

## Roland Barthes Semiotic Analysis in Turning Red Movie

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### ABSTRACT

Turning Red, a Disney Pixar animated film from 2022, tells the sudden transformation of Mei, a 13-year-old teenager who turns into a red panda when her emotions burst. The film highlights the complex relationship between Mei and her mother, focusing on interpersonal communication as a cause of conflict. This research utilizes Roland Barthes' semiotics theory to analyze symbols and meanings in the Mother-Child communication. Using a qualitative descriptive method, the analysis is conducted on 19 scenes from the film. The results emphasize the importance of effective communication and conflict management, along with the role of parenting styles in influencing the Mother-Child relationship.

### KEYWORDS

Interpersonal  
Communication,  
Semiotics  
Analysis, Turning  
Red Film

### INTRODUCTION

According to Cangara (Saragih, 2018), mass media conveys information or messages to the audience through intuitive communication tools, such as radio, TV, newspapers, books, films, etc. Meanwhile, Praktio (cited in Saragih, 2018) states that mass communication cannot be separated from mass media, as media is one of the communication tools. Mass media is then utilized as the implementation of using media to serve as a platform for mass communication (Saragih, 2018). The film is considered an effective mass communication medium for delivering messages to a broad audience due to its audio-visual nature and the story's narrative flow (Asri, 2020). Therefore, film has a significant influence on shaping the mindset and perspective of society towards various issues. Additionally, films can be used for socialization and cultural publication, given their persuasive nature (Asri, 2020).

In Indonesia, people spend more time watching films, especially during the pandemic. The lockdown has led to an increase in interest in watching movies to overcome boredom. The availability of streaming applications such as Netflix, Disney+, Disney Hotstar, Viu, and others has made it easier for viewers to access content. These applications allow viewers to enjoy films anytime and anywhere, even during lockdowns when cinemas are closed. Data from money.kompas.com states that in January-March 2022, Disney Hotstar Indonesia had 5 million subscribers. According to data published by Media Partner Asia, there are 17.4 million subscribers to various streaming applications in Indonesia. The report also indicates that Indonesia remains a competitive arena and a benchmark for streaming application providers (Auliani, 2022).

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As social beings, humans are generally considered to be engaged in communication, particularly in the form of communication. Interpersonal communication is a social process in which individuals influence each other through the exchange. Interpersonal communication is exchanging messages between people, with effects and responses that can be directly perceived. In the context of humans as social beings, the family, especially the role of the mother, takes center stage. Communication styles can vary in every family, and age differences and generational gaps can pose challenges for children and parents. One impact of these communication issues is the loss of trust in children towards their parents, resulting in limitations in sharing daily feelings or experiences due to responses that do not meet the parent's expectations. This usually occurs due to different expectations of children in viewing a particular issue (Ramadhana, 2018).

Based on research conducted by McKinsey & Company, as revealed by Yoanita (2022), it was concluded that most teenagers, especially those from Generation Z, feel that their parents are overly controlling and strict. Maulana Rezi Ramadhan (Ramadhan, 2018), in a journal on Self-Disclosure in Parent-Child Communication in Adolescents with Authoritarian Parenting Styles, concluded from 71 research respondents that 41% of them felt less involved in discussions about life decisions, such as school choices, tutoring locations, and others. This makes children tend to be less confident in speaking openly with their parents (Ramadhana, 2018).

The numerous issues between children and parents, experienced by many people, have inspired many films with similar themes. One of them is an animated film titled "Turning Red," produced by Pixar Animation Studios, released by Walt Disney Pictures, and directed by Domee Shi. Rosalie Chiang, Sandra Oh, and Ava Morse are the voice actors in this film, which can be watched through the Disney+ or Disney Hotstar app.

**Image 1. Turning Red Movie Poster**



Source: Disney (2022)

"Turning Red" tells the story of Mei Lin Mei Lee, a 13-year-old teenager from a family with a family shrine and ancestral traditions. Despite being cheerful and intelligent, Mei struggles communicating with her protective mother. One day, she realizes that communicating power to transform into a Red Panda, an inheritance from her ancestor, Sun Yee. Her mother, Ming, informs Mei about a ritual to lock in this power during the red full moon. However, Mei must learn to control the emotions that trigger this transformation. At school, she confines her friends about her issues, and they help her cope with these sudden changes. When Mei wants to attend a concert of her favorite band, 4 Town, Ming firmly refuses, sparking a heated argument that further distance lies

to her mother, trying to get money for the concert. When her deception is revealed, it leads to a significant conflict between Mei and Ming.

