

## **Roland Barthes' Semiotic Analysis in the Film “Noktah Merah Perkawinan”**

**Mike Indarsih**  
[mike.mih@bsi.ac.id](mailto:mike.mih@bsi.ac.id)

**Hani Yuniani**  
[hani.hun@bsi.ac.id](mailto:hani.hun@bsi.ac.id)

**Fajar Diah Astuti**  
[fajar.fja@bsi.ac.id](mailto:fajar.fja@bsi.ac.id)

**Horidatul Bakiah**  
[horidatul.hbk@bsi.ac.id](mailto:horidatul.hbk@bsi.ac.id)

**Aldinna Nurpikhasari**  
[aldinan12@gmail.com](mailto:aldinan12@gmail.com)

**Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika**

### **ABSTRACT**

Communication is an activity that is carried out daily, either with people close to us or even with strangers we have just met. Communication seems simple but has various meanings because with communication someone can express their feelings. Assertive communication is the ability to express desires, feelings and thoughts to others while maintaining and respecting the rights and feelings of others. This study aims to interpret the value of assertive communication contained in the film Noktah Merah Perkawinan using Roland Barthes' semiotic approach. The research method used is qualitative descriptive research with a semiotic theory approach. The results of the study using Roland Barthes' semiotic approach can be seen from the connotation, denotation and myth contained in the film Noktah Merah Perkawinan. The results of the interpretation by denotation, connotation and myth show that communication between couples is very much needed. Each partner needs to express their desires, feelings and what is on their minds. The inability to communicate with a partner can cause various problems in the household. The disharmony of a marriage occurs because both parties are unable to communicate well, so that many misunderstandings occur.

**Key words:** Denotation; Connotation; Myth; Assertive Communication

### **INTRODUCTION**

Communication is the process of sending and receiving messages between 2 or more people (KBBI, 2020). Everything in this world is not connected by chance but has a purpose behind it. Assertive Communication for husband-and-wife

companions is something that is meaningful to have, because assertive communication will make it easier for husband-and-wife companions to communicate about what they experience, think and can socialize with their environment efficiently. Alberti and Emmons (in Rahayu, 2018) define assertive communication as a positive self-expression that displays behavior that respects others. Irsyadi (in Widyastuti, 2018) assertive communication is a skill to communicate what is desired, experienced, and thought to others but always protecting and respecting the rights and feelings of others.

The phenomenon of a person's tendency to commit delinquency or negative attitudes stems from the weakness of their assertive attitude (Hikmah, 2020). Qaddura et al (2019) assertive communication is a very meaningful personal quality, where a person can voice their will and position to be able to achieve goals, overcome their difficulties, without disturbing the rights of others and being able to control their aggression. People can communicate their own impressions and those of others by always defending their rights without disturbing the rights of others. We can observe Assertive Communication lessons from a film (Ampuno, 2020).

Film is a mass communication media that is thought to have great power in influencing the wider community, both in psychological, social, and cultural factors. This assumption is supported by film which is a media based on audio and visual, and its function as a means of entertainment, guidance, data, and persuasion. Film can be a very safe alternative to obtain data and messages that are also entertaining. Film in a small sense is the appearance of photos through a big screen, but in a broader interpretation it can also be included as shown on television (Wahyuningsih, 2019). Film as a work of art is born from a creative process that demands freedom of creativity for H. Hafied in (Saskhia & Suranto, 2018). For Mudjiono (2020), film is a very relevant field of study for semiotic analysis because films are formed with various characteristics.

Red Dot Marriage describes the couple Ambar (Marsha Timothy) and Gilang (Oka Antara). The couple lives with their son and daughter, Bagas and Ayu. Gilang is a landscape architect who started his own business after leaving his father's architecture industry. He currently focuses on decorating the house with beautiful plants. Meanwhile, Ambar, in between her daily life taking care of the house and children, tries to keep herself busy by teaching ceramic workshops. There, she meets a woman named Yuli (Sheila Dara) who becomes one of her students. Ambar and Gilang's relationship is hit by a case that arises from the interference of both their mothers and fathers. This case also makes the couple fight hard until finally they just keep quiet while harboring their annoyance. Ambar can't stand their behavior of avoiding each other. On the advice of her friends, she also invites Gilang to go to a marriage counselor. But in the middle of the stage, Gilang suddenly leaves Ambar because he doesn't want to talk about the case.

