Domination Portrayal in Sing Movie by Garth Jannings: Symbolic Violence Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This research discusses about symbolic violence in Sing movie. Sing is a 3D animation movie produced by Illumination Entertainment 2016. The characters are animals that act like human with the specific characterization. The reason for choosing this movie because it is much entertaining, and it actually obtained the symbolic violence through its characters. This study is aimed to analyze the issue of symbolic violence, which is usually carried out by the superior owners to dominate people who don’t have power. This study is related to Pierre Bourdieu’s theory called symbolic violence. The method of this study is descriptive qualitative. The data were collected through process of watching, pausing and interpreting and then the writer analyzed those data by using the theory of symbolic violence by Pierre Bourdieu. The result of the study shows that the forms of symbolic violence that are symbolic violence of superior to inferior (England to America), symbolic violence of family to children (Big daddy to Johnny), symbolic violence male to female (Rosita’s husband to Rosita), (Lance to Ash), (Grandfather to Meena), (Garth Jennings to Miss Crawly), and symbolic violence between the upper and lower classes (Superior to Jews). The researcher concluded that England wanted to show that the super power countries in the world were England, not America. America gets strength from England and also America will not succeed if there is no Asia. Asia has an important role in making America successful and, getting recognition from the England.

1. Introduction

Sing movie become an object of this research, because there are many literary works in the form of novels and movies that discuss the issues that occur with American citizenship. The problems are show transparently and can be detected directly, for example how they dominated blacks. Sing is a movie that doesn’t show the problem transparently. This movie shows jokes that can make the audience laugh and they didn’t realize it as a satire.

Sing movie is an American computer animated musical was produced by Illumination Entertainment 2016. It was directed and written by Garth Jennings. This movie reflects social condition about the violence that occurred in the United States. Violence that is common in society without realizing it is called as symbolic violence, symbolic violence which is ideological violence and not visible. This practice in social relations of symbolic violence often carried out by the state has enormous capital to subordinate the public to obedience and submission. The capital power makes the symbolic violence effortless for the ruler to carry out (Anriadi, et al., 2021). There are a number of cases of symbolic violence that represent the identities which exist in the American community. The examples of the symbolic violence such as a pig (a wife) who has many children and is dominated by her husband, punk rock porcupine is dominated by her selfish boyfriend, and cheats are always forced to rob banks by his fathers. The violence is carried out symbolically or hidden without realizing that they have been dominated.

In the work of Pierre Bourdieu, symbolic violence denotes more than a form of operating symbolically violence. It is “the violence which is exercised on a social agent with his complicity” (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2002). The exercise of symbolic violence is that gender is both weaker and less agreeable, less intelligent, more unreliable, and so forth (and for gender relations is the paradigm of operation of symbolic violence), or class relations in which both working class and middle agree that the middle classes are more intelligent, more capable of running the country, more decent of higher pay (Rahman, 2019).
The researcher takes Sing Movie as the source data because the writer found some strange things in this movie such as how a husband, boyfriend and also father are dominate their family (wife, girlfriend and child). And also this movie is rarely used as object material of thesis, whereas this movie consists of symbolic violence in it. According to the researcher, this object has a significant association that is analyzed using one of the literary theory, the theory is the famous by Pierre Bourdieu. There are something unique and controversial from this scene, led the writer to an understanding that this movie is not just to entertain audience but there are value to be conveyed, social conditions which are happen in real life is presented in the movie.

The phenomena or quotations of words presented in each scene in the movie become phenomena or quotations that can represent symbolic violence that is understand by writers or the general public towards women and children. Here, the researcher tries to analyze the symbolic violence in Sing movie by using 'Pierre Bourdieu's sociological perspective'. The problem of this research is "How is the symbolic violence portrayed in Garth Jennings Sing movie (2016)?", whereas the objective of this study is to explain how the symbolic violence portrayed in Garth Jennings Sing Movie (2016).

2. Literature Background

Symbolic violence is, in contrast to, the overt violence of the usurer or the ruthless master it is gentle, invisible violence, unrecognized as such, chosen as much as undergone, that of trust, obligation, and personal loyalty (Bourdieu, 1990). Hospitality, gifts, debts, piety, in a word, of all the virtues honored by the ethic of honor (Rahman, 2018). Bourdieu used the concept of symbolic violence to explain how power is used in subtle ways by those who have it over those who do not.