The researcher chose the theme of communication between parents and children in the film "Turning Red" because it reflects common issues in family communication, especially between parents and children. Children often want to experience more things but feel awkward due to the primitive and rigid views of their parents. The researcher aims to explain this film's denotative and connotative meanings from the perspective of Roland Barthes' semiotics. The study utilizes semiotics focusing on denotation, connotation, and myths to analyze the communication focusing on parents and children in the film "Turning Red." Based on this background, the research focuses on How the interpersonal communication between the mother and child exists in "Turning Red"?

Canggara, as cited in (Criscentia, 2021), states that mass communication utilizes mass media in delivering its messages. Mass media used to communicate with the audience includes television, newspapers, social media, and other communication tools. Meanwhile, Bungin, as mentioned in (Criscentia, 2021), defines mass media as a communication medium whose information dissemination coincides and is accessible to a broad audience. Mass media can also refer to messages, news, opinions, entertainment, and more—mass media plays for spreading messages, news, opinions, entertainment, and others.

Mass media has several characters, and its management involves several individuals or institutions, not just individuals. This means that collecting and distributing information does not depend on one person. Secondly, mass media is one-way, where the message sender and receiver do not depend on each other. The following characteristic is that communication through mass media is widespread and simultaneous, allowing information to reach many people simultaneously. Following ours, mass media uses mechanical tools such as TV, radio, newspapers, films, and other devices. Lastly, in mass media simultaneously, all information or messages conveyed can be accepted by the general audience without restriction (Criscentia, 2021)

Film is a communication medium that uses moving images and has a storyline to convey messages to the audience. Putri, as cited in (Criscentia, 2021), states that a mass medium has no limits in scope because it involves continuous visualization and taste between one another. In general, the term "film" comes from the word line with no limits inates from the word cinema meaning motion, tho/photos meaning light, and graph meaning writing and images. Thus, cinematography can be interpreted as depicting pictures by light (Suryadi, 2022).

Sumarno, as cited in (Suryadi, 2022), categorizes, es films into two types. First, fiction films are fictional and not based on real stories but often on everyday issues and are commercial. Disney's film "Turning Red" falls into the category of fiction films as it addresses everyday life topics and is commercial. Second, non-fiction films are divided into two types: factual films that present facts and actual events and documentary films that show the filmmaker's subjectivity by containing opinions or views on an event and influencing the audience's perception (Suryadi, 2022).

Semiotics is the science that studies signs and is considered crucial in enhancing communication effectiveness. Initially associated with language, semiotics was later applied to art and science. Roland Barthes developed a semiotic theory that is divided into denotation and connotation. Denotation is the relationship between the signifier and the signified in reality, making denotation a signifier of connotation (Pratiwi, 2022). Meanwhile, connotation is defined as a representation of the interactions that will arise when the emotions and feelings of the audience meet the sign. Connotation is subjective, and its presence is often not directly realized. Barthes (Criscentia, 2021) discusses how humanity assigns meaning to things. In this context, assigning meaning is different from communicating. Thus, Barthes views significance as a process with a well-organized structure and sees social life as significant (Criscentia, 2021).

Sobur, as mentioned in (Criscentia, 2021) explains that denotation at the first level is the direct meaning or the actual meaning, often misunderstood as a reference. At this level, the traditional significance process can also be referred to as denotation, indicating the use of language with a meaning corresponding to the uttered words. However, in Roland Barthes' theory, denotation is positioned at the first level of the signification system, making denotation tend to be linked to the closed nature of meaning (Criscentia, 2021).

The connotation in Barthes' theory is associated with ideological activities referred to as myths and functions as the instigator and validator of dominant values over some time. Budiman, as cited in (Criscentia, 2021), states that the term connotation is used as a signifier for the second stage of the signification system, referring to the Latin word that means to be a sign and tends towards different cultural meanings in communication. Pratiwi (Criscentia, 2021) explains that connotative involves a combination of denotative meaning and all the images, memories, and feelings that arise when the senses interact with the sign (Criscentia, 2021).

Barthes considers myths a form of language, explaining that myths can be interpreted as a system of communication and messages. The meaning of myths, according to Barthes, differs from its ordinary meaning, as he views myths as a form of development from the connotative meaning that has been present in society for a long time. In the context of the semiological system, Barthes regards myths as a sign system interpreted by humans. According to Hoed, as mentioned in (Criscentia, 2021), the language used in myths requires specific conditions before becoming an acceptable myth to society, so the discourse in myths is not arbitrary.