Roland Barthes' Semiotic Analysis examines characteristics and how they work, which is based on Saussure's thinking about characteristics that are divided into indicators, where Barthes' analysis is divided into several analysis sessions, namely denotation, connotation, and myth (Rujina et al., 2020). The denotation system is an initial level sign system consisting of a chain of indicators and the abstract concepts behind it.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Roland Barthes' Symbolic Interaction Theory**

Symbolic interaction is based on ideas about people and their interactions with citizens. The essence of symbolic interaction is an activity that is characteristic of humans, namely communication or the exchange of symbols that are given meaning. This perspective suggests that human attitudes must be seen as a process that allows humans to form and control their attitudes by considering the expectations of others who are their interaction partners. The definitions they share with others, the atmosphere, objects and even themselves determine human attitudes. In this context, humans, meaning is constructed in the process of interaction and this process is not a neutral medium that allows social forces to play their role, but rather is the real substance of social organization and social power (Mulyana, 2012).

The assumption that the symbolic interaction theory put forward by Roland Barthes defines a characteristic (sign) as a system consisting of (E) an expression or signifier in its relationship (R) with content (or signified) (C).”or abbreviated to ERC. A system of features “primary (primary sign system) can be an element of a more complete sign system and has a different meaning than the original.”Thus, the primary sign is denotative while the secondary sign is one of connotative semiotics. This connotative concept is the meaningful concept of Roland Barthes' symbolic interaction.

Through this model, Barthes explains that the significance of the initial session is bonding “between signifiers (expressions)” and signified (content) in a characteristic to external reality. That is what Barthes said as denotation is the most real meaning of the characteristic (sign). “This denotation generally refers to the use of language with a meaning that matches the meaning of what is said (Barthes, 2009).” Connotation “consisting of indicators, signs, and processes that combine indicators and signs (called marking); These 3 factors must first be found in every system. Connotation is a term “which Barthes used” to show the significance of the second session. Regarding “This describes the interaction that occurs when the character meets the feelings or emotions of the reader and the values of his culture (Barthes, 2009).

### **Assertive Communication**

Assertive communication refers to an individual's ability to express their feelings, choices, needs, and opinions directly and honestly, while defending their own rights without infringing upon the rights of others (Hikmah, 2020). According to Qaddura (2019), assertive communication is a crucial individual quality that allows someone to articulate their desires and positions to achieve goals and overcome challenges, all while respecting the rights of others and managing their own aggression. Furthermore, Putri and Wahyuni (2018) explain that assertive communication is not an inherent trait or something that appears by chance during a person's development. Instead, it is a learned behavior, developed in response to social situations encountered in life. In addition to assertive communication, there are other forms, such as passive communication and aggressive communication. Based on this, assertive communication can be defined as active, direct, and honest communication, where an individual is able to express their own opinions and respect the views of others, while maintaining their rights and not infringing on the rights of others.

### **Film as a Communication Media**

A film is a Mass communication is audiovisual and complex. Film is an aesthetic work with information media that can be used as entertainment media, preaching media, and political media. Film can be a tool for entertainment and learning, besides that it can play a role in spreading various new cultural values. Film can be said as cinema or as a moving picture that can be interpreted as a work of art, a popular form of entertainment, and industrial production or commercial product. Film as a work of art emerged which demanded freedom of creativity and a creative process according to H. Hafied in (Saskhia, R., 2021). According to Mudjiono, Y. (2020), the film is Very important learning material in terms of semiotic analysis because films are made with different brands. Signs include various sign systems that work well together to get the desired effect. Films tend to have meanings mentioned by Roland Barthes, namely signifiers and signifieds. In general, the audience only interprets the film as a whole, on the other hand, when analyzing films, there are many denotative, connotative and mythical meanings. Supiarza et al. "Images are an important part of a film that are inseparable from each other." Films become social conversations with unique selling points that spread to various places, and the psychoanalytic perspective of film influences the way of thinking in a perceptual context. and the application of information transfer values (Manalu & Warsana, 2021). Film is a director's tool to convey messages to the audience.

