

Symbol Used in the Demon Slayer: Mugen Train Movie

Anggun Purnomo Arbi

STKIP PGRI Sidoarjo, Email: anggunpurnomo58@gmail.com

Iddun Muhammad Hattory

STKIP PGRI Sidoarjo, Email: ihattory@gmail.com

Nur Kalim

SMP PGRI Wringinanom, Email: nurkalim224@gmail.com

Abstract

The objective of this study was to describe the symbol used in the Demon Slayer: Mugen Train the movie. Symbol, as the part of literature, can be defined as often characters, images, settings and the other elements which reflect bigger hidden ideas or message in order to build more interesting story. Viewed from its setting, this study was applied library research as it studied a movie. The subject of this study was a Japanese movie entitled “Demon Slayer: Mugen Train”. In collecting the data, there were two research instruments including: the researcher as a data collector and analyst, and the documentations. The data of this study were phenomena classified as symbols. Those data were collected from the Movie. The steps of data collections included: (1) watching movie several times, (2) reading the movie scripts. The data analysis steps in this study were identified as the descriptive analysis technique. The results of this study presented that there were some symbols found in the Demon Slayer: Mugen train movie, they were: nature symbols (flame, water, and Thunder), object symbols (word (Nichirin Sword), Hanafuda Earrings, and tomb), animal symbol (crow), and color symbols (pink, blue, black or dark, and red).

Keywords: Symbol, Movie, Demon Slayer: Mugen Train

INTRODUCTION

Literature can be defined as an work or a group of works of art that is made up of words. In studying literature, we know that there are two methods including: (1) intrinsic elements covering what in the literary works themselves such as character, plot, symbols, setting, and so forth and (2) extrinsic elements including the outer factors or environmental factors (Wellek & Warren in Yunita, 2017). In this study, the intrinsic element analyzed was symbols or symbol.

Symbol is categorized as the shapes, images, and signs used in daily life, and it is used to represent something or the meaning of something (Nurkia, 2018). Because of its usage, symbol can be found in literary works such as movie. In this study, the researcher intended to analyze symbols in the popular Japanese animated movie entitled “Demon Slayer: Mugen

Train the Movie”. In addition, there were some reasons that motivated the researcher to conduct the analysis of symbols in the Demon Slayer: Mugen Train the Movie.

Firstly, Demon Slayer: Mugen Train (2020) reaches 8.3 / 10 rating score in the Internet Movie Database (IMDb, 2020). 8.3 score in IMDb indicates that this movie is a great movie. Moreover, this movie reached number one (#1) of the box office movie in Japan (VIU, 2021). It means that this movie is the best Japanese animated movie nowadays. Those reasons are the considerations of why the researcher chose Demon Slayer: Mugen Train the Movie as the object of this study.

Secondly, symbol is an important thing that should be analyzed because of its roles. The symbols, in daily life, have crucial functions in representing something (Widyaningrum, 2020). It means that people use symbols in order to deliver the ideas or to make their literary works be more meaningful.

Thirdly, the film or movie can be identified as a unique ways of charging symbols and providing clues which something can be seen as a symbol (Widyaningrum, 2020). In producing a movie, sometime, some symbols are added in order to give deeper messages. For example, in the movie entitled “Wall E” some symbols represent the condition of Earth. In movies, we can see that movie character sometimes becomes symbolic such as Captain America that symbolize the patriotism. Based on the reasons, the researcher intended to conduct the study that has a title “Symbol Used in the Demon Slayer: Mugen Train Movie”.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This part covers some related concept and theories used to support this study. It consists of the theories of symbol, meaning of symbol, definition of movie, introduction to Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie, and its synopsis.

Symbol

Symbol, shapes, images, and signs, is used in daily lifeto represent something or the meaning of something (Nurkia, 2018). Symbolism, symbol, is often used by the Authors to make their works be more meaningful and to build a story that is more than the events described. It means that the appearance of symbols make the works be more interesting and attractive. The meaning of symbols can only be understood and interpreted if we understand the context, concepts, and the ideas that build symbols. It means that the symbols can present more than one meaning. In conclusion, symbols can be the presentation or representation of one object to another one (Widyaningrum, 2020).