## **METHOD**

This research employs a qualitative research method. Kirk and Miller state in (Criscentia, 2021) that qualitative research methods are used to obtain new theories and concepts for a problem or to develop existing theories and ideas. This research method focuses more on descriptive aspects, providing detailed explanations about the ongoing situation and not on the consequences or explaining individual behavior (Criscentia, 2021). In this study, the researcher will not directly participate in and engage in the activities to be

examined but will only act as an observer, ensuring no influence on the dynamics of the studied object.

The semiotic method analyzes, dissects, and expresses meaning as text. This interpretative and subjective research requires each interpretation behind each sign to involve each individual's thinking power, experiences, culture, and emotions (Criscentia, 2021). The semiotic model used in this research is Roland Barthes' model, which includes two primary significance levels. The first is denotation, and the second is connotation (Criscentia, 2021).

Primary data are obtained from the film "Turning Red," produced by Walt Disney in 2022, which serves as the primary data source for this research. However, only 25 pre-determined scenes will be used as the data source in this study. This data will be obtained through direct observation by watching the film on the Disney+ application and capturing relevant scenes. Meanwhile, secondary data are research information that can be obtained from various existing sources, such as journals, books, previous reports, and the internet. Secondary data sources for this research will primarily be sought from relevant journals, books discussing the used theories, and other credible sources accessible through the internet.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

In the analysis of this research, the researcher employs Roland Barthes' semiotic method with a qualitative descriptive approach. The researcher will select and describe scenes that reflect interpersonal communication between the mother and child in the film "Turning Red" through words. The first stage involves watching the entire movie to observe all the scenes. The second stage consists of selecting scenes by the research problem formulation, namely the analysis of the mother-child interpersonal communication using Roland Barthes' semiotics in the film. Next, the selected scenes are analyzed based on denotation, connotation, and myth. The researcher initially identified 25 scenes reflecting interpersonal communication between the mother and child in the film "Turning Red."

In the scene analysis, there are several separate stages. The first stage is selection, where the researcher chooses scenes in "Turning Red" that reflect interpersonal communication between the mother and child. The second stage involves analyzing the selected scenes using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory to identify the denotation, connotation, and myth of the 25 chosen scenes. This analysis helps the researcher discover meanings that represent the research problem formulation. The denotation of each scene is identified and analyzed to generate connotations and myths that emerge. The next stage is interpretation, where the researcher eliminates six scenes deemed less relevant, resulting in 19 scenes with a total duration of 36 minutes and 12 seconds. The final stage involves concluding interpersonal communication between the mother and child in the film "Turning Red."

**Image 2. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (06.13 – 07.22)**



Source: Disney (2022)

**Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is Mei being fed by her mother before she answers the question her mother gives her.

**Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is Mei saying in her monologue that, although many of her decisions are influenced by her mother, she is an independent child. Mei's mother has indeed determined Mei's aspirations.

**Myth**

The myth in this scene is that many Asian parents have already planned what their child's future will be, forcing their children to comply with their parents' wishes (Marta et al., 2023).

**Image 3. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (09.30 – 10.56)**



Source: Disney (2022)

**Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is Mei's small family getting ready for dinner. The scene also portrays the warmth of Mei's small family, where Mei and her mother watch a movie together until an advertisement promoting Mei's favorite band appears.

**Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is that Mei and her mother have similar ways of thinking, as seen from their shared opinions about the movie they are watching. Thus, when Mei's mother expresses her dislike for Mei's favorite band, Mei becomes hesitant to show her liking for the band.

**Myth**

The myth in this scene is that Mei's mother's communication pattern indirectly controls and limits what Mei is allowed and not allowed to like (Marta et al., 2023). Both scenes in images 2 and 3 reflect Mei's mother's authoritarian parenting style, where the mother

shows unwillingness to be contradicted, creating fear in Mei to reject her mother's wishes. The key to the Chinese parenting style is the expectation of reciprocity between the child and the parent. In this case, reciprocity involves the child respecting and obeying the parent's desires. (Rose & Safana, 2022)

Although Mei's mother fulfills Mei's physical and financial needs, Mei's freedom to express opinions and act is limited because she has to comply with her mother's desires. Similarly, Mei's mother's communication pattern influences the message delivery process within a family, and the expression of these messages will then affect a person's behavior and attitude (Marta et al., 2023). Mei's mother does not allow Mei to answer her question and immediately feeds a piece of baozi into Mei's mouth.