### **METHOD**

The research design that will be used by the author leads to qualitative descriptive research through a semiotic theory approach. This descriptive qualitative research utilizes the most complete data collection techniques and is explored "as deeply

as possible and does not prioritize the size of the population or sampling. In general, the semiotic method has a qualitative-interpretative nature (interpretation), which is a method that focuses on signs and texts as the objects of study, and how the interpretation and understanding of the code (decoding) behind the signs and texts by researchers. The textual analysis method is part of this interpretive method. This research focuses on the type of qualitative descriptive method through Roland Barthes' semiotic approach. Roland Barthes built a systematic model in analyzing the meaning of signs. Barthes' main focus is more on the idea of two orders of significations. This study uses the theory of symbolic interaction based on ideas about people and their interactions with citizens. The essence of symbolic interaction is an activity that is a human characteristic, namely communication or the exchange of symbols that are given meaning. Through this model, Barthes explains that the significance of the first session is the bond "between the signifier (expression)" and the signified (content) in a feature to external reality. That is what Barthes calls denotation, the very real meaning of the feature (sign). "This denotation generally refers to the use of language with a meaning that matches the meaning of what is said (Barthes, 2009). Connotation consists of indicators, signifieds, and the process that unites indicators and signifieds (called marking); 3 factors like that are the first to be found in every system. Connotation is the term "used by Barthes to display the significance of the second session. This "describes the interaction that occurs when the feature meets the feelings or emotions of the reader and the values of his culture (Barthes, 2009).

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Communication is the key to a relationship, not only in a marriage relationship. All relationships start from communication, therefore when communication can no longer be established properly, it will result in problems in the relationship that is built. Communication plays an important role in building togetherness between two or more people, failure to communicate will result in failure to build togetherness.

Assertive communication is the ability of individuals to express feelings, choices, needs and opinions directly and honestly to defend individual rights without disturbing the rights of others (Hikmah, 2020). In the film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan*, Ambar is a character who shows an effort to open communication with her partner. There are many scenes involving Ambar as an individual who clearly expresses her feelings both to her partner and to others.

In Roland Barthes' semiotics, communication can be shown through signs or symbols that have denotative and connotative meanings. The denotative and connotative meanings displayed in the scenes of the film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan* are seen in the signs or symbols that appear in the film scenes. In scene 1 where Gilang talks to Ambar while making ceramics, it can be seen from Ambar's body movements and face that show dissatisfaction and disappointment because of Gilang's attitude of forgetting to treat the wounds on their son's body. Ambar's body

movements and face are signs of dislike, this is followed by dialogue that shows her dislike.

Assertive communication is shown by Ambar who openly says she will meet a marriage counselor to discuss their problems, the interest in Ambar who dares to invite her husband to discuss the problems that occur between them is responded to with the reason of work which indicates that her husband is again avoiding the problem that should be resolved immediately. The scene closes with the breaking of the ceramics that Ambar is decorating, indicating the destruction of hope to find a solution to their problems.

"This film gives an important message and becomes a lesson, that communication is important. In a relationship if only one party is trying then it will not be possible for communication to be established well."  
*"Try to have good communication. What needs to be realized is that the communication that is built has no limits, everything must be worked on together and without time limits."*

*[interview with Marsha Timothy June 5, 2023]*

In assertive communication there are several signs that can indicate that someone is doing assertive communication. The film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan* shows that in a relationship, assertive communication by showing one's identity and being able to defend oneself without having to disturb others, especially in a marriage court. The emergence of a third party from a family member or close party can disrupt the communication between the two partners. This will worsen the relationship of the couple, especially if both choose not to express it. Several aspects of assertive communication that appear in the film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan* can be seen based on the following aspects:

#### 1) Expressing positive feelings

The film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan* shows several expressions of positive feelings between the characters involved in it. Among them is the expression of praise that Yuli gave to Ambar regarding Gilang's ability as an architect. Yuli said that Gilang is a skilled architect, so she praised Ambar who was very lucky to have a husband like Gilang. Expressions of positive feelings are also shown by efforts to get help or assistance. In this case,

Ambar told Gilang that they needed to go to a marriage counselor to discuss the problems between them. Ambar's words that wanted Gilang to join the counseling session showed her desire to get help so she could talk to her husband. So far, Ambar always felt that Gilang always avoided them every time they discussed the problems that occurred between them. Ambar's constant efforts to pressure Gilang to have a conversation finally caused Gilang to initiate a conversation. The conversation between Gilang and Ambar never lasted long, because Gilang always avoided it. The same thing happened even when Gilang initiated the conversation first with Ambar.

