CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. 1   Background to the study

Culture is the way of existence of its members: the gathering of thoughts and behaviour which they learn, share and transmit from generation to generation. Culture is "the complicated entire which includes knowledge, perception, art, regulation, morals, custom, and another competency acquired through man as a member of society" (Tylor, 1871). Culture impacts the level of knowledge and ideas contained within human thoughts so that during everyday life culture is abstract. According to Geertz (Geertz, 1973), Culture is "a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols." Culture, on any such view, is sort of a text—something that needs to be interpreted through the research of symbols (Geertz, 1973).

Culture can be represented using symbols, language, habits, the way of life and many more. Every place has different cultures, like in the US, it is okay to open a gift in front of the giver, but it is taboo to do that in Japan. Hall (2005: 18–20) defines representation as the ability to imagine or describe. Representation is important because culture is usually developed through meaning and language, which in this case is a symbolic form or a form of representation. Some works that use culture in their representation are Avatar: *The Way of Water* by James Cameron, *Moana* by Ron Clements and John Musker, *Brave* by Brenda Chapman and Mark Andrews, and *Raya and The Last Dragon* by Carlos Lopez Estrada and Don Hall.

Raya and The Last Dragon is one of the Walt Disney movies which is popular in 2021. This movie is about Raya and Sisu, the last dragons of Kumandra, and their struggle to find all the pieces of a magical gem in the hopes of restoring the nation to it is a previous, peaceful state. Kumandra was a wealthy land 500 years later when evil spirits known as the Druun began to ravage everything. They turned souls into stone by absorbing them. The dragons of Kumandra eventually used what power they had left to build an orb that warded off the Druun and brought everyone back to life, except the exception of the dragons who had turned to stone. All of the people are seeking the power of the orb, which finally led to the division of the populace into five distinct tribes known as Fang, Heart, Tail, Spine, and Talon. The orb was acquired by Heart Tribe, who have since protected it. 500 years later, Heart Tribe Chief Benga has been preparing his daughter Raya to protect the orb. He still has faith that all the nations would put aside their differences and return to becoming Kumandra. He decides to host a feast for all nations. Because they share a similar interest in dragons, Raya ends up becoming friends with Namaari, the daughter of the Fang Tribe's Chief Virana. Namaari offers Raya a dragon pendant, and Raya shows her where the orb is. Raya is betrayed by Namaari, and the Fang Tribe soon attempts to steal the orb. When the other tribes discover out, a fight ensues, and the orb is shattered. The Druun revives and each tribe steals pieces of the orb. Benga tells Raya to leave while he turns into stone when Raya tries to save him. Six years later, Raya has been looking for the stream's end to call Sisu, the only dragon of the species still alive and the one who is thought to have created the orb, to assist her

in finding the orbs missing pieces. She succeeds to summon Sisu and finds herself amid the remnants of the desert-like Tail Tribe.

In this study, the writer intends to examine how *the Raya and The Last Dragon* movie represented Southeast Asian Cultures. This movie showed us see social conditions at a particular time and place. In addition, what makes this movie interesting is how explicitly or implicitly this movie shows the tradition, cultures, and life of Southeast Asian people featured in this movie. The researcher found some symbols that indicated the development of cultural representation as heredity from extrinsic elements through the object, character, action and self-defence.

1. 2   Statement of the Problem

To help the writer analyse the film, the writer composes the statement of the problem as the following:

1. What Southeast Asian cultural symbols are represented in the Raya and The Last Dragon Movie (2021)?

2. How Southeast Asian cultures are represented in the Raya and The Last Dragon Movie (2021)?

1. 3   Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to follow the problems mentioned above as follows:

1. To describe the Southeast Asian cultural symbols that are represented in the Raya and The Last Dragon Movie (2021).

2. To explain the representation of Southeast Asian cultures in the Raya and The Last Dragon Movie (2021).

1. 4 Scope of the Study

The scope of this research is limited to discussing symbols, icons, and indexes that represent Southeast Asian cultures in Film Raya and The Last Dragon.

1. 5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this research is to provide knowledge to the readers, especially English Literature students who have studied representation to find out how Disney movie represents the culture of Asian countries, especially Southeast Asian countries in this movie. This research can also be used as a reference for understanding Southeast Asian cultures in the study of literature, especially through film.

1. 6 Approach to the study

In this research, the researcher uses qualitative research with a structuralist approach. Structuralism, says, Genette, "is a study of the cultural construction or identification of meaning according to the relations of signs that constitute the meaning-spectrum of the culture." The approach contains two things; they are intrinsic and extrinsic elements. Both of them analyze the symbol of a culture that is represented in the Raya and The Last Dragon Movie. The symbol is a sign of meaning as difference; the binaries which the culture uses/enact to create its meanings; binaries which, of course, disunite and join. In the intrinsic element, the

researcher only uses the setting of place to analyze this movie. Meanwhile, in the extrinsic element, the researcher uses socio-culture and society to analyze this movie. The data collection technique used were; first, watching the movie to get an understanding, to check and collect the data. Second, reading the script of the story refers to the data. The last, selecting the scenes (capture the scenes) that indicate the cultural representation.

To analyse the data, the researcher used two theories from the experts to explain the data based on the cultural representation in the movie Raya and The Last Dragon. The first is using the theory from Stuart Hall (1997), that is the theory of Representation. Stuart hall defines: Representation means by using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent, a meaningful world, to others, besides, representation is an important part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of the culture. The other theory researcher used is Pierce's theory. This theory uses signs as an account of significance, representation, reference and meaning. He used three concepts in his theory, they are a symbol, an icon, and an index.

1. 7 Organization of the Paper

This paper is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction that includes the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, the approach of the study and the organization of the paper. The second chapter consists of the synopsis of the film and the biography of the director. The third chapter consists of the review of related literature that includes the previous study, the

definition of popular culture, film and its genre, the theory applied and the important terminologies. The fourth chapter consists of an analysis and discussion. Finally, the last chapter is the conclusion and suggestion.