Mei's monologue about her mother influencing many of her decisions also indicates her mother's authoritarian parenting style. Similarly, Mei's reaction after her mother disapproves of Mei's favorite band, 4-TOWN, through her tone changing unfriendly when the advertisement about 4-TOWN appears on TV. Mei is forced to abandon her intention to express her interest in front of her mother to respect her mother's opinion.

**Image 4. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (08.10-09.25)**



Source: Disney (2022)

### **Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is Mei and her mother giving each other a high five to celebrate their success at work that day.

### **Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is that Mei and her mother have a close relationship, especially since they spend the whole day together conducting customer temple tours.

### **Myth**

The myth in this scene is that, as stated (Baharuddin, 2019), mothers and daughters have a strong emotional bond.

**Image 5. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (13.00-14.05)**



Source: Disney (2022)

### **Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is a close-up shot of Mei's blushing face as she is embarrassed, looking at her mother scolding the man depicted in her notebook at the man's workplace.

### **Connotation**

In this scene, Mei feels embarrassed because her mother scolds an innocent man due to a picture in her notebook, leading her mother to misunderstand. Furthermore, her mother rejects Mei's explanation and the man's explanation that he doesn't even know Mei.

### **Myth**

The myth in this scene is that parents tend to believe their children are always right. Therefore, Mei's mother refuses to listen to Mei's and the man's explanations because she thinks she knows Mei very well. She trusts that Mei is a good and innocent child, so the fault must lie with the man.

**Image 6. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (22.20-23.30)**



Source: Disney (2022)

### **Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is Mei's mother spying on her at school, hiding behind a tree on Mei's school grounds. She wears sunglasses and a scarf to conceal her face.

### **Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is Mei's protective mother deciding to watch over Mei at school secretly, but her suspicious behavior leads to her being caught by the security guard. When Mei sees her mother being apprehended, she pretends not to know her and runs to the bathroom.

### **Myth**

The myth in this scene is that parents have great love and concern for their children, but their way of expressing concern often goes astray, making the child uncomfortable like Mei, who chooses to ignore her mother.

**Image 7. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (22.18-29.50)**



Source: Disney (2022)



### **Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is Mei's mother trying to comfort Mei and giving reassuring statements to her.

### **Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is Mei's mother stating that she has gone through the same thing and was able to overcome it, so she believes Mei can overcome it, too, using the same approach. Mei's mother promises to always be by her daughter's side for every step she takes in the future.

### **Myth**

The myth in this scene is that parents often feel that when their child faces a problem similar to what they experienced, the solution taken is the same as the solution to their past issues.

**Image 8. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (36.10-37.42)**



Source: Disney (2022)

### **Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is Mei's mother expressing joy that Mei can control her emotions, avoiding suddenly turning into a red panda. She asks Mei what she does to control her emotions.

### **Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is when Mei mentions that she imagines the faces of the people she loves the most to control her emotions, initially referring to her friends. However, when her mother shows a touched expression, Mei changes her statement, saying that her parents are the ones she loves the most.

### **Myth**

The myth in this scene is that children often lie to their parents to avoid disappointing them. Upon seeing the touched expression on her mother's face, Mei immediately fabricates a story, indicating that she chooses to lie to avoid disappointing her mother.

These five scenes depict the interpersonal relationship between Mei and her mother. The closeness portrayed in Image 4 makes Mei's mother feel she knows her daughter well. Consequently, she rejects explanations from others in Image 5 and angrily scolds the man depicted in Mei's notebook.

The closeness convinces Mei's mother that her daughter couldn't possibly engage in negative behavior, as depicted in Mei's drawings. Therefore, she confidently reprimands the man represented. Despite her deep affection for Mei, Mei's mother often expresses her love inappropriately, as shown in Image 6, where she worries and wants

to bring Mei a forgotten sanitary napkin. However, her attempt to hide and arouse suspicion from the school security guard leads to her arrest, causing a commotion.

Unfortunately, Mei feels embarrassed by her mother's behavior, secretly following her to school, prompting Mei to pretend not to know her rather than approaching her directly. In Image 7, Mei's mother believes that Mei's current problem can be solved by handling how she dealt with a similar issue. This approach doesn't consider the environmental differences that can influence the challenges and outcomes between her and her daughter.

