

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background Of Choosing Subject

Symbolism in human life has its own meaning. Every human being in carrying out a life has its own symbols. The meaning of symbols in a life is like a goal in achieving something every human want it. The symbol function can also be interpreted to name or signify something. It can be a specific object (a person), identify an action (a scream), or refer to an abstract idea (crazy) (E.M. Griffin., 2012). Every human being or individual has different symbols or meanings. Because, the symbol in the meaning of human life is very important. Every individual in this world gets a symbol from the moment he is born. It serves as a reference in carrying out every life in this world. As a simple example, when humans are born they always get a name. It is intended as a symbol in verbal or word form to mark someone. Human life has full meaning with symbolism. This is because humans live with full direction that they want to achieve. This happens because human life is filled with verbal things. Something that has been named by every human being is a reflection of a symbol. This is because language becomes something that can encourage someone's desire to get something more or to move forward. Although language can be a prison that confines us, we have the potential to push back the walls and bars as we master more words (E.M. Griffin., 2012). Having a large

vocabulary or language is the key to being able to interpret a symbol. This is because every individual or human always interacts with society and learns to interpret life in the world.

All limbs of every living thing have symbolic meanings or meanings. Just like humans, when their eyes blink, they have their own symbols or meanings. Because symbols are something that is always learned in life in this world. Including, animals have symbols when they meet other animals or humans. According to E.M. Griffin, 2012 in his study of symbolism theory said that a symbol is "a stimulus that has a learned meaning and value for people." Thus, humans living in this world are always interpreted by a symbol. Such as body movements, spoken words, or other things that have symbolic meanings that are issued. Therefore, the symbol has its own puzzle meaning for every human being. The riddle forms a symbol to find out what human intentions, meanings, and goals provide for some symbols in life. Not only reflected in the human environment, symbolism can also appear in a novel, comic, or the like. As a reader, this must be familiar. Because, when a reader reads a novel or comic in the sequence of stories that are shown, there are puzzles to be told. The symbols contained in a novel are usually in the form of verbal language that can be known immediately what the symbols mean. While comic, has a lot of generated symbol puzzles. When someone reads comics, they will be shown various kinds of symbols that are produced. Among them are pictures that show the movement of a symbol and the resulting language so that readers can think about the puzzle of what is meant in the sequence of a comic story.

In this study, the researcher discusses various symbols that are reflected in Garfield's comic stories. This study also aims at finding out what symbols are contained in Garfield's comic stories which are reflected in social life in America. This research was conducted to find out how a person's reaction from various conversations that were expressed. This aims to find out how symbols are generated to anticipate something that is not desirable. Because, the first thing someone has to do needs a lot of vocabulary or language to produce a symbol. Interactionist maintains that “humans require social stimulation and exposure to abstract symbol systems to embark upon conceptual thought processes that characterize our species” (E.M. Griffin., 2012). Symbols are created because of communication with each other. So, to create a symbol from an individual starts from the thoughts that exist in the human or animal brain and produces a symbol in the form of verbal or non-verbal.

Running a life is always related to communication. Communication is very important for every individual to other individuals. The result of the communication produces various symbols. According to interactionist principles, there's no way that a person who has had almost zero human contact would be able to develop a language or think through her responses (E.M. Griffin., 2012). Thus, the creation of a symbol can be caused by direct contact between individuals and other individuals. After direct contact, the process of creating a symbol also requires a process of developing an understanding of the meaning of the movement, word, or other signs produced to create a symbol.

Garfield's comic has a characteristic in a story created by a comic writer.

The story conveyed has various kinds of symbols and conveys messages indirectly to human life. The researcher have vision and mission in conducting research on stories in Garfield's comics. This is because the storyline wrapped in comedy is something every comic reader needs to pay attention to because it has a message or influence being conveyed. The vision to be achieved by researcher is to find out what influences are conveyed in a Garfield comic story. The mission that the Garfield comic story researcher want to achieve is to be able to provide research result that the story with a comedy plot in the Garfield comic has a symbolic meaning that has an influence and is conveyed to human life in general.

The conditions that occur at this time, namely in human life, have similarities with what is told in Garfield's comics. For example, the issue told in Garfield's comic entitled "Jon of the Jungle" has similarities that occur in human life as found in the middle part of the story where humans like to hunt extinct animals just to gain unilateral advantage. So, the solution that can be done in this research is to develop several theories to solve the problems that have been formulated.

In conducting research on comic stories, Garfield has keywords that have been arranged in the abstract section. By considering the keywords in including semiotics, influence, symbol, denotative, and connotative can build and emphasize the content to be discussed in this study Garfield's comic was published on June 14, 1978. Exactly on that date was designated as Garfield's birthday. In this several comic series, Garfield discusses all the problem that

occur in human life. Like how humans are generally lazy to face Monday. Likewise with the issue that discusses the various problems that exist in human life entitled "Jon of the Jungle". In this issue, it tells about how Jon, a comic artist, forgets the most important thing to take care of his cat. He can forget about this because his job is under pressure from his superiors to produce quality comic series for publication. This series also tells about human problems when facing various pressures.