For example, the white color symbolizes the purity. The red color symbolize valor. Water symbolizes serene mind. The blue color is the symbol of cool. The vulture is the symbol of death. The red color is the symbol of the blood.

Movie

Generally, literature can appear in many forms including movie. A movie, an audio visual media, can be described as an art and entertaining medium (Humaira, 2018). Movie is also a story which is visualized. Moreover, the background of movie is rooted in the technology and science (Webster in Humaira, 2018). Viewed from artistic status, movies have genres.

The genre of movie is the category of an audio visual media based on similarities of narrative elements or emotional response to movie (Keith, 2007). One movie is able to have more than one genres. Movies can be classified into some genres including: adventure, comedy, action, fantasy, animation, romance, crime, was, sci-fi, thriller, and family.

Demon Slayer: Mugen Train (2020)

Demon Slayer: Mugen Train is a Japanese animated movie (anime) directed by Haruo Sotozaki. It was released on In Japan at 2020 and in USA at April 2021. The genres of this movie are actions, animation, adventure and fantasy (IMDb, 2020). This movie was produced by creating images with animation technique. The story of this movie is adapted from a manga entitled “Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba.



Figure 1. Demon Slayer: Mugen Train Movie

Taken from (IMDb, 2020)

Synopsis of Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie

The story is started when Tanjiro's family is killed by a demon and his sister, Nezuko, is turned into a Demon. Tanjiro join the corps whose mission is to kill the demons called Demon Slayer. As a demon slayer, Tanjiro has a responsibility to eradicate all demons. In this movie, Tanjiro and his friends, Inosuke and Zenitsu, embark on their missions to help Kyojuro Rengoku in a mission called Mugen Train.

METHOD

As it was analyzed the symbols used in the movie, this study was identified as library research. Library research studies the written materials including: documents, books, tabloid, magazines, scientific journals, newspaper, video and others (Mahmud, 2016). Considering the form of data, this study applied the descriptive qualitative study. In addition, words or phrases are the form of data in the descriptive qualitative study (Mahmud, 2016).

The object of this study was a Japanese movie entitled "Demon Slayer: Mugen Train". In collecting the data, there were two research instruments including: the researcher as a data collector and analyst, and the documentations as a video. The data of this study were phenomena classified as symbols. Those data were collected from the Movie. In the process of data collection, this study used documentation technique covering some steps (1) watching movie several times, and (2) reading the movie scripts. The data analysis steps in this study were identified as the descriptive analysis technique covering some steps: (1) identifying the symbols, (2) classifying the collected data into relevant theories and concepts, (3) describing, analyzing, and examining the data, and (4) concluding the findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Related to the purpose of the study, this study focused on analysis of symbols used in the Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie. Symbols which are images, shapes, and sign are regarded as the representation of something (Elaheh, 2011). Based on data analysis, some symbols were found in the settings, characters, tone, and dialogues of Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie. The results of this study, symbols, were described in the form of narrations below:

Nature Symbols

One type of symbol found in the Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie was nature symbol. Nature symbols belong to conceptional symbol (Nurkia, 2018). Authors of Demon Slayer:

Mugen Train movie described the characters, nature, and situations by using nature symbols. Nature symbols found in this movie were:

Water

The first nature symbol found in the in Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie was water. It was shown in the scenes when Tanjiro used the power of water breathing style. Water is shown in this movie several times. It can be assumed that the author used water as the symbol of Tanjiro's character. Water represents that Tanjiro is a calm and peace lover. His life and destiny flow like a water. Generally, water is the symbol of origin of life (Nurkia, 2018). After the death of his father, Tanjiro strives hardly to earn money for his family to keep his family alive.



Figure 2. Tanjiro Uses Water Power

Source: Demon Slayer

Flames (Homura 炎)

The second nature symbol in Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie was the flame. There are some flame symbols in this movie. Flame symbol belongs to Kyojuro Rengoku as the Pillar of flame (the powerful demon slayer who uses power of flame). The flame symbols showed in the Rengoku's cloak, Rengoku's sword, and Rengoku's power called fire breathing style. Rengoku uses the power of flame to slay the demons into ash.



Figure 3. Kyojuro Used the Power of Flame

Source: Demon Slayer

The flame used by Rengoku symbolizes his nature because Rengoku is an energetic and soulful person who has a determination like a burning fire. Flame is the symbol of Rengoku's life story. Like the flame that burns brightly then disappears and becomes meaningful, Rengoku sacrifices himself to protect humanity. In this movie, the flame also represents the Rengoku's strength and determination to protect humanity.

Thunder

The third nature symbol in symbol in Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie was the Thunder. Thunder symbols appear so many times in this movie. It appears in the design of Zanitsu's sword, and in the power of Zenitsu. He always uses the Thunderpower when he fights demons. Because, in general, Thunder is so fast, it symbolizes how Zenitsu slays the demons quickly. In this movie, Thunder is also the symbol of tense atmosphere and the unpredictable or shocked moments.



Figure 4. Zenitsu Uses Thunder Breathing Style

Source: Demon Slayer

Object Symbols

Some objects shown in our life can also be a symbol. Object symbol is known as the type of conventional symbol (Nurkiah, 2018). In this movie, the researcher found some object symbols. They were: sword (Nichirin Sword), Hanafuda Earrings, and tomb.

Nichirin Swords

The first object symbol found in the Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie was nichirin sword and nichirin blade. The nichirin sword is not only used by the main character of this movie but also all demon slayers. This special sword is the only weapon that can kill demons, so all demon slayers use this powerful weapon. This weapon can be identified as the symbol of demon slayer's responsibility.



Figure 5. Nichirin Sword

Source: Demon Slayer

In addition, in general, sword is the symbol of strength and protection (Nurkia, 2018). The nichirin sword is the symbol of all demon slayers power. Moreover, it symbolizes how demon slayers sacrifice themselves in order to protect humanity.

Mugen Train

The second object symbol used in Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie was Mugen train. Literary, Mugen train means infinity train. This train is the major setting of Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie where the story begins. It is the train controlled by demons in order to murder the humanity. This train is named mugen (infinity) because it never stops killing people by making them fall in the infinity dreams or endless dream.



Figure 6. Mugen Train

Source: Demon Slayer

This train is the symbol of endless nightmare and endless terror that are caused by demons. This train is also the symbol of Tanjiro's emotional journey that affected his mind. The word infinity or mugen represents infinity dream that has no end. People who falls in that endless dream will fall into the darkness.

Hanafuda Earrings

The third object symbol found in Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie was Hanafuda earrings used by Tanjiro. Hanafuda earrings are a kind of ring with image of sun. In this movie, sun is the symbol of humanity's hopes and strength. Demons in this movie can only be beaten

by the sun energy. This is why the sun in Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie is the symbol of human will, hope, and strength.



Figure 7. Tanjiro Wears Hanafuda Earrings

Source: Demon Slayer

Tomb or Grave

Tomb is the last object symbol found in the Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie. this object symbol was shown in one setting of this story. At the beginning of the story, before the mugen train mission begins, the leader of the demon slayer, Kagaya, visited a place that was full of graves. Kagaya was crying while looking at the tombs. He wept over several demon slayers who died from sacrificing their lives. Object symbol tomb, in this movie, represents sadness, death, and sorrow.



Figure 8. The Burials of Demon Slayer

Source: Demon Slayer

Animal Symbol

One type of conventional symbol is animal symbol (Nurkia, 2018). In this movie, animal symbol was used by the author in order to build the story of stopping the Mugen Train. There was only one Animal symbol found in the Demon Slayer: Mugen Train. This animal symbol was a crow.

Crow

In Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie, crow appeared several times. Crow helped the demon slayers to guide their missions and get the information from the leader. In this movie,

crow was known as the symbol of death. It can be shown in the scene when Kyojuro Rengoku dead because he protects people. This crow cried as of Rengoku's death. In addition, crows always appear when a demon slayer is murdered by demons.



Figure 9. Crow

Source: Demon Slayer

Colors Symbols

Color is considered as the conventional symbol (Nurkia, 2018). Some dominants colors shown in the movie can contain hidden messages. In Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie, the researcher found some color symbols covering: pink, blue, dark, and red. Those color symbol were described below:

Pink

One color symbol found in the Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie was pink color. This symbol appeared several times. It was the color of demon slayers' kimono. They were Kanroji and Nezuko. Generally, this color has symbolic meaning covering: femininity, sweetness, love, romantic, innocence, and so forth. In this movie, this color symbolized the nature of Nezuko and Kanroji that were sweet and romantic (Bourn, 2021). Especially Nezuko, she was shown as the feminism girl that really loved her family although she turned into demon. Moreover, in order to highlight the romantic atmosphere, the author used pink tone as seen in the figure below.



Figure 10. Romantic Scene of Nezuko

Source: Demon Slayer

Blue

The next color symbol in the Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie was blue. This color was highlighted in Tanjirou's power effects. When Tanjirou used his power, the blue water effect splashes in his sword. Blue color has symbolic meaning covering: cool, serenity, heaven, and peace (Nurkia, 2018).

Viewed from this statement, it can be found that there was similarity of the symbolic meaning of blue seen in the Demon Slayer: Mugen Train. The blue color, in this movie, was the symbol of peace. As a main character, Tanjirou always sacrifices himself to bring about peace for humanity. This color symbol also represented Tanjirou's serene mind.



Figure 11. The Blue Water as Tanjirou's Power Source: Demon Slayer

Dark / Black

One color symbol in this study was black or dark. Black or dark tone was shown in the beginning of this movie as the main time setting of this movie was night. Black is also the color of Mugen Train. Black is a dark color that represents power, sophistication, mystery, authority, formality, evil, death, and aggression, authority, rebellion, and fear. (Bourn, 2021).



Figure 12. Black Tone That Dominates the Movie Source: Demon Slayer

Because black is the color of Mugen Train that was controlled by Demons to kill human, this color symbolized the evil of Enmu and Akaza as the demons. This color also had symbolic

meaning fear as the Demons murdered 40 humans. It also associated with mystery as Mugen Train was observed by some Demon Slayers.

Red

The last color symbol found in Demon Slayer: Mugen Train movie was red color symbol. This color was shown in the scene when Kyojuro dead. This color symbol appeared as blood. The color symbol 'red' has meaning of emotion, passion, blood, daring or danger (Pierce in Nurkia, 2018). This color represents Kyojuro's blood when he strive to protect all people that got stuck in the mugen train. This color also symbolize Kyojuro's strength as he fought against the devil and also protected the people.



Figure 13. Red Blood

Source: Demon Slayer

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the appearance of symbol in literary works is interesting ways to build the ideas. In movie, we can find a lot of symbols that are used to make the story of movie become meaningful and interesting. Based on the findings and discussion of this study, researcher found some symbols including nature symbols (flame, water, and Thunder), object symbols (word (Nichirin Sword), Hanafuda Earrings, and tomb), animal symbol (crow), and color symbols (pink, blue, black or dark, and red).

REFERENCES

- Bourn, J. (2021). *Color of Meaning*. Retrieved from: Bourn Creative: <https://www.bourncreative.com/>
- Elaheh, F. (2011). Symbol, Metaphores and Simile in Literature: A case Study of "Animal Farm". *Journal of English and Literature of Islamic Azad University of Bandar Abbas. A Journals*, 20.

- Humaira, M. (2018). *An Analysis of Moral Value in Zootopia Movie*. Aceh: Ar-rainiry State Islamic University.
- IMDb. (2020). *Demon Slayer the Movie: Mugen Train (2020)*. Retrieved on April 20, 2021, from Internet Movie Database: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt11032374/>
- Keith, B. (2007). *Film Genre: From Iconography to Ideology*. London: Wallflower Press.
- Mahmud. (2016). *Metodologi Penelitian*. Mojokerto: Thoriq Al-Fiqri.
- Nurkia, M. P. (2018). *The Analysis of Symbols in Kingdom of Heaven Film by Ridley Scott*. Jambi: The State Islamic University Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi .
- VIU. (2021). Retrieved on April 20, 2021, from VIU: <https://www.viu.com/ott/id/articles/film-demon-slayer-kimetsu-no-yaiba-raih-kembali-box-office-no-1-jepang/>
- Widyaningrum, A. A. (2020). *Revealing the Significance of Symbols in Presenting Aladdin's Character in Disney's Live-Action MOvie Aladdin*. Yogyakarta: Universitas Sanata Dharma Yogyakarta.
- Yunita, T. (2017). *Symbol and Their Meanings in the Little Prince*. Semarang : Universitas Katolik Soegijapranata.