Mei's mother's confident way of speaking indicates her belief in the effectiveness of the method she used before, providing comfort to Mei. Image 8 shows that Mei feels more comfortable with her friends than with her parents, as imagining her friends brings her a sense of tranquility. Mei thinks that her friends understand her feelings better than her parents. During adolescence, children start to explore different perspectives, and peers' opinions become more crucial than their parents (Baharuddin, 2019).

Therefore, peers significantly influence teenagers like Mei more than their parents (Alfi Karimah et al., 2016). However, when Mei sees the emotional expression on her mother's face, she lies and says that her parents are the people she loves the most in the world, who can calm her and prevent her from turning into a red panda.

**Image 9. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (12.20-12.40)**



Source: Disney (2022)

### **Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is Mei's attempt not to glance at her fallen notebook so that her mother doesn't notice it, but her efforts fail.

### **Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is that Mei does not want her mother to see the contents of her notebook, but Mei's mother ignores Mei's prohibition and continues to chatter about what Mei is studying. She only stops when she sees a picture of Mei and a boy dating in Mei's notebook.

### **Myth**

The myth in this scene is that children tend to conceal many things from their parents because most parents are unwilling to listen to their children's explanations, as demonstrated by Mei's mother, who continues to open Mei's notebook despite Mei's objections.

**Image 10. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (12.43-13.00)**



Source: Disney (2022)

**Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is Mei's mother appearing angry upon seeing the pictures in Mei's notebook. She asks Mei many questions about the images, but Mei is busy trying to pull the book away from her mother.

**Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is Mei's mother feeling very angry when seeing the pictures in Mei's notebook. She refuses to listen to Mei's explanations, ultimately deciding to draw her conclusions about the images.

**Myth**

The myth in this scene is Mei's mother ignoring Mei's explanations and drawing her conclusions according to the reality she wants. Listening is essential for maintaining and developing interpersonal relationships, but Mei's mother seems to lack that ability.

**Image 11. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (16.50-18.36)**



Source: Disney (2022)

**Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is Mei's mother looking worried about Mei and attempting to open the bathroom curtain where Mei is hiding. However, she failed due to the burnt smell of her cooking porridge.

**Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is Mei's mother disregarding Mei's request to go away and leave her alone in the bathroom. The mother insists on opening the curtain covering Mei before being thwarted by the burnt smell of her cooking.

**Myth**

The myth in this scene is that many parents often cross the boundaries of their children's privacy, as Mei's mother forces herself to see Mei's condition in the bathroom even after a firm rejection. Her mother ignores Mei's loud protests.

**Image 12. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (48.15-49.20)**



Source: Disney (2022)

**Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is Mei refusing her mother's request to join her in her study session. Her rejection is ignored by her mother, who acts as if Mei isn't saying anything. It escalates until Mei snaps at her mother, expressing that she doesn't want her presence.

**Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is Mei lying to her mother; she doesn't intend to do her homework. However, Mei's mother behaves as if she doesn't hear Mei, disregarding Mei's wishes. This angers Mei, leading her to snap at her mother unintentionally.

**Myth**

The myth in this scene is that parents who are too strict with their children will turn them into liars. Parents whose desires are rarely contradicted will be surprised when their child rebels like Mei's mother, who is shocked when Mei not only resists but even raises her voice in defiance.

In the scene depicted in image 9, Mei tries not to act suspiciously so that her mother doesn't see the contents of her notebook. However, her eyes accidentally glimpse her fallen notebook from under the bed, causing her mother to notice its presence. Her mother picks it up and checks its contents, ignoring Mei's prohibition. Mei's mother suddenly falls silent upon seeing a picture of Mei and a young man in a relatively mature pose. Naturally, Mei's mother becomes angry. In the scene depicted in image 10, she questions Mei about whether the young man did the things portrayed in the picture. However, Mei's explanations are ignored, and her mother concludes the picture. Even when Mei tries to retrieve her notebook, her mother refuses, leading to a tug-of-war between them. Meanwhile, in the scene depicted in image 11, Mei's mother insists on inspecting Mei's condition in the bathroom despite Mei vehemently refusing and even shouting at her. Mei's outburst momentarily surprises her mother, but it doesn't stop her mother from pulling back the curtain where Mei is hiding.