## 2) Self-affirmation

In terms of self-affirmation, each character makes an effort to show themselves by giving opinions and even showing what their rights are. Eyang's attitude in accusing Ambar of not being able to take care of her children makes Ambar decide to confront her mother-in-law. The scene in scene 3 shows Ambar defending her rights as a mother. Ambar has the right to raise and teach her children according to her own way. She does this to show her mother-in-law that she is the one who has the right to take care of her children. Ambar's actions also show her different opinions from her mother-in-law in terms of raising children.

Gilang also showed his self-affirmation attitude when he had a conversation with his mother. When his mother said that all his actions were done to protect himself, Gilang firmly stated to his mother that he was now an adult and could protect himself. Gilang firmly gave his opinion and defended his rights as Ambar's husband whose privacy was often violated by his mother.

## 2) Expressing negative feelings

The expression of negative feelings in this film is shown through various signs, including scenes of silence or not responding when called. Facial expressions that show displeasure show how assertive communication dominates several scenes. One of the most iconic negative expressions in this film is when Gilang threatens to slap Ambar. Ambar's attitude that never stops cornering Gilang with her words makes Gilang express his anger. In the end, both of them release their emotions and disappointment by crying together.

*"All the scenes are memorable, yes, but the scene containing the slapping scene is quite memorable because to do this scene, I, Oka and the director had an intense discussion to make this scene as good as possible. Because at that time this scene was one of the most talked about scenes."*

***[interview with Marsha Timothy June 5, 2023]***

The film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan* provides various messages and evidence that in a relationship communication is very important. Disharmony in communication can cause miscommunication which ultimately has an impact on many things. Assertive communication in a household relationship is indeed very much needed, this is because in every relationship there needs to be assertiveness.

Doris Hulbert in Garner stated that there are at least six assertive communication techniques that can be practiced, namely listening, stating expectations clearly, paying attention, compromising and negotiating, being persistent and providing effective and constructive criticism. This assertive communication technique seems to be successful in the relationship between Gilang and Ambar. Ambar's persistence

in inviting Gilang to discuss the problems between them did not immediately get a good response from Gilang. However, this persistence gradually made Gilang, who was initially always silent, finally take the initiative to have a conversation first, although the conversation was often interrupted because Gilang chose to leave.

Ambar's statement about her desire to achieve happiness has opened Gilang's eyes that all this time he has forgotten the most important thing in his life. He only thought that by working hard he could give happiness to his wife and children without trying to understand what could make his wife and children happy. Ambar also clearly told Gilang that all this time he had always been silent without doing anything, this caused Ambar to feel disappointed because of his attitude. Ambar who felt always ignored without knowing the things her husband did, finally clearly criticized her husband's attitude who was always silent and left when a problem arose.

For Gilang himself, his silence was done because he did not want to burden his wife, so he always tried to solve the problem alone. When Gilang finally realized his mistake, he honestly admitted all his mistakes to his wife and asked her to stay by his side. Ambar's decision to forgive Gilang and not continue the divorce suit is part of assertive communication. Where Ambar acts by prioritizing compromise and negotiation. Ambar's actions reflect that in communicating something everything can be compromised and negotiated to be able to solve the problems they face.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion that have been done in the previous chapter shows the values of assertive communication contained in the film *Noktah Merah Perkawinan*. The assertive values contained in the film are shown in the scenes and dialogues that occur between the characters. The signs that have been interpreted through Roland Barthes' semiotics show that in a household relationship, communication needs to be built using clear signs. The denotative and connotative meanings shown in the film scenes show how a husband and wife struggle to maintain their troubled household through a long and tiring process. The disturbances that arise in the reality of their household are one of the problems that have existed and accumulated for years. The loss of communication between the husband and wife causes the two to grow further apart due to increasing misunderstandings. Assertive communication used in the film helps the main characters rebuild their relationship through better communication. The efforts made by the main characters and supporting characters in the film show how they try to show their respective attitudes when facing problems. Assertive communication carried out by Ambar as the main character in the form of expressing positive feelings, negative feelings, and opinions in all aspects of household life makes her the party who tries to always maintain communication. The character Ambar tries to continue to communicate assertively with her partner. Ambar has the principle that husband and wife are partners in running a household



life so that there is no difference in position between husband and wife, so she feels the need to be involved in decision making by her husband.