Those who possess more capital in a field can exercise symbolic violence 'with complicity of those who suffer from it' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2002; Astianth, et al., 2017). Individuals may be treated as inferior or subordinate to others by being defined, for example, as 'the marginalized career, being limited in terms of realistic aspirations, or being denied resources' (Webb, 2002; Rahman, 2022). Additionally, Bourdieu also explained the state’s role in exerting symbolic violence to its citizens, arguing that ‘the state is an X (to be determined) which successfully claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical and symbolic violence over a definite territory and over the totality of the corresponding population’ (Bourdieu, 1998).

Violence that is difficult to overcome is symbolic violence because its effects do not look like ordinary violence (Haryatmoko, 2010). Therefore, this research is important to describe the forms of symbolic violence in operation. Media content often produces symbolic violence through hateful words and communications with a racist or sexist background aimed at hurting a person's personal, ethnic, or sexual integrity (Heitmeyer and Hagan 2005). Symbolic violence as invisible violence (Bourdieu 1990), moreover, symbolic violence occurs when people don't want to know they are targets and they practice it every day. Symbolic violence is soft violence, practiced in everyday life in a repetitive manner (Dwizatmiko, 2010).

McQuail (2011: 35) states that film is a real mass media, judging by the ability of films to reach large populations quickly. Starting from a motion picture, film is also known as a modern communication channel with a wide and popular reach and has an allure that affects the audience. Furthermore, film is a text with encoded meaning that can be read. They use indexical, iconic and symbolic tools that the audience can easily identify (Bunker, 2005; Sukmawaty, et al., 2022). The power and ability of movies is to reach many social segments (Gomery & Pafot-Overduin, 2011). Movie can influence and shape society based on the message behind it. Messages can provide various benefits and also have a negative impact on society. The media have a very strong influence and create tension within us, and even among human beings (Wulandari, 2019). Messages are a means of shaping and controlling distance and forms of association and action in society.

There are several previous studies that discuss symbolic violence including Novarisa (2019) entitled Dominasi Patriarki Berbentuk Kekerasan Simbolik Terhadap Perempuan Pada Sinetron, This study discusses how symbolic violence operates in the soap opera “Catatan Hati Seorang Istri” by dismantling the ideology of patriarchy as the dominant ideology in the soap opera. This research is a qualitative research with the Sara discourse analysis method Mills and data collection techniques through text analysis, as well as literature study. Symbolic violence concept used in this study is how men dominate women give birth to symbolic violence. The results of this study indicate that the soap opera “Catatan Hati Seorang Istri” displays male dominance over women in the form of; (1) domination in the name of domestic obligations, (2) domination places women as objects sexual intercourse, and (3) domination by silencing women. However, this form of domination makes women rebel and speak. This domination underlies the
symbolic violence in soap operas “Catatan Hati Seorang Istri”.

Putri (2018) wrote an article about symbolic violence entitled “Praktek Kekerasan Simbolik (Relasi Guru dan Peserta didik dalam Pendidikan Islam)”. This research aims to describe the occurrence of the practice of symbolic violence in relations between teachers and students, especially in the world of Islamic education. The practice of symbolic violence is inseparable from the dynamics of education in Indonesia, because it does not is in the learning process that goes well without any effort discipline. Furthermore, symbolic violence is the same as symbolic domination where oppression uses symbols (sloganistic, simple, popular.). Furthermore, this suppression is not perceived as oppression between the teacher and learners, but as something that normally needs to be done. Moreover, it means, the suppression has obtained the consent of the oppressed party alone. The form of this relationship is seen as natural as something that should happen between teachers and students and this really needs to be watched out for because: Symbolic violence is inherent in the realm of education and it takes place in the school environment.

Likewise Setijowati (2018), in her research “Kekerasan Simbolik dalam Nyali Karya Putu Wijaya: Karya Sastra, Politik, dan Refleksi”, aims to reveal the symbolic violence in Putu Wijaya's novel Nyali by using the actential model of A.J. Greimas. The actental model reveals the roles that are usually performed in the story, such as subject, object, sender, receiver, helper, and opponent. Furthermore, accentual relationships are useful to see the relation of narrative structure. In this research, Pierre Bourdieu's perspective on symbolic violence is also used. Furthermore, the symbolic violence found stems from the dominance of high-ranking soldiers to lower-ranking soldiers, including obedience, indoctrination, command, lying, mastery strategies, and instructions. The symbolic violence in Nyali is shown in a top-down structural crime strategy (the General tricks the Colonel, the Colonel asks the Corporal to carry out the General's control plan).