The three scenes illustrate an authoritarian parenting style where the child has little control over many aspects of their life, including providing privacy for the child to solve their problems. This is further explained in (Rose & Safana, 2022), stating that in an authoritarian parenting style, a mother often does not give sufficient privacy to her child entering adolescence. The lack of privacy provided by Mei's mother results in Mei unintentionally rebelling against her mother when she insists on participating in Mei's study activities. Mei's mother ignores Mei's rejection and continues chattering as if her daughter is not saying anything, reflecting authoritarian parenting where the parents

disregard the child's opinions. Mei's outburst is undoubtedly surprising for her mother, who is accustomed to Mei being obedient and always respecting her. However, the dramatic changes in cognitive, social, and emotional aspects significantly impact interpersonal relationships, making personal boundaries crucial during adolescence (Marta et al., 2023).

**Image 13. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (14.05-14.20)**



Sumber: Disney (2022)

### **Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is Mei sitting in the car with her mother. Her mother asks if there is anything else she needs to know, and Mei responds by shaking her head and forming a fist with her hand.

### **Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is that, although Mei smiles and tells her mother there is nothing else she needs to know, the camera focuses on Mei's clenched fist by her side, indicating suppressed emotions.

### **Myth**

The myth in this scene is that Mei's clenched fist suggests her reluctance to express her true feelings to her parents. Openness between a child and parents creates effective communication, and Mei's closed-off demeanor hinders their communication effectiveness.

**Image 14. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (38.01-40.00)**



Source: Disney (2022)

### **Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is Mei's mother refusing permission to go to a concert, leading to a heated argument. Mei eventually gives in, albeit with suppressed anger. Mei's mother only stops her angry rant when she receives a call from Mei's grandmother.

### **Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is that Mei yields to her mother despite being secretly angry

and upset. Mei's mother continues to angrily express her disapproval of Mei's behavior until she is interrupted by the phone call. It becomes evident that the relationship between Mei's mother and her mother (Mei's grandmother) is not very good.

### **Myth**

The myth in this scene is that a child, even when upset and disagreeing with their parents' decisions in an authoritarian upbringing, is forced to comply. Similarly, the strained relationship between parents and children is often perpetuated across generations, as seen in Mei's mother's relationship with Mei's grandmother.

**Image 15. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (55.50-56.30)**



Source: Disney (2022)

### **Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is Mei's mother checking Mei's room and discovering that Mei sneaked out without her permission. Mei's mother also finds Mei's belongings, red panda merchandise, under Mei's bed.

### **Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is Mei's mother being extremely angry upon finding Mei absent from her room and sneaking out. Her anger intensifies upon seeing the red panda merchandise, indicating that Mei has frequently transformed into a red panda without her knowledge.

### **Myth**

The myth in this scene is that parents may not be aware that one reason for their child's lies is their overly protective attitude, which can make the child reluctant to be honest.

**Image 16. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (82.00-83.30)**



Source: Disney (2022)

### **Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is Mei seeing a teenage version of her mother in limbo, crying. Mei approaches her and starts a conversation.

### **Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is that the teenage version of Mei's mother cries because she feels guilty for going against her mother. Despite her efforts, she is saddened by the fact that she failed to be a perfect child for both her parents. Mei then comforts her and says she understands her mother's feelings.

### **Myth**

The myth in this scene is that the young version of Mei's mother experienced the same feelings that Mei is currently experiencing, as the parenting style she used on Mei is similar to the one her parents used on her.

In the scene depicted in image 13, Mei states that there is nothing more her mother needs to know. However, her clenched fists reveal her suppressed emotions while speaking, and the smile she directs at her mother appears forced. Due to the authoritarian parenting style applied by her mother, Mei becomes highly cautious in her demeanor, choosing to withhold her emotions and refrain from saying anything more to her mother. From the beginning, Mei's mother, who refused to listen to Mei's explanations, created ineffective communication between them. Effective communication requires openness between parents and children (Elly Junalia et al., 2020). Openness is built on positive support, closeness, and trust (Elly Junalia et al., 2020).

Meanwhile, Mei chooses to remain silent and not openly express her emotions to her mother because her mother tends to disregard Mei's statements. Consequently, Mei does not feel positive support and trust from her mother. In scene 15, Mei's mother becomes angry and surprised upon discovering Mei's lie. Mei's mother never expected her obedient child to deceive her. Mei's mother fails to realize that Mei's lies stem from her authoritarian parenting style, creating an environment where Mei doesn't feel safe and supported, leading her to resort to lying.

