

THE MEANING OF ACCIDENTAL IN THE ONE PIECE ANIMATION FILM IMPEL DOWN ARC AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR INDONESIAN LANGUAGE LEARNING IN HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the symbolic meanings in the film One Piece Arc Impel Down using Arthur Asa Berger's theory and its implications for Indonesian language learning in high school. The study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with observation, note-taking, and documentation techniques. The results show that there are 95 data points of symbolic meaning, consisting of 30 conventional symbols (31.58%), 33 accidental symbols (34.74%), and 32 universal symbols (33.68%). Accidental symbols are the most dominant category. The study finds that films can be used as audiovisual media to improve visual literacy, critical thinking skills, and the ability to interpret symbolic meanings.

Keywords: symbolic meaning; semiotics; One Piece; Indonesian language learning;

1 INTRODUCTION

Language is a system of symbols made up of words that have meaning and are interconnected to form a message that can be understood by speakers and their conversation partners. The essence of language is not only expressed verbally, but also through various forms of nonverbal communication, such as images, colors, movements, and audiovisual media. One type of audiovisual media that can represent various meanings is film. Since language is expressed through various signs that carry meaning, the study of language cannot be separated from semiotics. Roland Barthes views semiotic analysis not only as a way to create a formal classification of narrative elements, but also to uncover hidden meanings behind a sign and text.

Through a combination of visual elements, dialogue, sound, and storyline, movies serve not only as entertainment but also as a means of communication that conveys messages, values, and symbolic meanings to the audience. The study of symbolic meanings in films can be carried out through a semiotic approach. Semiotics is the study of signs and the process of their meaning in various forms of communication. One figure who classified symbolic meanings is Arthur Asa Berger, who divided symbols into three categories: conventional symbols, accidental symbols, and universal symbols. Conventional symbols are those whose meanings are formed based on social agreement, accidental symbols relate to personal experience and interpretation, while universal symbols have meanings that are widely understood across different cultures. That classification provides a systematic foundation for identifying and interpreting the symbols found in an audiovisual work.

One of the animated films rich in symbolic representation is the One Piece Arc Impel Down. This arc depicts Monkey D Luffy's struggle as he infiltrates the underwater prison Impel Down to rescue Portgas D Ace. Various symbols are shown through the prison setting, character costumes, colors, expressions, and the actions of the characters, representing meanings about power, oppression, freedom, justice, friendship, sacrifice, and struggle. The variety of symbols makes One Piece Arc Impel Down worthy of being analyzed as a semiotic research subject.

Using films as a learning medium has the potential to support Indonesian language learning, especially in reading and viewing elements. Analyzing symbolic meanings in films can train students to observe, interpret, and critically understand various visual signs. This way, students not only grasp the story content but also develop visual literacy, critical thinking skills, and the ability to relate the life values in films to social reality.

This research aims to explore the symbolic meaning in the animated film One Piece Arc Impel Down based on Arthur Asa Berger's theory, as well as describe its implications for Indonesian language learning in high school. The results of the study are expected to contribute to the development of semiotics studies,

especially in audiovisual media analysis, while also serving as an alternative learning media that is innovative, contextual, and relevant to the development of digital media.

2 METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach aimed at describing and interpreting the symbolic meanings found in the animated film *One Piece Arc Impel Down*. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on the meanings of the visual symbols that appear in the film, resulting in data in the form of descriptions, interpretations, and in-depth explanations. The primary data source for the study is the animated film *One Piece Arc Impel Down*, covering episodes 422 to 451. The research data consists of scenes, objects, colors, and character expressions. Meanwhile, secondary data sources are obtained from books, scientific journals, articles, and previous research related to semiotics, symbolic meaning, Arthur Asa Berger's theory, and Indonesian language learning.

The data collection technique was carried out through observation, note-taking, and documentation. The first stage involved repeatedly watching all episodes to gain a complete understanding of the storyline and the context of each scene. Next, the researcher noted every scene that contained visual symbols relevant to the focus of the study. Documentation was done by taking screenshots of scenes considered to represent symbolic meaning as supporting data for the analysis process.