Some of the previous studies above both examined symbolic violence and differed from this study which discussed symbolic violence in Sing Movie by Garth Jannings.

3. Methodology

In analyzing the object, the researcher used descriptive qualitative method. Descriptive qualitative research is defined as the qualitative research, a type of research which does not include any calculation or enumerating, where descriptive qualitative research seeks to provide this picture using data in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. Descriptive qualitative method is a board range of activity that describes situation actually and accurately and how to gain information about facts or phenomena of interest (Moleong, 1995). There are two types source of data in this study, Primary data is the data which is collected from Sing movie by Garth Jennings. Primary data includes; English subtitle of the movie that helped writer in quotes phrases, sentences, dialogue of characters that had been used as data of analysis and the screen shoot of some screens that had been used as data to give the complete understanding of analysis. Secondary data is the data which is collected from many sources (some journals, books and thesis) that deal with the research object (material object). In collecting data, the writer would apply some techniques as follows: Watching, Pausing, and Interpreting. The steps of data analysis can be formulated as follows: (1) the writer would determine the symbolic violence data include every scene, image, key words, phrases or sentences in the movie. (2) The writer would describe how the symbolic violence is reflected in Garth Jennings “Sing” movie characters, event, action, dialogue, and etc. (3) The last step is the writer would draw the conclusion based on data analysis then give suggestions.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Symbolic violence of superior to inferior

Symbolic violence is very easy for the superior to be done, if they have economic capital and symbolic capital. So the superior will be very easy to impose their ideology on their inferior. Through this movie, Garth Jennings makes this movie as the opportunity to convey his ideology to the public that England as a superior and America as an inferior.

He wants to show that England has economic capital and symbolic capital so that it is easier to give symbolic violence to America, which is described through nana (England) and Mr. Moon (American).

Mr. Moon is a son of a car wash. When he was young he dreamed for becoming an astronaut, but one day his father invited him to watch Nana's concert in the theater. Since that day, Mr. Moon was amazed by nana and turned his dream became a great theater owner. After decades his father collects money to buy the theater and finally he succeeded in; formalizing his theater but eventually the theater failed and bankrupt. To develop the theater, he opened a singing audition for all people of the different backgrounds with the aim to get the responding from people and getting
sympathy from Nana to help him fund his theater to success as before. Mr. Moon’s looks can be seen below:

Figure 1. In duration 00:01:52 – 00:02:30 (Mr. Moon was stunned by nana’s performances).

The picture above shows when Mr. Moon was very stunned by Nana’s performances, since the day he was inspired and changed his dream of an astronaut to become a theater owner. When he became the owner of the theater, the theater did not develop and went bankrupt. After he is bankrupt he became debt collector. To pay his debt he tries to ask for help from Nana as superior. The symbolic violence of the superior to the inferior shown by the following dialogue in duration 00:48:27– 00:49:41:

One day in the Nana’s mansion. Mr. Moon follows Eddie (Nana’s grandchild) to visited Nana and he tried to persuade Nana to help him fund the show that he was going to hold.

Data 1

Mr. Moon : Ah, Nana! Just look at you, dear! Wow. You don’t look a day over.
Eddie : Oh my Gosh.
Mr. Moon : Buster Moon! We met at Eddie’s graduation!
Nana : Oh, lucky me. A visit from my useless grandson and his ghastly little theatre friend.
Buster : Look at that –she remembers me! Okay Nana, how would you like to be the sponsor for a very prestigious prize?
Nana : Not for that singing contest I saw on the news.
Mr. Moon : That’s the one!
Nana : Oh, I see. You don’t have the money, do you?
Mr. Moon : Well, we don’t quite have it all locked in just yet.
Nana : Well, you’ll not get a cent out of me.
Mr. Moon : Nana, please, just listen to me for a sec,
Nana : No, absolutely not.
Eddie : Don’t listen to him, Nana.
Nana : I’m not listening to either of you.
Mr. Moon : Wow. I saw this show when I was a kid. Nana, you were absolutely amazing!
Nana : Please. This flattery is futile. I’ve no intention of bail out. Your pathetic shows are the reason that theatreno longer has an audience.
Mr. Moon : Oh, but this show, it’s gonna-gonna pack ‘em in like it did in the good old days.
Nana : They were not good old days, Mr. Moon. They were magnificent. And that theatre of yours, it was a palace of

The dialogues above show that Mr. Moon tried to persuade Nana to sponsor his show. However, Nana always refused, she said that he will not get a cent out of her. Then Nana compared the current moon theater and theater in the past. She considers that theater Mr. Moon is a theater that has a show pathetic. However, Mr. Moon never give up, he was still looking for ways to make Nana to become his sponsor wonder and magic.
Garth Jennings as an agent from England tried to give symbolic violence to America, through the representation of Nana as England to show that America could not give something good. In this case it was a theater performance. England gave symbolic violence to America by saying the show he was going to make was only a pathetic show. This pathetic word is a form of ridicule from England to America that America cannot be better than England. Indirectly England give America symbolic violence with negative stereotype that England is very bad in do something and the ridicule of pathetic can make an impact to America psychology. America feels down and tries to give all their capacity to get attention from England. Garth Jennings present his symbolic violence to Mr. Moon in the form of describing himself as a character who has no stand alone and always fails. It makes him look like a weak character and always asks for help from the superior. An ideology of weak and always asking for help are the purpose Garth Jennings to instill in the audience that even though he is a theater owner but he is still a weak and always failing.

4.2 Symbolic violence of family to children

Johnny is a young man who has a big body, black skin and his style like a thug. He was a son of a bank robber who had the dream of becoming a singer but was constrained because he was forced to follow his father's to become a bank robber. Johnny's look can be seen bellow in duration 00:04:35-00:05:33:

Figure 2. Johnny sings when he is waiting for his father to rob a bank

Figure 3. The police are looking for sources of singing sounds
The picture above shows, when Johnny is waiting for his father who is robbing a bank, he assigned to control the bank area. He looked bored and entertained himself with singing. While he was singing suddenly the police passed around it and looking for the sound source. Fortunately, they managed to escape from the police chase.

Blacks in America are considered bad people, slaves and always commit crimes for murder, rape, and robbery. Black people are also described as more evil than white people. Based on the data above illustrates that African Americans do more crime than white people. One of the crimes committed was robbery. In this movie, Johnny is portrayed as a black representation and follows his father as a bank robber. Garth Jennings gives symbolic violence to African Americans through Johnny. African Americans are described as a group that always commits crimes. Garth Jennings wants to emphasize that African American is just a group of bad people living in America. Garth Jennings also gives symbolic violence through clothing styles that affirm that African Americans are bad people. In this movie, Garth Jennings also gives Johnny symbolic violence in the form of symbolic violence between family and children.

In the evening, when Johnny just came home from a singing audition, his father told him to rob again and he assigned as a driver. Johnny was afraid of his father so he was forced to follow him. It is shown by the following dialogue in duration 01:27:01-01:27:55:

Data 2
Big Daddy: There he is! I got a surprise for you, my son. Hahaha.. over.
Johnny: What’s that?
Big Daddy: (to Gang Member) tell him the plan.
Gang Member: Right. We’ve been told there’s a ship carrying 25 million in gold, gonna dock at night right here, with the usual guards here and here. But lucky for us, there’s a sewer right under here, so the getaway driver meets us here.
Big Daddy: And that is gonna be you this time, Johnny.
Nana: Not for that singing contest I saw on the news.
Mr. Moon: That’s the one!
Johnny: What you want, you want me to drive?
Big Daddy: Yeah, it’s time my boy had a proper role in the gang, eh?
Johnny: Hang on, hang on, Dad. Barry’s always been our driver.
Big Daddy: Barry don’t mind, do ya Barry? (Barry shifts - clearly uneasy with this change of plan).
Barry: No. No, that’s fine.
Big Daddy: Yeah.
Johnny: So when exactly is this ship comin’ in then?
Gang Member: We ain’t got a date yet.
Johnny: Probably won’t be for a while though, will it?
Big Daddy: Well what do you care? It’s the last job we ever need to do. When it comes in, we go right?
Johnny: Great. Can’t wait.

Based on the dialogues above, it shows Johnny’s father assumed that it was time for Johnny to get one of the important roles in his gang to rob banks. His father wanted to train him to become his successor as a robber gang leader. Johnny makes an excuse to not follow his father. But still he accepted the offer because he did not want to violate his father’s order.

Garth Jennings shows Johnny's character has been given symbolic violence by his father called Euphemism. Euphemism usually makes symbolic violence invisible, works subtly, cannot be recognized, and is chosen "unconsciously". For example can be form of trust, obligation, loyalty, politeness, giving, debt, reward, or mercy. Politeness is the symbolic violence that always occurs in families between parents and children. The euphemism that happened to Johnny was his obedience to his father. He still did things he didn’t like. In order to considered obedient to his father. He didn’t realize that his father gave him symbolic violence for reasons of obedience and politeness. Garth Jennings shows that African American families always give symbolic violence to their children. Garth Jennings describes that African Americans always impose their will on their children through euphemism.

4.3 Symbolic violence of Men to Women (patriarchy)

One day, Ash and her boyfriend were singing at the cafe. When a while singing Ash took her lover's microphone
and singing alone, this made her boyfriend angry and they were fired by the cafe's owner for their incompatibility. After they fired her boyfriend reminds her that she is only backing vocals. It is shown by the following dialogue in duration 00:06:48-00:06:57:

Data 3
Lance : Ash, babe I'm the lead singer, okay? Just stick to the backing vocals.
Ash : Sorry, I get carried away.
Lance : Yeah, I know, right, it just kind of ruins my song, ya know?

The quotation and dialogue above shows that Ash was asked to become a backing vocal by her boyfriend. Even though, she has better voice than her boyfriend. But she is always becoming a backing vocal. Ash did not realize that she had been given symbolic violence by her boyfriend. She did not realize that the prohibition of his beloved was a form of symbolic violence which harmed her. She accepted because she considered that the prohibition was a form of love for her boyfriend even though she was hurt. Ash did everything that her boyfriend said because she loved him. She felt everything she had done for him was right, actually she could against her boyfriend, she had the right to show her voice, but she did not refuse and she thought that her boyfriend was a decent man and she is a woman who must obey his words.

4.4 violence of upper class to lower class

Mike is a street singer who is arrogant and deceptive. One day he went to the night club. There, he saw a beautiful girl who entered the club. When he wanted to enter he was stopped by the club guards because he doesn't money. One day he went to the bank and borrowed money so he could enter the club and meet the girl, at the club he played gambling with bears and also cheated which made the bear angry and tried to kill him. Mike's look can be seen bellow:

![Figure 4. Mike caught cheating when playing gambling](image)

The picture above shows that Mike was caught cheating while playing gambling, he hid his card so he won. But, unfortunately his lie was known by a bear and made the bear very angry because he felt cheated by Mike who had a very small body.

Garth Jennings gives symbolic violence to Jews through Mike. He gave symbolic violence to Jews by describing the most arrogant, fraudsters, liars and lower classes who like to borrow money. Indirectly Garth Jennings shows that Jews have the most evil character. Garth Jennings also shows that many people hate them because of their arrogant. Garth Jennings also shows that even though Jews are clever but they use their ingenuity for negative things by deceiving others. Jews are also described as having the attitude of a materialist they did all the ways to get money. The impact of symbolic violence given by Garth Jennings to Jews is that the audience will assume that the Jews are the most evil antagonists.
5. Conclusion

In conclusion the researcher sees that Sing Movie is a work that contains some symbolic violence. This movie creates a comedy situation to make the symbolic violence invisible. This movie contains an ideology that America is not the super power country in the world. Its presence has hit many parties, because the events revealed in it are considered as a contamination of the culture involved in it.

Garth Jennings's goal is to tell the world that England is the most powerful country in the world. America creates new ideas such as singing competitions just to get attention and recognition from the England. This movie shows a reality and various cultural issues that occur in America. The issue in this movie is to submit to the ruler. Garth Jennings tried to show the power of England and showed the form of symbolic violence in some cultures in America. So, the result of the study shows that the forms of symbolic violence that are symbolic violence of superior to inferior (England to America), symbolic violence of family to children (Big daddy to Johnny), symbolic violence male to female (Rosita's husband to Rosita), (Lance to Ash), (Grandfather to Meena), (Garth Jennings to Miss Crawly), and symbolic violence between the upper and lower classes (Superior to Jews).

So the researcher concluded that England wanted to show that the super power country in the world was England, not America. America gets strength from England and also America will not succeed if there is no Asia. Asia has an important role in making America successful and, getting recognition from the England.

References


