signs” (smoke, thunder, footprints, echoes, non-synthetic odours and flavours), medical symptoms (pain, a rash, pulse rate), measuring instruments (weathercock, thermometer, clock, spirit-level), “signals” (a knock on a door, a phone ringing), pointers (a pointing “index” finger, a

directional signpost), recordings (a photograph, a film, video or television shot, an audio-recorded voice), personal “trademarks” (handwriting, catch phrases)” (Peirce, cited in Chandler, 2007, p.37). In line with the concept of index which is proposed by Peirce, this one is the example of sign included in index/indexical:



Figure 2.4 Indexical sign (Sylvia, 2010)

This is an index sign, giving direction and information about where people should pass by to go out.

2.1.2.3 Icon

Unfortunately, as with symbolic, the terms icon and iconic used in a technical sense in semiotics are different from its everyday meanings. “Icon is a mode in which the signifier is perceived as *resembling* or imitating the signified (recognizably looking, sounding, feeling, tasting or smelling like it), being similar in possessing some of its qualities: e.g. a portrait, a cartoon, a scale-model, onomatopoeia, metaphors, realistic sounds in “program music”, sound effects in radio drama, a dubbed film soundtrack, imitative gestures” (Peirce, cited in Chandler, 2007, pp.36-37). In order to understand the concept of icon/iconic more easily, an example is provided below:



Figure 2.5 Iconic sign (Sylvia, 2010)

Mickey Mouse is one of the iconic figures for Disney. He is an icon for the company because he is the character that Walt Disney started the company with.

Based on the explanation stated above, Peirce focuses his theory on the interpretation of sign related to the logic. People have to look at the sign first as the representamen in order to create meaning behind the sign. After that, people can make some interpretation toward the sign before referring it to the intended meaning. By making the divisions of sign, Peirce intends to emphasize in differing “modes of relationship” between sign vehicles and signified.

In this study, the writer uses the theory of Peirce’s typology of sign in order to find and categorize the types of signs which exist on the chapter cover in the graphic novel *Maus*. So, the writer needs a code to give a cultural framework to signs in order to build a meaning. In interpreting codes, the writer considers culture in which the sign and code used. It may be possible to have different interpretation of signs but code will rule and limit it based on culture and the social convention.

2.2 Codes

In order to define codes of chapter cover in the graphic novel *Maus: A Survivor's Tale* by Art Spiegelman, here are the kinds of codes. Codes are the important aspect in building the meaning of signs. It is strengthened by Chandler's statement in his book (2007, p. 147), "since the meaning of a sign depends on the code within which it is situated, codes provide a framework within which signs make sense". In other words, codes help to build the meaning of signs in order to be meaningful. The various kinds of codes overlap, and the semiotic analysis of any text or practice involves considering several codes and the relationships between them. A range of typologies of codes can be found in the literature of semiotics

Chandler mentions some codes (2007, p. 149) namely:

a. Social Codes

1. Verbal language (phonological, syntactical, lexical, prosodic, and paralinguistic subcodes);
2. Bodily codes (bodily contact, proximity, physical orientation, appearance, facial expression, gaze, head-nods, gesture and posture);
3. Commodity codes (fashions, clothing, and cars);
4. Behavioural codes (protocols, rituals, role-playing, and games).

b. Textual codes

1. Scientific codes, including mathematics;

2. Aesthetic codes within the various expressive arts (poetry, drama, painting, sculpture, music, etc.) – including classicism, romanticism, realism;
3. Genre, rhetorical and stylistic codes: exposition, argument, description, and narration and so on;
4. Mass media codes and magazine codes, both technical and conventional (including format).

c. Interpretative codes

1. Perceptual codes: e.g. of visual perception.
2. Ideological codes: more broadly, these include codes for encoding and decoding texts – dominant “ (or hegemonic), negotiated or oppositional.

Knowledge is needed to make the right interpretation toward those three kinds of codes. According to Chandler (2007, p. 150) there are three kinds of knowledge which are important, as follows:

1. The world (social knowledge);
2. The medium and genre (textual knowledge);
3. The relationship between (1) and (2) (modality judgements).

In interpreting code, culture in which the sign and code are used has to be considered. It may be possible to have different interpretation of the signs but codes will rule and limit it based on the culture and social convention. In conclusion, codes manage the interpretation toward the signs based on the social and cultural knowledge.

2.3 Maus

Maus is the graphic novel by American cartoonist Art Spiegelman. It depicts Spiegelman interviewing his father about experiences as a Polish Jew and Holocaust survivor. Art Spiegelman's graphic novel, *Maus A Survivor's Tale*, was originally a series in comic magazine *Raw* from 1980 to 1991 (Spiegelman, 1991).

2.4 Previous Studies

Laksono (2012) has done a research on semiotics study in Benny Rachmadi's opinion cartoon compiled in "*Dari Presiden ke Presiden*. He analyzed about the effectiveness of codes in the cartoon. He analyzed the signs found in the cartoon by using Peirce's typology of sign so that he could categorize them specifically into icon, symbol or index. He found that iconic signs are mostly used. It is followed by symbolic signs and the indexical one. He also investigated what connotation that can be made in Benny Rachmadi's opinion cartoon and found the kinds of codes used in interpreting the cartoon. Laksono built the meaning of the cartoon and relate it to the certain cases since the cartoon directly used to tell about the certain phenomena happening in the society. In this case, he discussed the political cases on his research. Laksono analyzed the codes in his objects, the frequently code used in the cartoon is considered as the most effective one. He analyzed the codes found in Benny Rachmadi's opinion cartoons by using Chandler's and Bathes's theories of codes.

Another previous study is a thesis "A Semiotic Study on Indonesian Drama Movie Posters under Religion Different Theme" by Kafitasari (2013). She analyzed movie posters by using Peirce's typology of signs. She analyzed the

signs found in the movie posters by using Peirce's typology of sign so he could categorize them especially into icon, symbol, and index. She found that iconic signs are mostly used. She also investigated what connotation can be made in movie posters. This previous study gave identification toward the semiotics signs found which are related to the story in which the researcher interpreted the deeper meanings of all the signs found in the posters by using connotative theory.

Through that theory, the signs found were related to certain cases, real condition of Indonesian society, and the story of the movie itself. The last, this previous study tried to analyze the clarity of signs found that reflected the religion difference in order to know which poster is the clearest and the least clear in showing religion difference.

This study helped the writer to analyze the similar evidence because the writer also tried to analyze the signs. Moreover, the writer finds some differences, such as the object that has already been mentioned before. Different from those previous studies, this present study analyzes semiotic signs and finds out the interpretation built by the three sign models. It is also using theory of codes to interpret the data. The writer uses the chapter covers on the graphic novel *Maus: A Survivor's Tale* by Art Spiegelman. The writer also makes classification of the type of the signs such as icon, index and symbol. Then, the writer is using those three signs to find out the interpretation on the chapter covers. It is very different from the theory of codes that is used by the first previous study to find out the effectiveness. He analyzed the codes found in Benny Racmadi's opinion cartoons by using Chandler's and Bathes's theories of codes.