

The Analysis of Amish's Purity Symbol in "Plain Truth" Novel by Jody Picoult

A. Ilah Nurul Falah^{1✉}, Muhammad Yahya², Ibrahim Ibrahim³, Ria Reski Agustiani⁴

¹ *Departement of Public Administration, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sinjai, South Sulawesi, Indonesia*

² *Department of Communication Sciences, Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia*

³ *Department of Public Administration Science, Universitas Pejuang Republik Indonesia, South Sulawesi, Indonesia*

⁴ *Department of English Literature, Universitas Negeri Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia*

✉ email: Ilahnurulfalah@umsi.ac.id

Received:

January 22, 2024

Revised:

February 1, 2024

Accepted:

February 3, 2024

Published:

February 3, 2024

ABSTRACT

The research aims to aanalysis of Amish's ppurity ssymbols in "Plain Truth" Novel by Jody Picoult. This research used descriptive qualitative method and semiotic approach in analyzing purity symbol. This research used Pierce's theory and combine with Kennedy's symbol theory. The instrument of the research is using note taking from the novel. The results of this research prove that there are three different types of symbols in novel Plain Truth, such as: Character, Object and, Action, while symbol of purity portray such as: Character explain who commit the purity, like Aaron Fisher, Object explained the purity of the object like beard man, Amish woman outfits, and buggy and horses.

Keywords: Amish; Novel; Purity; Symbol; Semiotic

INTRODUCTION

Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism place a strong emphasis on the notion of purity, or suddha, while various traditions may have differing views on the consequences of the ensuing moral cleansing. The goal is to cleanse the Buddhist practitioner's personality in order to achieve Nirvana and eradicate all moral and character flaws and defilements (kleshas like desire, ignorance, and rage).

In a bible, "BETH. With what shall a young man cleanse his way? When he shall keep thy word." Psalm, 119:9 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Matthew 5:8 (Jubilee bible). In human civilization, the foundation for harmony, wealth, and spiritual advancement is the kind individual. The citizen like that is dependent of the purity and the loyalty in the community. Most of the people of the community lost and declined by any chance, so the citizen must be protected and be guided into religious activity and become pure. The absence of any mixing or moderating addition defines purity as the state or characteristic of being pure.

The collection of orthodox Christian church fellowships with Swiss Anabaptist roots is collectively referred to as the "Amish." The Amish are renowned for their uncomplicated lifestyle, modest attire, and resistance to embracing several contemporary amenities. Amish children are not allowed to attend school past the age of 14, and Amish adults are not allowed to use a wide variety of productivity

enhancing technologies, including cars, electric tools and appliances, and many kinds of modern communication and information technology. Together, these rules reduce the wages of adult children. As a result, children who remain in the community spend less time working for a wage and more time caring for their parents. Parents incentivize children to remain in the community by committing to disinheriting children who leave (Hanson, 1989). For a number of reasons, many Amish and other minorities emigrated to Pennsylvania, which serves as the setting for Jodi Picoult's *Plain Truth* novel.

The Amish are incredibly devoted to their religion. They hold that Scripture should be interpreted and applied literally as God's word. They regard the biblical injunctions to keep oneself apart from worldly possessions seriously. They think that being worldly can prevent them from being near God and bring influences that could be harmful to their way of life and communities. The literary works are the cultural products that have social and values benefits because the works by the author reflect what has existed in the community, both the problems and solution offered by the writer through the works at that time (Irmawati et al., 2021). These values become part of the truth and identities of the ancestors' works. Therefore, preserving it and instilling it in the next generation is very important (Andharu et al., 2023).

This research used the semiotic approach. In term, semiotic derived from the ancient Greek word "semeion" which means "sign". Charles Sanders Peirce and Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) are two prominent individual who are frequently cited as the two founders of semiotics. Semiotics, the profound study of signs permeating the very fabric of human existence, unveils the enigmatic layers of meaning concealed within these symbolic manifestations (Harianja, 2023). In literary research, semiotic approach specially examined a literature which is seen to have its own system. While the system is dealing with technical issues, the mechanism of creation, expression and communication problems. Literary work according to view of semiotic has its own system that is a sign system or code. Sign or code in the literature according to Yunus (1998:76) can be called aesthetic which is potential that given in communication.