In scene 14, Mei becomes angry because her mother refuses to give her permission to attend a concert she likes. They briefly argue until Mei decides to give in, though her smile appears forced. She even turns her face away as she passes her mother to enter her room. Mei's behavior angers her mother, but their argument is interrupted by a call from Mei's grandmother. Mei's grandmother, aware of Mei's panda issue, decides to come and help resolve the problem. Mei's mother rejects her assistance, insisting she can handle the situation. However, Mei's grandmother insists on coming and hangs up abruptly, ignoring Mei's mother. The fearful tone in Mei's mother's voice when facing her grandmother suggests that she, too, received an authoritarian upbringing from her grandmother. This is evident when Mei's grandmother ends the call unilaterally, similar to how Mei's mother treated Mei.

The poor relationship between parents and children often occurs across generations (Marta et al., 2023). It states that intergenerational transmission in parenting styles can occur when parental parenting styles are influenced by personal experiences, specifically how they were raised. In scene 16, we can observe how Mei's mother, when she was young, felt she had failed to be a good child to her parents. Mei's mother says she had tried her best but always fell short. This reinforces the intergenerational

transmission of Mei's mother's authoritarian parenting style to Mei, as she experienced the same challenges in her youth due to her parents' parenting style.

**Image 17. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (66.12-71.11)**



Source: Disney (2022)

### **Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is Mei's mother comforting Mei when their ritual fails, but Mei refuses to repeat the ritual, even avoiding her mother's touch. This confuses and angers Mei's mother when Mei decides to leave. Mei's mother's anger is so intense that she transforms into a red panda.

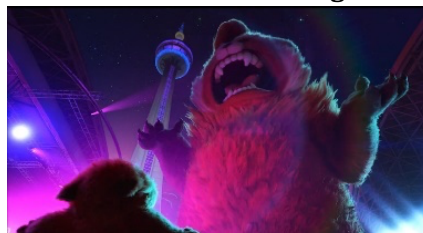
### **Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is that Mei realizes she doesn't want to let go of the red panda within her. She rejects her mother's comforting words about the repeatable ritual and refuses to be touched by her. Choosing to escape from the ritual site angers Mei's mother, leading to her transformation into a red panda.

### **Myth**

The myth in this scene is that Mei, as a child, refuses to be touched and comforted by her mother because subconsciously, she perceives her mother as a threat that will take away something precious from her, namely the red panda.

**Image 18. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (74.45-80.20)**



Source: Disney (2022)

### **Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is Mei and her mother having a heated argument at the concert Mei attended. Their argument occurs in the form of red pandas, causing chaos at the concert venue due to Mei's mother's attempt to capture her.

### **Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is that Mei's mother believes that Mei's rebellious behavior is not her true self and urges her to return to being an obedient child. Mei, in anger, expresses that this is her authentic self and admits to lying to her mother about things



she dislikes. Mei even states that she will not become like her mother, a well-behaved child when she was young.

### **Myth**

The myth in this scene is that Mei's mother adopts an authoritarian parenting style, leading Mei to become a rebellious child who lies to avoid her parents' anger. The scene in picture 17 illustrates how Mei no longer feels safe with her parents. She unconsciously avoids comforting touches from her mother because she perceives her mother as a threat that will separate her from her red panda. Mei has grown attached to her red panda, leading her to change her mind and want to protect her red panda. The deteriorating communication effectiveness between Mei and her mother gives rise to conflicts, causing a strain on their interpersonal relationship, and Mei no longer feels safe with her mother.

This conflict then escalates into a heated argument in the scene depicted in picture 18. Mother Mei claims that Mei's recent defiant behavior is not her true self. Mei becomes angry at her mother's statement and declares that this is her true identity. Mei states that she is no longer a child and proceeds to expose all the lies she has told her mother. Mei confesses that she lied about her lack of interest in boys, heavy music, and all the mischief she engaged in yesterday—all were her ideas and not her friends. Mei insists that her mother must accept these newfound facts, which only further infuriates her. Mother Mei inquires about the reasons behind Mei's rebellious behavior and lies, but Mei responds with a shout. She explains that she just wanted to go to a concert. Her mother rejects Mei's answer, emphasizing that she has never attended a concert because she prioritizes the family and strives to be a good child for her parents. Mei's anger intensifies upon hearing her mother's words. Mei sarcastically apologizes for not being perfect, not being good enough, and never being like her mother. In (Baharuddin, 2019), it is stated that parenting with an authoritarian approach to increase a child's obedience can lead to more defiant behavior, similar to Mei, who rebels against her mother due to her excessively authoritarian parenting.