The data analysis was carried out using qualitative descriptive methods, referring to Arthur Asa Berger's theory of symbolic meaning. The analysis process started by identifying symbols that appeared in each scene, then grouping them into three categories: conventional symbols, accidental symbols, and universal symbols. Next, each symbol was interpreted based on the story context, the relationships between characters, and the message intended to be conveyed in the film. The results of the interpretation were then described systematically to explain the symbolic meaning contained in each piece of data.

To ensure the validity of the data, the researcher applied theoretical triangulation by comparing the interpretation results using Arthur Asa Berger's theory and supported by various relevant scientific references on semiotics, symbols, and visual communication. In addition, the analysis process was repeated on each piece of data so that the interpretations matched the film's narrative context and the research objectives.

The final stage of the research was carried out by compiling the analysis results into a scientific description, then linking them to the implications for teaching Indonesian in high school, especially in the areas of reading and viewing. Through this stage, an overview was obtained regarding the use of films as a learning medium that can develop students' visual literacy, interpretation skills, and critical thinking.

3 RESULTS

Based on the research results, it shows that the animated film *One Piece Arc Impel Down* contains various forms of symbolic meaning according to Arthur Asa Berger's classification, namely conventional symbols, accidental symbols, and universal symbols. Out of a total of 95 data points found, accidental symbols were the most dominant category with 33 data points (34.74%), while universal symbols numbered 32 data points (33.68%) and conventional symbols accounted for 30 data points (31.58%). The dominance of accidental symbols indicates that the *Impel Down* narrative is built more through emotional experiences, character relationships, and the context of events experienced by each character rather than through socially agreed-upon symbols or symbols with universal meaning.

According to Arthur Asa Berger, an accidental symbol is a symbol whose meaning doesn't come from general agreement but is formed through personal experiences, background, and the specific context surrounding an event. Therefore, the interpretation of an accidental symbol is heavily influenced by the storyline and the emotional relationships between characters. In the movie *One Piece Arc Impel Down*, accidental symbols serve to strengthen conflicts, develop character personalities, and convey human values that are central to the story.

3.1 Accidental Symbolic Meaning

According to Arthur Asa Berger, an accidental symbol is a symbol whose meaning doesn't come from general agreement but is formed through personal experiences, background, and the specific context surrounding an event. Therefore, the interpretation of an accidental symbol is heavily influenced by the storyline and the emotional relationships between characters. In the movie *One Piece Arc Impel*

Down, accidental symbols serve to strengthen conflicts, develop character personalities, and convey human

values that are central to the story.

Data 1

Episode 440, at 19:44 minutes

It shows an accidental symbol of a thick wooden door locked with a big iron chain inside Impel Down prison, with blood pooled in front of the door being Luffy's blood. The meaning of Luffy's blood flowing from the door is his sacrifice, fighting to heal to the point of needing to be evacuated into a stone room. This symbol becomes a deep metaphor that the closer you get to freedom, the more blood you also have to shed. This scene reinforces the philosophical theme of One Piece itself, that freedom isn't a gift, but something fought for with blood and tears.

Data 2

Episode 433 at 17:34 minutes

Shows a heart-shaped island dominated by pink colors, with a rainbow in the sky. Momoiro Island, also commonly called Kamabakka Kingdom, can be categorized as an accidental symbol, because the meaning contained in it isn't universal, but only relevant to certain characters. The dominance of pink and the presence of the rainbow represent values of love and identity freedom. Viewers understand this meaning because Kamabakka Kingdom functions as a safe place for the community and a base for revolutionary characters.

Data 3

Episode 434 at 11:05 minutes

The arrival of the pirate Whitebeard Shirohige and his pirate crew. The scene showing the silhouettes of the pirates standing on the ship is seen as a symbol of strength, protection, and a father's loyalty to his children. In the One Piece movie, Shirohige doesn't see his crew as subordinates but as family. His arrival at Marineford is an act of sacrifice to save his son, Portgas D. Ace. This meaning isn't widely understood because of the deep bond between Shirohige and Ace.

Data 4

Episode 427 at 07:47

Showing Roronoa Zoro surrounded by children with amazed and enthusiastic expressions is a symbol of admiration and reminds Zoro of his childhood friend who also practiced sword techniques. The accidental meaning in this data comes from the story context and the viewers' experience, who understand that Zoro feels a sense of kinship when seeing children learning sword techniques.

Data 5

Episode 451 at 15:19 minutes

Showing a pleading gesture by holding someone else's hand while asking for something is a conventional symbol of humility and sincere pleading. In general society's culture, this gesture shows that someone is willing to lower their pride for a goal they consider important. Luffy's visual gesture proves that true freedom is the freedom to not leave anyone behind. This shows that Luffy can be a true and strong leader.

Data 6

Episode 452 at 07:53

Bon Clay's last memory. His hand pose forming a heart is a universal symbol of happiness and wishing goodness for others. Bon Clay choosing to stay and keep smiling symbolizes selfless sacrifice, while the vast sea and open sky in the background represent the freedom he gives to Luffy and the other prisoners, becoming a heartfelt farewell.

Data 7

Episode 429 at 18:52 minutes

There is a dental action symbol, which is the hand contact between characters, interpreted as the relationship between Luffy and Nami when she needed help and protection from the Arlong pirates who raided Nami's entire hometown and murdered Nami's adoptive mother. This meaning is personal because

it is experienced by Nami as a personal experience.

Data 8

Episode 436 at 13:21

Presents an accidental symbol representing struggle, determination, and sacrifice. Luffy's body is filled with poison, and the visual effects showing his unsteady steps indicate that his physical condition is nearing its limit, yet he keeps moving to save Ace. This meaning comes from Luffy's determination to save his brother over his own safety. This scene is considered an accidental symbol because its meaning is shaped by experience rather than a universal symbolic agreement.

Data 9

Episode 439 at 17:38

Shows Luffy being crucified as an accidental symbol. Normally, a crucified body represents someone atoning for sins or undergoing judgment or punishment, but in this scene, Luffy being crucified symbolizes sacrifice to save his brother Ace. Luffy is being treated after being poisoned by Magellan, and placing him on a stone helps minimize any issues caused by the medicine reacting in his body. It shows that his will and spirit are still strong, all for saving his brother Ace.

Data 10

Episode 442 at 13:26

The scene of Ace standing facing the sky while surrounded by tridents is an accidental symbol representing steadfast spirit in the face of death threats. Ace facing the sky is an accidental symbol that signifies hope, dreams, and the freedom of the soul. Even though his body is restrained and surrounded by physical threats, Ace still looks up to the sky, symbolizing that his mind and spirit cannot be shackled by the threat of execution. This shows the inner strength of a pirate. The tridents pointing at him are a symbol of state power and a real threat of death.

Data 11

Episode 444 at 08:03

The excitement of the prisoners is an accidental symbol that represents the awakening of the human spirit amid oppression. Prisoners who have lived in suffering and despair suddenly find hope through the presence of Luffy, IvanKov, and their escape plan. The prisoners' cheers symbolize the transformation from a victim into a revolutionary force, and the solidarity from inside the prison shows that the spirit of freedom cannot be killed by chains or the hell of Impel Down.

Data 12

Episode 447 at 04:52

The fateful meeting of two D's: Monkey D. Luffy (the sun) and Marshall D. Teach (the darkness). Blackbeard laughing in front of Luffy symbolizes an undeniable future threat, indicating that after the Impel Down escape, the pirate world will enter a new era where great powers will collide. Blackbeard dominating visually represents a new danger born from the chaos of the revolution, while the small Luffy becomes a symbol of resilience, showing hope that the spirit of freedom can fight against the darkness.

Data 13

Episode 447, at 06:50

Shows Marshall D. Teach standing in the middle of a destroyed village. This scene symbolizes the sudden emergence of a dangerous new power. Blackbeard stands amid the ruined village, representing that the chaos caused by the Impel Down escape and the Marineford war has produced an even more ruthless and brutal pirate. This image serves as a symbol of a new dark era. Blackbeard dominates the visuals of destruction in this more terrifying new age.

Data 14

Episode 449 at 04:50

Luffy's clenched fist is a symbol of the accidental will of the D family, an inner strength almost like spirit

power or inherited destiny. It shows the determination to keep fighting even when the body is broken, an unbound spirit of freedom, and the readiness to protect loved ones. The image of a clenched fist can carry big ideological meaning. Luffy's fist isn't just a regular gesture; it's a symbol of human strength to stand up against fate.

Data 15

Episode 422 at 15:49 minutes

There's a row of big warships with cannons. These ships are naval warships, which stand for military strength, power, defense, and attack. In many cultures, warships are seen as a symbol of a side's power and their ability to control territory, and they can pose a threat to others who feel affected. Other universal symbols like cannons also represent combat strength, threats, and state-approved violence. Cannons are generally associated with war and the ability to strike enemies.

3.2 Implications of Indonesian Language Learning in High School

The research shows that the accidental meanings in the animated film *One Piece Arc Impel Down* have meaningful implications for learning Indonesian in high school, especially in the Reading and Viewing parts of the Deep Learning Curriculum Phase E (10th grade). These parts focus on students' skills in understanding, interpreting, evaluating, and sharing information found in different types of texts—written, visual, or audiovisual. As an audiovisual medium, films offer all kinds of symbols that can be analyzed, making them a hands-on learning tool to boost students' interpretive abilities. The accidental meanings found in this study, like symbols of sacrifice, struggle, friendship, loyalty, hope, responsibility, and freedom, can be used as material to help students practice understanding the deeper, implicit meanings in audiovisual works. This process encourages students to think critically, reason, and build arguments based on evidence found in the film.

Using the *One Piece Arc Impel Down* movie as a learning tool also supports the development of visual literacy. Besides improving visual literacy, film-based learning can also help develop critical thinking skills. Students are not only asked to identify symbols in the film but also to explain why a symbol is interpreted in a certain way. This activity encourages students to analyze, interpret, and evaluate the information they get. Critical thinking skills are an important competency in 21st-century learning because students are expected to provide logical reasons supported by evidence found in audiovisual texts.

This research also contributes to strengthening character education. The values represented through accidental symbols, like Luffy's sacrifice to save Ace, Bon Clay's loyalty to his friends, Whitebeard's courage in protecting his family, and the prisoners' spirit in fighting for freedom, are positive values that can be instilled in students. These values align with the goals of learning Indonesian, which not only develop language skills but also shape students' character with empathy, responsibility, cooperation, courage, and care for others.

In practice, teachers can apply learning by making use of scenes from the *One Piece Arc Impel Down* movie. Teachers can ask students to observe certain scenes, identify accidental symbols that appear, analyze the symbols, and then interpret the meaning of those symbols according to the context of the story. After that, students can present their analysis either orally or in written reports. This activity not only trains the ability to understand audiovisual texts but also improves speaking, writing, discussing, and expressing opinions in an argumentative way.

Based on the aforementioned description, it can be concluded that the accidental meaning in the animated film *One Piece Arc Impel Down* has great potential as an alternative medium for Indonesian language learning in high schools. This film is able to provide a contextual, engaging, and meaningful learning experience because students not only study semiotic concepts theoretically but also apply them directly through the analysis of symbols present in audiovisual media. Thus, the use of films in learning can support the enhancement of visual literacy, interpretive skills, critical thinking, appreciation of audiovisual works, as well as the development of students' character in accordance with the objectives of Indonesian language education in high schools.

4 CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the animated film *One Piece Arc Impel Down* contains various accidental meanings that are constructed through experiences, emotions, and relationships between characters in the storyline. These accidental meanings are not formed based on social consensus nor are they universal, but rather arise due to the context of events experienced by the characters. The

analysis results indicate that accidental symbols represent values such as sacrifice, struggle, friendship, loyalty, responsibility, hope, freedom, and solidarity. Thus, the analysis of accidental symbols can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the meanings hidden behind visual representations in the film.

The research findings also indicate that the accidental meaning in the film *One Piece Arc Impel Down* has implications relevant to the learning of Indonesian language in high school, particularly in the elements of Reading and Viewing. Films can be utilized as audiovisual learning media that assist students in developing the ability to observe, interpret, analyze, and evaluate symbolic meaning in a work. Therefore, the use of films as a learning resource can serve as a contextual, innovative, and meaningful alternative in supporting the achievement of Indonesian language learning objectives in high school.

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