Semiotic or semiology is the terminology that refer to the same theory. Semiology, a word coined by Saussure, can sometimes refer to the Saussurean tradition, whereas semiotics can sometimes refer to the Peircean tradition. Semiology is more used in Europe while semiotics is used in America (Santoso 2003, 1).

According to Saussure in Chandler (2007, 2-3), it is feasible to imagine a science that investigates the function of signals in social interactions. It would be included under general psychology as it is a component of social psychology. We will refer to it as semiology (from the Greek word "sign," semeion). It would look at the rules that control signs and their nature. It is impossible to predict with certainty if it will exist because it does not yet. However, it has a location set out for it beforehand and a right to exist. This comprehensive science has several branches, linguistics being only one. Because the rules that semiology uncovers will also apply to linguistics, linguistics will be given a distinct position within the study of human knowledge.

Pierce in Hoed (2014, 5) defined semiotic as the study of signs. Peirce used the word "doctrine" to refer to a system of principles rather than a religious doctrine. Signs are the subject of semiotics. Sign is everything, physically or mentally, in the whole world or in the whole universe, in human's mind or in biology system of animal, which is given meaning by human. So that, sign is not only just the sign if it has any meaning. Peirce developed his own theories on the sign, semeiotic systems, and sign taxonomies in Chandler (2007, 29). Peirce proposed a triadic (three-part) model of the sign in contrast to Saussure's self-contained dyad model. This model consists of: The representamen: also known as the sign vehicle by certain theories, is the shape that the sign takes—it need not be material, though it is typically viewed as such. An object: something beyond the sign to which it refers (a referent) To qualify as a sign, all three elements are essential. An interpretant: the sense that is derived from the sign, not an interpreter. A sign is a combination of the thing being represented, the representation itself, and the interpretation of the representation by the interpreter.

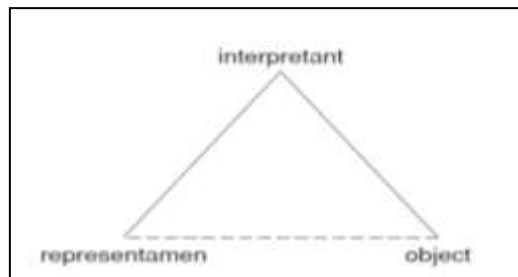


Figure 1.1 Peirce Semiotic Model

Three things above must be present for something to be considered a sign. The object, the representation, and the interpretation—the interpreter—are the three components that make up the sign. The broken line at the base of the triangle is intended to indicate that there is not necessarily any observable or direct relationship between the sign vehicle and the referent (Chandler 2007,29-30).

According to Saussure and Peirce, semiotics refers to the typical connection between a sign and an interpreter, or between a symbol and its referent, or meaning. The semiotic object is the content, not a referent, and the content must be defined as cultural unit (as cluster or as system of interconnected cultural units) (Eco 1976,62). For the researchers, semiotic is the study of how to interpret the sign. The sign itself is any kind of idea, emotion, and culture, that has been projected in real life.

Peirce provided several sign typologies, while Saussure did not. The division of signs that he considered to be the most essential has been extensively referenced in later semiotic research. Despite the fact that it is sometimes described as a categorization of various "types of signs," it is more helpful to understand it in terms of various "modes of relationship" between sign vehicles and the signified (object). In Peircean terms they are relationships between a representamen and its object or its interpretant, but for the purpose of continuity have continued to employ the Saussurean term signifier and signified (Peirce 1931-1958, 1867 in Chandler 2007).

Peirce in Sebeok (2001,10) classified signs into three parts, those are: A sign intended to emulate, mimic, or replicate its referent in any manner is called an icon.