**Image 19. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (85.22-86.16)**



Source: Disney (2022)

### **Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is that Mother Mei and Mei communicate through an invisible barrier that separates them because Mother Mei chooses to lock away her red panda. In contrast, Mei decides to protect her red panda.

### **Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is that Mother Mei asks Mei to join her in confining the red panda she owns, but Mei refuses. She tells her mother that she has grown up. This

prompts Mother Mei to apologize if she contributed to Mei being too hard on herself. Mother Mei also says she would be even prouder if Mei continues progressing.

### **Myth**

The myth in this scene is that Mei and her mother are trying to resolve the conflict using conflict resolution strategies of "fighting actively" and talking.

**Image 20. Scene from the film "Turning Red" (87.32-88.30)**



Source: Disney (2022)

### **Denotation**

The denotation in this scene is that Mei and her mother have reopened their shrine, and Mei often transforms into a red panda while helping her mother at the shrine. Mei's friends come to invite her to play, which her mother allows. Her mother invites them for dinner at their house.

### **Connotation**

The connotation in this scene is that Mei and her mother have resolved their conflict, improving their relationship and even closer. Mother Mei now trusts Mei's friends.

### **Myth**

The myth in this scene is that the conflict between Mei and her mother has been successfully resolved using appropriate conflict resolution strategies, and now their relationship has become stronger.

The scene in picture 19 depicts Mei and her mother separated by an invisible portal, where the mother stands in a place where the red panda has been confined. Mother Mei pleads with Mei to join her in confining Mei's red panda, but Mei refuses, stating that she is transforming. She has found herself but fears this change will distance her from her mother. Mother Mei says she feels the same fear. She acknowledges that Mei has been working hard to please everyone but has been harsh on herself. Mother Mei apologizes if she taught Mei to be that way and urges Mei not to hold back from anyone. She assures Mei that the more Mei grows, the prouder she will be. The two then join hands across the invisible barrier that separates them. In this moment, Mei and her mother successfully resolve the conflict in their interpersonal relationship using two conflict management strategies: fighting actively and talking. In these strategies, conflict resolution involves discussing and listening to each other's feelings and accepting and appreciating each other's desires (Devito, 2013).

In the scene in picture 20, the relationship between Mei and her mother becomes closer after they successfully resolve their conflict. It is evident that Mei is now free to transform into a red panda whenever she wants, and she can go and play with her friends. Mother Mei even invites Mei's friends, whom she didn't like before, for dinner at their

home. With the conflict resolved successfully, Mei and her mother now understand each other better. Mother Mei is no longer an authoritarian parent, and Mei no longer needs to lie to her mother when she wants to go out and play.

From the analysis, it can be concluded that ineffective communication patterns and the authoritarian parenting style of Mother Mei caused the conflict in interpersonal communication between Mei and her mother. This parenting style makes Mother Mei less attentive to Mei's opinions, resulting in a lack of essential listening skills in interpersonal communication. Mother Mei tends only to hear what she wants, does not understand Mei, and makes Mei feel unsupported. The film "Turning Red" shows that Mother Mei's authoritarian parenting style is a legacy from Mei's grandmother. Both use conflict management strategies when the conflict erupts by actively expressing their feelings. Mei acknowledges her lies, and Mother Mei expresses her confusion. The talk strategy is also employed, where both express their desires and feelings before seeking solutions. Although initially challenging, this conflict brings about positive changes. Mei grows more mature, and Mother Mei learns to accept Mei's life choices. After the dispute is resolved, the relationship between Mei and her mother improves, interpersonal communication becomes more effective, and the authoritarian parenting style naturally diminishes.

## CONCLUSION

Based on this study, it can be concluded that in the film "Turning Red," interpersonal communication between the mother and daughter is initially ineffective, leading to conflict. The factors contributing to the conflict involve the mother's poor listening skills and the use of an authoritarian parenting style, forcing the child to lie. However, in the end, the conflict is successfully resolved through conflict management strategies such as actively fighting and talking. After successfully resolving the conflict, the relationship between Mei and her mother becomes closer. Interpersonal communication becomes more effective, allowing Mei and her mother to be more open in sharing their feelings. Additionally, the authoritarian parenting style of Mei's mother gradually diminishes.

On the other hand, the researchers recommend that the film industry, especially the Indonesian film industry, produce more films in the future that address the theme of the relationship between mothers and children and emphasize the communication aspects between them. Especially in the Indonesian film industry, which tends to be dominated by horror genres, films focusing on the mother-child relationship can serve as an alternative to enrich the topics addressed in Indonesian cinema.

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