The orange cat or Garfield in the series helps Jon improve his work as a comic writer. Garfield fixed Jon's story to make it more interesting. In the story "Jon of the jungle" Garfield alludes to how most humans when speaking don't always pay attention to the use of words. So that in the comic story Garfield spreads his influence so that every human being is able to pay attention to what he says to others so as not to look stupid. Apart from that, the continuation of the story "Jon of the Jungle" in the Garfield comic story is worthy of research because there are symbols contained in the Garfield comic storyline and these symbols have something that can influence everyday human life wrapped in comedy.

This makes Garfield's comic a comic that can be scrutinized because it has symbols that indirectly convey messages to humans today. This is in a story when Garfield and a dog named Stickfletcher fix Jon's story. Garfield created a story about how humans often hunt endangered animals. The story displays the symbol that Garfield's comics are able to criticize the activities of humans who like to hunt endangered wild animals.

The object of research in Garfield's comics is the symbol and influence conveyed in a story. So it is interesting to do research because in several comic series Garfield has symbols of life which have indirectly been conveyed to the readers. Therefore, this research deserves to be chosen by using qualitative methods by developing several theories such as symbolism, pop culture, or social influence theory. In a series of comic stories, Garfield conveys symbols through pictures and words which indirectly relate to the reality of human life.

The phenomena that exist in Garfield's comic stories also look exactly like those that occur in human life. As in the story "Jon of the Jungle" in the Garfield comic which tells how someone's life is full of luck. This is discovered at the end of the story when Jon's boss comes to his house to check on how his good idea is going. In fact, Jon's work has been repaired by a cat that is Garfield. In the story there are symbols that describe a person's luck when facing various pressures. This phenomenon is not far from human life when carrying out an activity. This phenomenon also gives rise to a belief that when humans take care of a cat, they will get some luck when carrying out a real life.

Each issue of the comic series has a given symbol meaning. Objects in every comic story are usually divided into three parts, namely icons, indexes, and symbols (Charles Sanders Peirce, 1977).

The popularity of literary comics in America has been proven by Garfield comic. From various sources, it is known that before this comic was licensed, the Garfield comic story was aired as a television series in 1983 under the title Garfield on the town. In 1987 Garfield comic became the number three comic

in history that appeared most often in 2.000 newspapers and this comic strip was distributed to 2.500 newspapers around the world in 1995.

The first Garfield Comic strip collection book was released in 1980 and became number one on the New York Times bestseller list. As Garfield comics grew in popularity, in 1982 CBS aired Here Comes Garfield, an animated television program whose story was taken from the Garfield comic strip. Based on sources on the garfield.com site, 20th Century Fox produced widescreen cartoon films entitled Garfield: The Movie in 2004 and Garfield: A Tail of Two Kitties in 2006. The large number of comic series that have been incorporated into television shows that many people who likes the character of a cat as a symbol in life. The existence of a symbol that appears and the creation of a symbol can have an influence on the recipients, such as happiness, way of thinking and imitating the behavior of a symbol that has been received. Therefore, it is very important to carry out research to analyze the symbols created from the Garfield Comic storyline based on symbols such as words, images or body movements which are reflected as symbols that have meaning and are able to influence the recipients of these symbols.

B. Scope Of Study

In research on the influence of the symbolism of Garfield's comic stories on society in America, the researcher focuses on a more detailed scope of study on what symbols are in Garfield's comic stories which are reflected in American society. This research also focuses on the meaning of symbols generated in Garfield's comic stories for American life.

C. Problem Formulation

Based on the explanation above, the problem formulation can be shown as bellow:

1. What are the meaning of symbols communicated in the Garfield's comic for American life?
2. How are the influences of symbolism to American society as reflected in Garfield comic?

D. Objective Of The study

Based on the problems above, the objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To find out the meanings of symbols communicated in the Garfield comic story for American society
2. To analyze the influence of symbolism to American society as seen in American Garfield comic

E. Review Of Related Study

In this study, the researcher read a lot of references from various sources. Among them are journals, theses or social media related to the topics contained in the problems in this research. This proves that what the researcher wrote is original.

First is a journal article this research is entitled *The Use of Garfield Comic Strips in Composing Descriptive Paragraph (An Explorative Study on 7F Students of SMP Negeri 9 Purwokerto Academic Year 2016/2017)*. This journal focuses on finding out the problems faced by students in writing English texts through descriptive stories in Garfield's comics. The purpose of this study was

to determine the use of comic strips in composing descriptive paragraphs (Eka Latifah).