Photographs may be iconic signs because they can be seen to reproduce their referents in a visual way. Onomatopoeic words are also iconic signs because they simulate their referents in an acoustic way. Commercially produced perfumes that are suggestive of certain natural scents are likewise iconic, because they simulate the scents in an artificial way. The manifestations of iconicity can be seen across species, suggesting that the ability to manufacture concrete simulative representations of the world, consciously or unconsciously, is a basic semiotic capacity in most life forms.

A symbol known as an index designates something or someone based on their existence, position within time or space, or relationship to another object or person. An indicator of a fire is smoke, which indicates its location. Similarly, a cough indicates a cold. Unlike icons, these signals identify or reveal where they are rather than replicating their referents. People all across the world use their index fingers to point out and find objects, people, and events in the world. This is the most common example of indexicality in action. Here, there, up, and down, for instance, all allude to the relative locations of objects as we talk, demonstrating the latent indexicality of many words about them.

The authors employ symbolism in order to elicit from their readers a variety of intellectual and emotional reactions from a person, thing, or event. Using a flag as a symbol, for instance, may evoke sentiments of patriotism or anti-patriotism in different people, or it could evoke a sense of danger, similar to a caution flag. A writer may elicit a wide range of emotions by employing symbols (McGee 1956,6).

There could be no literature, not even language, without symbols. What are words but symbols in and of themselves, virtually as random as the letters that make them up, just sounds of the voice to which we have consented to assign certain meanings just as we have agreed to convert these sounds into specific letter combinations? When the first man named every living thing, symbolism was born. Alternatively, it started in heaven when God created the universe by name. And it is here that we witness the very essence of symbolism in literature: a mode of representation that, at best, is approximative and, at worst, fundamentally arbitrary, until it acquires the power of convention, for an invisible reality perceived by the consciousness. Sometimes we are allowed to hope that that invisible truth is actually reflected in our convention, rather than just being indicated by it. If we have located a recognizable sign, we have accomplished a lot (Symons 1919, 1-2).

Symbol appears in many context and use to many function. Symbol represent other things. Symbol sometimes refers to other things, but it also insist the attention of itself as an object. Symbol also translate the mental concept to be real terminology. Last symbol is characterized by a translucence of the special (the species) in the individual or of the general (genus), above all, by the translucence of the eternal through an in the temporal (Wellek and Warren 2014, 219-220).

The researchers choose "Plain Truth" as the object because of Amish community is rarely becomes an object of research and which based on true events. This title of the novel also inspires people to make the TV series version of "Plain Truth" with the same title, and nominated in some TV awards. The researchers analyzed what symbol

that the author used to describe the purity of Amish community in “Plain Truth” novel.

In analyzing purity symbols in “Plain Truth” novel, the writer need to confront with Semiotic theory. According to Eagleton (2008) Semiotic or Semiology is the systematic study of sign. While according to Sebeok (2001) sign could appears in six form, and one of that form is symbol. In other word, Semiotic is the study of symbol. The following parts will explain further about semiotic definition by some theorists. It will be followed by two traditions or paradigm of Semiotics (Saussure and Pierce) as introduction of Semiotic approach. It will be followed by Pragmatics Semiotic theory, that will be used to analyze symbols. Then kinds of sign by Pierce (icon, index, and symbol).

METHOD

The design in this research was descriptive method. Descriptive method was used to give description and explanation about the symbols that are shown in “Plain Truth” novel by Jodi Picoult. In collecting data, the researchers used these steps, as follows: The first step was after data collected next was grouping data based on the formulation of the problem. The researchers used symbol classification based on Kirszner and Mandell (1994, 259) theory. Those classifications are: character, object, event, and setting.