## REFERENCES

- Aminuddin. (1998). *Semantics*. New Rays.
- Ampuno, S. (2020). Assertive behavior of the millennial generation in the perspective of Islamic psychology. *JIVA: Journal of Behavior and Mental Health*, 1(1).
- Anwar, L. P. (2022). Semiotic analysis of the representation of family dysfunction in the film *Boyhood*. *JDMR: Journal of Discourse and Media Research*, 1(1), 60–77.
- Azwar, S. (2017). *Psychological research methods*. Student Library.
- Barthes, R. (2009). *Mythology: The creation of discourse*.
- Effendy, O. U. (2013). *Communication science theory and practice*. PT. Remaja Rosda Karya.
- Fahida, S. N. (2021). Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis of the film "Later We'll Tell You Today" (NKCTHI) by Angga Dwimas Sasongko. *Cinematology: Journal Anthology of Film and Television Studies*, 1(2), 33-42.
- Faradisa, A. (2016). Packaging of moral messages framing analysis of the film *Emak Ingin Naik Haji*. Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta.
- Fiske, J. (2007). *Introduction to communication science* (3rd ed.). Rajawali Press.
- Hikmah, N. (2020). Assertive behavior in an Islamic perspective. *Liwaul Da'wah: Journal of Da'wah Studies and Islamic Society*, 10(1), 101–114. <https://ejurnal.iainlhokseumawe.ac.id/index.php/liwaul-dakwah/article/view/988>
- Kuncoroyakti, Y. A. (2022). Semiotic analysis of Roland Barthes' communication in the film *I Come from My Beautiful Body*. *Journal of Communication Science*, 1(2), 97–105.
- Lantowa, J., Marahayu, N. M., & Khairussibyan, M. (2017). *Semiotics: Theory, methods, and its application in literary research*. Deepublish.
- Maijar, A., Fadilla, S., & Budiman, N. (2021). Social fact paradigm in the film *Fetih 1453*: A structural functional study. *Art Expression: Journal of Science and Art Works*, 23(2), 364–378.
- Manalu, Y. E., & Warsana, D. (2021). *Yowis Ben* film as a communication medium for tourism promotion in Malang City. *Cinematology: Journal Anthology of Film and Television Studies*, 1(1), 49–57. <https://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/Cinematology/article/view/34707>
- Mudjiono, Y. (2020). Semiotic study in film. *Journal of Communication Science*, 1(1).
- Mulyana, D. (2016). *Communication science: An introduction*. PT. Remaja Rosda Karya.
- Putri, R. M., & Wahyuni, T. (2018). The influence of group guidance on students' assertive behavior at SMP Srijaya Negara. *Journal of Applied Guidance and Counseling*, 2(2), 178–183.

- Qaddura, Z. H., Dewi, V. S., Putri, N. D. P., Khoirunnisa, K., & Cahyono, I. (2019). Assertive communication experiences in married women through the *ta'aruf* process. *Journal of Islamic Psychology*, 6(1), 57–66.
- Rahayu, A. I. (2018). The influence of assertiveness on communication skills in students at the University of August 17, 1945 Surabaya. *17 August 1945 University of Surabaya*.
- Rujina, R., Arifin, M. B., & Rijal, S. (2020). *Pemali* in the Dayak Lunayeh ethnic culture in the city of Samarinda: A semiotic review. *Journal of Language, Literature, Arts, and Culture*, 4(4), 614–626.
- Saskhia, R., & Suranto. (2018). Semiotic analysis of representation of gender injustice in the film *Moxie*. *Journal of Communication Science, Yogyakarta State University*, 332–340.
- Sobur, A. (2007). *General psychology*. CV. Pustaka Setia.
- Sugiyono. (2018). *Quantitative, qualitative, and R&D research methods*. Alfabeta.
- Vera, N. (2014). *Semiotics in communication research*. Ghalia Indonesia.
- Wahyuningsih, S. (2019). *Film and preaching*. Media Sahabat Cendekia.
- Widyastuti, T. (2018). The influence of assertive communication on conflict management. *Widya Cipta*.