Second research is entitled *An Analysis Of Onomatopoeias in Garfield Comic*, published by *Global Expert: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra* in 2019. This journal focuses on knowing how to directly imitate or duplicate sound in an object or what is referred to as onomatopoeia in Garfield's comics. This study uses the method of observation and The technique of noting later in the analysis of the data in this study used the proprietary referential equivalent method Sudaryanto (1993). Meanwhile, in analyzing the types of onomatopoeia and contextual meaning, this research uses Ullman's theory (1962). Then in analyzing and strengthening the meaning of this research also uses the theory of meaning lexical Lyon (1995) (Tiara Eliza, 2019).

Third is based an article source obtained from the website www.hollywoodinsider.com/garfield-success-analysis/ written by Austin Oguri in 2022 regarding *Garfield's Simple Charm: an in-depth analysis of the success story of this cool cat*. The article has a review that emphasizes Garfield's symbol of simplicity. This review has an explanation of Garfield's emphasis on strip simplicity, which makes it attractive as a reference in this study.

Fourth is a research written by Mircea Eliade in 2005 entitled *Simbolisme Menurut Mircea Eliade*. This journal focuses on seeing symbolism in human life. This study wants to see Eliade's thoughts in understanding symbols. In this writing, the writer using descriptive method using symbolism theory. So, the results of this study say that symbolism according to Mircea Eliade always

exists in every human life (Ivan Th. J. Weismann).

This research on Garfield comics is different from previous studies. This study examined the symbolism communicated in the Garfield comic storyline. Therefore the results of this study are useful as a reference for other researchers to develop Garfield's related comic stories.

F. Research Method

In conducting research on the influence of Symbolism contained in Garfield comic stories on human life, the researcher used a method so that the research runs smoothly. Therefore, the researcher used qualitative methods in conducting this research. This method is suitable because the data of this study are in the form of words and gestures used in Garfield comic stories. The use of qualitative method in this research is to find the influence of symbolism in Garfield's comic stories on human life.

1. The Source Of Data

This research requires data and data sources to support the analysis process. Based on Sugiono's (2013) statement from the journal which has been translated Indonesian to English that data collection techniques are the most strategic step in research, this is because the main objective of the research is to obtain data. He classifies two data primary data and secondary or supporting data. Primary data is data that is directly obtained by researcher, the secondary data is data that is not obtained directly by researcher such as obtaining data through documents and this data to supporting the data in order to make the main data stronger analyzed.

a. Primary Data

The main data is the main source for conducting research. The main data of this research is from Garfield's comic story. The researcher took two volumes of the Garfield comic story, there are Volume 1 issue in 2012 and Volume 33 in 2015 to find out the similarities of the various symbols found in the two comic storylines. Then the researcher also took data from the content of the YouTube channel Lasagnanacat with the title “07/27/1978” www.youtube.com/watch?v=NAh9oLs67Cw to find out what symbols could have an influence.

b. Supporting Data

The researcher needed supporting data to support as a complement in this research. This means when researcher find something difficult to understand in the main data, the researcher will go after the other source. In this study, supporting data were taken from several journals, theories, and other references related to this research.

2. Methods Of Collecting Data

To provide relevant data in research, the researcher had chosen several series of Garfield comics stories that contain several symbols and influences in American social culture. To collect data the researcher used two methods in collecting data, they are: observation method and recording interesting things. In collecting data, researcher used observation technique by reading or observing Garfield's comic stories to find out the main data needed to

analyze this research. In the observation method, there are several steps:

1. Searching for words and gestures containing signs and meanings of the symbols in the Garfield comic storyline.
2. Analyze the signs and symbols of Garfield's comic storyline. Furthermore, the researcher noted the interesting things from the sign and the meaning of the symbol to know the influence on American social culture. Then the researcher classified the obtained data by placing the results in the discussion section. The data used in this study are taken from documents in the form of pictures, words, and gestures found in Garfield's comic stories.

G. Technique of analyzing data

In analyzing data, there are two ways used, those are deductive and inductive. In this study, researcher used inductive analysis of data. This is because inductive research is qualitative in nature which is used to examine the natural conditions of objects. In analyzing inductive or qualitative data and the results of qualitative research place more emphasis on meaning (Sugiyono, 2011).

H. Presentation

This research is presented in four chapters. First chapter explain about the introduction of this research which includes background of choosing subject, scope of study, problem formulation, objective of the study, review of related study, research method, technique of analyzing data, and presentation.

Chapter two is theoretical approach and framework. This chapter will

discuss some theories which related in this research.

Chapter three is the discussion analyzes about the influence symbols in the Garfield's comics in American society. Chapter four is the final part of this research, this chapter is the conclusion of the study.