The researchers used semiotic approach which formulated by Pierce (1931-1958, 2228). Peirce divided the important elements to analyze symbol by semiotic approach. Then it followed by Those important elements are representamen, object and interpretant. The process described as follows:

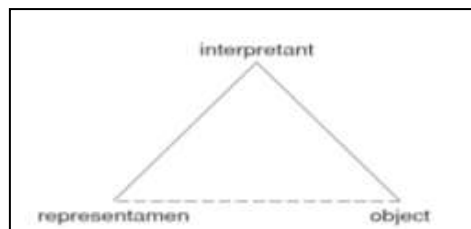


Figure 2. Pierce Semiotic Model

The researchers used these steps in analyzing data. The steps are: *The first* process was called representamen. The writer put the symbol that already has found in the representamen place. Representamen is the place of symbol that can be seen for the first time. *The second* process was called signifying order. The writer connects the symbol spontaneously with the writer's cognitive. The representament or the symbol will refer to an object (whether the object is real or not real) in the writer's cognitive. *The third* process was called semiosis. The writer interprets the symbol after the symbol or representamen has been connected with the object in the writer's cognitive. The interpreting process must refer the symbol to one conventional society or one particular culture.

In this research, the writer only did one time semiosis for each symbol. The writer then signified each symbol that had already analyzed to one particularly culture.

The result of the analysis is re-examined and may be reinforce in order to set accurate data in the study. Selected data and then analyze to answer all the problems statement in this research. Data that have been in the analysis then conclude so that research obtain the result in accordance with the problem statement.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

No.	Data	Types of Symbol	Purity Symbol	Meaning
1	"thank you. But we will not hire a lawyer for Katie, and go through the process in English court. That's not our way " (Picoult, 2000: 55)	Character	Aaron Fisher	In this novel, Aaron Fisher is very obedient to the rules of the amish and so keeps the amish life principle in him to keep him holy
2	"Aaron poured a small bucket of milk into a larger milk bucket. He was tall and dark-skinned, his arms filled with muscular pathways that arose from years of labor. His beard was long down to the buttons of his two shirts." (Picoult, 2000: 19)	Object	Beard	Beard is a symbol of purity because in the gospel it has been said that growing a beard is a duty and shaving it is an embarrassment.
3.	"The young woman is beautiful, with a typical German posture that always reminds lizzie on fresh cream and spring. She wore traditional amish clothing: a long-sleeved dress covered with black apron to knee-length" (Picoult, 2000:23)	Object	Amish Woman Outfits	In this novel, amish women's clothing is a symbol because of their simplicity in dress that symbolizes the principle of Christianity

- | | | | | |
|----|--|---------------------------|------------------------|---|
| 4. | "... Levi could not see samuel horse buggy coming, but he could hear the faint sound of his wheels" (Picoult, 2000:14) | Object
Buggy
Horses | and
Buggy
Horses | and
Buggy
Horses is a symbol because karna amish is forbidden to own a motor vehicle to avoid arrogance and remain as simple as the teachings of the community. |
| 5. | according to the rules of Ordnung, Sarah cannot drive with her exiled son; even eat one table... (Picoult, 2000 : 39) | Action
Ordnung | Ordnung | In this novel the ordnung is a symbol because the rules of ordnung rules are directly based on the biblical content. |

Discussion

The researchers recognized the information from Jodi Picoult's work "Plain Truth" that was used in this conversation. Kennedy's approach divides the many types of symbol revolt into five categories: object, character, light, location, and action. This technique of data analysis is then used to expose the symbol. In addition to categorizing the various types of symbols, the author also explains the significance of the Purity symbol, which are as follows:

Character

Aaron

Based on Triadic semiotic theory by Pierce (representamen, object, and interpretant) of Aaron it can be described as follows:

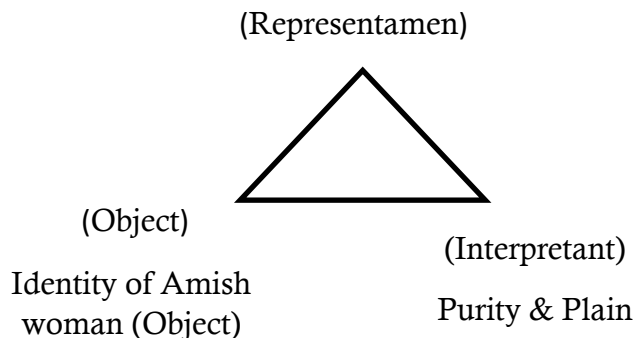


Figure 3. Auron Representamen

Aaron can be a representament. Representament is something that represent. It also the way people got and understood the sign for the first time. When we read the text, we found that the Aaron was the sign. The sign is something considered has meaning, and in this novel, it took the words form, Aaron. That's why the Aaron was representamen.

