

CHAPTER 3

METHODS OF THE STUDY

3.1 Research Approach

The writer uses qualitative method in examining film analysis. According to Pickering (2001, pp. 57-69), qualitative forms of textual or discourse analysis tend to look at far fewer texts but in more depth. Qualitative method is often used 'to study processes such as attitude formation or meaning attribution' (ibid). On the other hand, qualitative method can be appropriate to interpret meaning and understanding the film as well as discourse. As stated by Pickering above that qualitative method has functioned as the process study of meaning attribution, film as part of popular cultural text has symbolic meanings to be produced. It is suggested by Storey (2009, p. 176) that film is like any other cultural text or practice that 'has to be made to mean'. 'This will take us beyond a focus on the meaning of a text, to a focus on the meanings that can be made in the encounter between the discourses of the text'. Furthermore, Qualitative method is 'research procedure which products descriptive data such as written or oral words from people and observed behavior that used by the researchers to examine things in depth, and used to examine things in terms of process in understanding the issues' (Bogdan & Taylor 1975, cited in Moleong 2011, p. 4). Because of these reason, qualitative method would be used for this analysis.

The writer of the study tries to interpret a film as a cultural text. In order to get more understanding in analyzing data, textual analysis becomes the next methodology. According to Ida (2011, p. 42), textual analysis is categorized as “literary critics”. This textual analysis often uses to explore in depth understanding, to unpack the hidden meaning, to deconstruct ideology, cultural values, mythology, and so forth behind the author of media text, and to understand the context of the text (ibid. p. 42). In this sense, since the writer tries to examine and to unpack the hidden colonial discourse issue emerging in *How to Train Your Dragon*, thus textual analysis would be appropriate method as tools for analysis.

According to McKee (cited in Ida 2011, p.41), textual analysis is ‘a way of gathering and analyzing information in academic research’. Along this line, he explained that textual analysis is interpretations that produced by the text. As a part of text, film has many signs that include many interpretations for the writer of the study. In addition, the writer starts to assume the issues emerging in *How to Train Your Dragon* in which cannot be taken for granted. Thus, based on this knowledge, Ida (2011, p.46) suggests that that textual analysis is starting from assumptions in which there is no single meaning but multiple meaning. In the case of film that included as a text, hence contains of many signs. Because, according to Thwaites et al (cited in Ida 2011, p. 40), text is a combination of signs. In addition, this signs can produce meaning that lead to multiple interpretations for the researchers. Thus, in order to know what the meaning of film as a text, cinematic representations such as shots, angles, properties, costume, or color, for

instances, cannot be separated in this analysis. In which through this cinematic representation can help to interpret the meaning of signs in the film.

3.2 Data Sources

The film of *How to Train your Dragon* directed by Chris Sanders and Dean DeBlois in 2010 under DreamWorks production is the primary source of this research. Within this research there are two sources. In order to open the hidden colonial discourses issues in this film, the writer takes this issue through Said's definition of orientalism. Meanwhile, secondary sources are also added to this research in order to strengthen this analysis. It includes materials such as scholarly journals, trustworthy articles, books, and previous thesis related to this research as well.

3.3 Scope and Limitations

To keep the study in the expected field, the topic of analysis of this study focuses on the hidden colonial discourse issue between hiccup and night fury which might give the impacts toward relationship between 'superior' and 'inferior' in the future. The main source of the study is the film of *How to Train Your Dragon* by Dean DeBlois and Chris Sanders under DreamWorks production in 2010. The aspect of narrative and non-narrative is considered in analyzing this study to support the writer's arguments. The writer focuses on the two main characters namely Hiccup and Toothless who are dominant in narrative and plot. Moreover, the non-narrative aspects will be included in this research. Therefore,

the other subjects outside the limitation will not be considered in the process of the study analysis.

3.4 Technique of Data Collection

The writer of the study will not follow the whole scenes to be analyzed in animated children film *How to Train Your Dragon*. The writer starts from capturing some scenes that portray the issues of colonial discourses in this film. In addition, transcribing dialogues that portray colonial discourses issue will be included as well. After that, those scenes which portray colonial discourses issue will be distinguished into narrative aspects and non-narrative aspects. Moreover, since the issues are the hidden colonial discourses, the writer needs to analyze in depth and carefully in capturing some scenes. Narrative aspects and non-narrative aspects will help this research to open the hidden colonial discourse issues in *How to Train Your Dragon*.

3.5 Technique of Data Analysis

After all data are collected, the next step is analyzing the images by using several techniques. Both of main techniques in analyzing the film are narrative aspects and non-narrative aspects. Those are needed as well as supporting data that cannot be separated in doing film analysis. The first technique to be analyzed is narrative aspects.