Object

Beard

Based on Triadic semiotic theory by Pierce (representamen, object, and interpretant) of Aaron it can be described as follows:

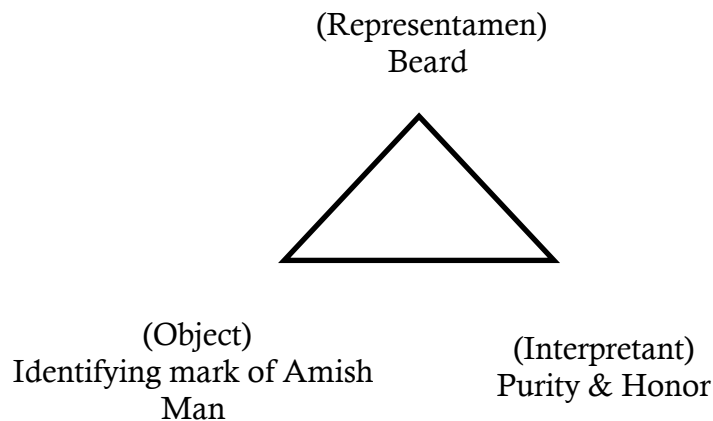


Figure 4. Beard representamen

Beard can be a representament. Representament is something that represent. It also the way people got and understood the sign for the first time. When we read the text, we found that the Beard was the sign. The sign is something considered has meaning, and in this novel, it took the words form, Beard. That's why the Beard was representament.

Identifying mark of Amish Man was an object. The object is spontaneous step in making the connection between the sign and the cognitive experience of people or interpreter. Additionally, the object is something other than the sign (or referent) to which it is related. Put another way, respondents referred to what they saw after seeing the sign as an item.

Purity can be an interpretant. Interpretant is the process in making connection between representamen and object. It is also called as the process of interpreting the sign. In other word, interpretant is a form of negotiation of sign-user in responding the sign, based on social, contextual or personal of the sign-maker.

Buggy and Horses

Based on Triadic semiotic theory by Pierce (representamen, object, and interpretant) of Aaron it can be described as follows:

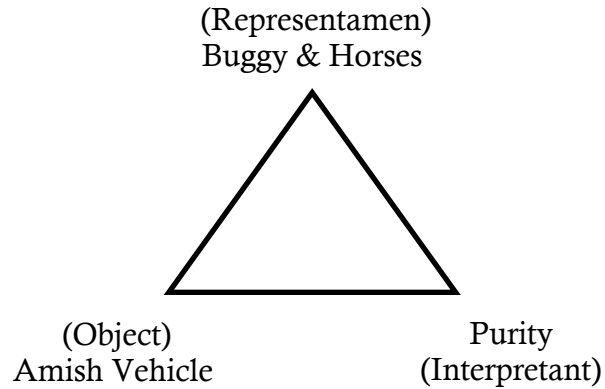


Figure 5. Buggy and Horses Representamen

Buggy & Horses can be a representamen. Representamen is something that represent. It also the way people got and understood the sign for the first time. When we read the text, we found that the Buggy & Horses was the sign. The sign is something considered has meaning, and in this novel, it took the words form, Buggy & Horse. That's why the Buggy & Horses was representamen.

Purity can be an interpretant. Interpretant is the process in making connection between representamen and object. It is also called as the process of interpreting the sign. In other word, interpretant is a form of negotiation of sign-user in responding the sign, based on social, contextual or personal of the sign-maker.

The purity of the Amish is based on a life of obedience and faithful to the community. The Amish people follow a fairly strict form of Christianity. They hold that Scripture should be interpreted and applied literally as God's word. They regard the biblical injunctions to keep oneself apart from worldly possessions seriously. They think that being worldly can prevent them from being near God and bring influences that could be harmful to their way of life and communities.

The Amish people have a deeply religious belief system that takes the Bible literally and regards it as the inspired word of God. They regard the biblical injunctions to keep oneself apart from worldly possessions seriously. They think that being worldly can prevent them from being near God and bring influences that could be harmful to their way of life and communities.

The Amish are not allowed to possess cars, even though their faith permits them to travel in buses, trains, and cars. In actuality, the vehicle is thought to pose the greatest threat to cultural purity and societal cohesion of all the material belongings.

It is said that having an automobile will cause social and cultural change to become so great that it would eventually destroy the Amish society. The Amish, on the other hand, travel throughout their community using horse-drawn carts or carriages. The average speed of these horse-drawn buggies is often between five and eight miles per hour. This sluggish pace is not an issue for the Amish because they don't often travel very far.

Action

Ordnung

Based on Triadic semiotic theory by Pierce (representamen, object, and interpretant) of Ordnung it can be described as follows:

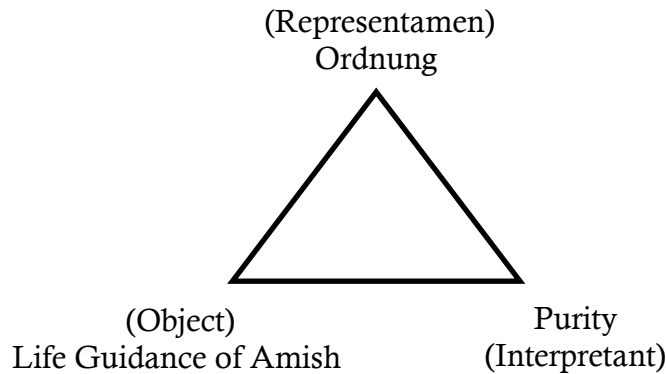


Figure 6. Ordnung Representamen

Ordnung can be a representamen. Representamen is something that represent. It also the way people got and understood the sign for the first time. When we read the text, we found that the Ordnung was the sign. The sign is something considered has meaning, and in this novel, it took the words form, Ordnung. That's why the Ordnung was representamen.

Life guidance of Amish was an object. The object is spontaneous step in making the connection between the sign and the cognitive experience of people or interpreter. The object is also something beyond the sign to which it refers (or a referent). In other word, what people referred after get the sign was called an object.

Purity can be an interpretant. Interpretant is the process in making connection between representamen and object. It is also called as the process of interpreting the sign. In other word, interpretant is a form of negotiation of sign-user in responding the sign, based on social, contextual or personal of the sign-maker.

The purity of the Amish is based on a life of obedience and faithful to the community. The Amish people have an extremely strict religious code. They hold that Scripture should be interpreted and applied literally as God's word. They regard the biblical injunctions to keep oneself apart from worldly possessions seriously. They think that being worldly can prevent them from being near God and bring influences that could be harmful to their way of life and communities.

The Ordnung does not cover other behaviors that are more widely accepted as immoral, such lying, cheating, and adultery, as they are seen as forbidden.

... Amish is accused of a major crime, although in history there has never been such a crime in the Amish community. Her mother said it without saying that using the phone is just the smallest of the row of sins she does. (Picoult, 2000: 45)

It is known that the gospel prohibits the existence of violence against others, this is the basis for the prohibition of legal or political involvement that has come out of the principle of simplicity that is recommended in the gospel.

In the Bible there is quite a lot of restrictions on making a picture of yourself or a statue. This is the basis of Amish rules for not letting outsiders take their pictures or make their own faces. You shall not make unto you any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: You shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them... (Exodus 20: 4-5). From the verse, the Amish make it the principle of life of their people, this is the main reason why the Amish refused to take pictures or photographed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researchers presented this research to the Department of English Language Studies, Unismuh Sinjai, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

REFERENCES

- Andharu, D., Widayati, W., Fadillah, M. R. I., & Pasopati, R. U. (2023). Grebeg Mantra Memetri of Wonosari Residents Village, Tukur District: A Semiotic Studies. *Journal Corner of Education, Linguistics, and Literature*, 3(2), 134–140. <https://doi.org/10.54012/jcell.v3i2.213>
- Beebe, Maurice. 1969. *Literary Symbolism: an Introduction to the Interpretation of Literature*. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing.
- B. Kraybill, Donald. 2011s. *The Riddle of Amish Culture*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press
- Chandler, Daniel. 2007. *Semiotics The Basics*. Second Edition; London: Routledge Press.
- Circlot, J.E. 1962. *Dictionary of Symbols*. Second Edition; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Coblay, Paul. 2002. *Semiotica for Beginner*. P.T. Mizan: Bandung.
- Duckart, Tracy. 2016. *Elements of Fiction: Symbolism*. United State; Humboldt State University
- Eagleton, Terry. 2008. *Literary Theory An Introduction*. United State: Blackwell Publishing.
- Eco, Umberto. 1976. *A Theory of Semiotics*. Canada: Indiana University Press.
- Hanson, R. (1989). Religion and the Family: The Case of Christian Fundamentalism. *Family Science Review*, 2(4). <https://doi.org/10.26536/fsr.1989.02.04.06>
- Harianja, M. (2023). Semiotic Meaning and Moral Value of “Mind Over Matters” Song By Young The Giant. *Journal Corner of Education, Linguistics, and Literature*, 3(2), 157–170. <https://doi.org/10.54012/jcell.v3i2.229>
- Hoed, Benny H. 2014. *Semiotik dan Dinamika Sosial Budaya*. Edisi Ketiga; Depok: Komunitas Bambu.
- Holy Bible : African American Jubilee Edition: King James Version. New York: American Bible Society, 1999.
- Hopkins, Jeffrey .2006. *Mountain Doctrine: Tibet's Fundamental Treatise on Other-Emptiness and the Buddha Matrix*. Snow Lion Publication
- Imran. 2013. *Analysis of Symbol in Dan Brown's Novel "The Lost Symbol"*. English

- and Literature Department Adab and Humanities Faculty: Alauddin State Islamic University.
- Irmawati, I., Arafah, B., Abbas, H., & Ali, H. (2021). *The Poverty Eradication Reflected in Ernest Miller Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms*. <https://doi.org/10.4108/eai.30-12-2020.2311280>
- Kuhnova, Katerina. 2012. *Becoming Amish*. Department of English and American Studies: Masaryk University Faculty of Arts.
- Kennedy, X.J. 2007. *Literature, An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry and Drama* (Tenth Edition). Harper Collins Publisher, New York
- Kirszner, Laurie g and Stephen R. Mandell. 1994. *Literature: Reading, Reacting, Writing*. Belmont; Wadsworth Publishing.
- Lancasterpa. (2018, July 19). *Amish People and Amish Culture*. Retrieved from <https://lancasterpa.com/amish/amish-people/>
- Lancasterpa. (2018, July 19). *Amish Faith & Beliefs*. Retrieved from <https://lancasterpa.com/amish/amish-faith/>
- McGee, Ratha Doyle. 1956. *Symbols; Signpost of Devotion*. London: The Upper Room.
- Putra, Muhammad. 2016. *Symbols in "Harry Potter and Philosopher's Stone*. English Literature: State University of Makassar.
- Ratna, Nyoman Kutha. 2004. *Teori, Metode dan Teknik Penelitian Sastra*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Belajar.
- Santosa, Riyadi. 2003. *Semiotika Sosial: Pandangan Terhadap Bahasa*. Surabaya: Pustaka Eureka dan JP Press Surabaya.
- Sebeok, Thomas A. 2001. *Sign: An Introduction to Semiotics*. Second Edition; London: University of Toronto Press.
- Symons, Arthur. 1919. *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*. London: Symons sonVirginia2012.pdf