3.5.1 Narrative Aspects

In the context of film, narrative aspects consists two main sources that are story and plot. However, in order to know what the story means, we need to identify first the plot of the film. Plot is everything that the text explicitly presents 'what happen physically' (Cited in Ida 2011, p. 92). Moreover, the structure of plot starts from introduction of the story then to resolution of the story, and finally the conclusion. Giannetti explained that 'the story can be defined as the general subject matter, the raw materials of a dramatic action in chronological sequence. The plot, on the other hand, involves the storyteller's method of superimposing a structural pattern over the story'. In this sense, what happens physically is about the action of the characters in the film. Therefore, it is important to see the characters that perform the story into the plot. Syd Field argues (cited in Giannetti 2002, p. 345) "Action is character", "What a person does is what he is, not what he says". So that what the characters do can carry the messages of the story through their actions in the film.

Since the issue is the hidden colonial discourse that emerges in animated film *How to Train Your Dragon*, the writer divides into two sections in order to unpack the idea of hidden colonial discourses in the film by using Said's concept of orientalism in how colonial operated within discourses. Here, the two sections of analysis the issue of hidden colonial discourses:

a) Finding binary oppositions in the film.

It is the first strategy to unpack the hidden issue of colonial discourses in *How to Train Your Dragon*. According to Said

(1978, p. 13), binary oppositions had a significant function in constructing European identity which promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, the west 'us' and the strange (the orient, the east, 'them'). Thus, by examining the binary oppositions in this film, it can help the writer of the study to reveal the issue of hidden colonial discourses.

- b) Analyzing the hidden colonial discourses through signs and practices within the relationship of the two main characters in the film.

By finding binary opposition in the film, this strategy is used to take those signs and practices between the two characters in order to discover the hidden meaning represented in the film. It is suggested by Saussure (cited in Ashcroft 2000, p.53) that signs acquire meaning through their difference from other signs (and thus a culture may be identified by its difference from other cultures). Thus, by opening these invisible things through signs and practices, it will help the writer to reveal the issue of colonial discourses in *How to Train Your Dragon* in this research.

3.5.2 Non-Narrative Aspects

In order to strengthen this research, non-narrative aspects will be used as supporting data. In non-narrative aspects, there are the actions of actors which

carry the story to tell the audiences what the story means. Non-narrative aspects is used as cinematic technique that created by the authors of the film in telling stories through a film. Non-narrative aspects have important role in conveying the message of the film. According to Abrams (2001, p.93), a film's form is a combination of style and content in which the content is structured by the narrative while style is shaped by the film techniques employed. Thus, non-narrative holds significant role to help the authors tell the story of the film. In addition, cited by Giannetti (2002, p. 8) Andre Bazin, a great French critic said 'one way of understanding better what a film is trying to say is to know how it is saying it'. By knowing how the authors tell the story, it will help the viewers in understanding the content of the film. Therefore, non-narrative aspects play significant part in producing the meaning of the story.

As the same as the text, film has the same function to communicate or to deliver the messages toward the listeners. According to Monaco (2000, p. 157), film is like a language, and since it is like language, some of the methods that we use to study language might profitably be applied to a study of film. In this case, film has many elements that set in codes. Suggested by Monaco (2000, p.21), codes are the things we read in films. 'Film is all the possible sets of these codes; a specific film is a limited number of codes and sets of codes. Genres, careers, studios, national characters, techniques, and every other element (...)'. Therefore, in analyzing the film within cinematic representation such as shots, angles, costumes, properties, and color as codes can support how the idea of hidden colonial discourses emerge in the story.

As a system of communication, film has visual content that has some techniques called mise-en-scene. According to Bordwell (2006, p.127), mise-en-scene means staging an action, and it was first applied to the practice of directing plays. Since the film technique has important role in delivering the idea of the film, mise-en-scene is chosen to be analyzed in this research. Speidel (2006, pp. 1-8) stated that the visual codes of cinema may be broadly divided into mise-en-scene and montage. In this sense, Speidel described that mise-en-scene is 'literally, 'putting into the scene' but it is simply understood as everything which appears within the frame including setting, props, costume and make-up, lighting, behavior of performers, cinematography, and special effects'. It can be concluded that the elements of mise-en-scene can help the authors of the film in conveying the hidden meaning. Thus, this research focuses on the elements covered by mise-en-scene such as shots, angles, costumes, color, and properties in order to explore a meaning behind the text. However, the writer will only choose the mise-en-scene that shows the most significant issues.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS