# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

## A.    Background of the Research.

Background should explain about purpose, function and the reasons of the research title. The research has qualitative methodology, means its explanation must be inductive. The writer started explaining this background from the special or smallest to the common or biggest ones, they are icon, index and symbols, semiotic, semantic, linguistic, language and data setting.

Basically, an icon is a form of a sign that has a physical resemblance to what it represents. In everyday life, icons can be found as a type of sign that has a shape that is not too far from what it represents. A painting or photograph of a person is an iconic example of the person in the painting and photograph.

Whether the icon has a resemblance to the object it represents, the index has a significant difference. The index is a type of sign that represents something based on a causal relationship or relationship due to an event such as a natural phenomenon. It can be interpreted that the index is a sign as proof. An index that can be used as an example is that smoke is a marker of fire and cloudy is a marker of impending rain.

Based on the two signs described previously, a symbol is a sign that represents something based on an agreement. Symbols can be understood if

someone already understands the meaning that has been agreed upon in advance. Examples of symbols that can be found include the Red Cross, which is the symbol of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

According the three types of signs, icons, indexes, and symbols are variables that refer to a scientific field called semiotics. Semiotics is the study of signs. Semiotics has two major branches proposed by Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce. Both describe the science of semiotics separately and have no relationship and even know each other. For Saussure, semiotics is the general science of signs. Meanwhile, Peirce defines semiotics as a formal doctrine of signs.

Semiotics itself has many descriptions, but semiotics is a branch of semantic science. The relationship between the two can be referred to as semantic semiotics, namely a review of the sign system that can be in accordance with the meaning conveyed. Semantics is the science that studies meaning. Semantics is agreed upon as a term used in the field of linguistics which studies the relationship between linguistic signs and the things they signify. In other words, semantics is a branch of linguistics that studies meaning or sense in language.

Linguistics has an understanding as a scientific field that examines or studies language in general. Linguistics itself has several different terms. However, the object or substance of the study remains one, namely language.

Humans recognize the culture and create various forms of ideas, activities, and other things to fulfill life. Language is one of the most important things that affect human life and culture. Language has an important role in human life because it becomes the main communication tool in the process of interaction between human beings.

As an object of linguistic study, language is a system of arbitrary sound symbols used by members of a social group to work together, communicate, and identify themselves. From the explanation above, language has the following characteristics or properties: language is a system, language is a symbol, language is sound, language is meaningful, language is arbitrary, language is conventional, language is productive, language is unique in addition to universal, language is dynamic, and language is human and varied. Finally, from a scientific approach and the general public's view, language is an important tool that accompanies the journey of human life from time to time.

Indonesia refers to one of the countries with the highest level of social media use in the world. Currently, the internet has become a necessity, not except for the Indonesian people. According to research on the social media management platform HootSuite and social marketing agency We Are Social entitled "Global Digital Reports 2020", nearly 64 percent of Indonesia's population is connected to an internet network. The research released at the end of January 2020 stated that the number of internet users in Indonesia had reached 175.4 million people, while the total population of

Indonesia is around 272.1 million. The high number of internet and media social users come to a new phenomenon among netizens in making memes on social media.

Meme means the form of ideas, behavior, ideas which is outlined in the form of an image accompanied by comments that flick to generate a sense of humor to recipients on social media. Memes are produced based on phonemes or a hot topic with take various materials such as news, quotations from sources, videos, and hyperlinks. Having produced later memes disseminated on social media to has a viral effect. The popularity of the meme in social media rises up because it contains satirical humorous and an outpouring of users' expressions or feelings in cyberspace (Luthfi, 2015).

Meme known from the ancient Greek "*mimeme*" which means something that imitates or resembles. The term meme was first coined by geneticist Richard Dawkins in 1976 through his book entitled "The Selfish Gene". In its development, mimemes are then abbreviated into memes like the word gen. Dawkins thinks the meme is something that jumps paint on the head and spreads like a virus.

In the early days, memes explained the theory of cultural evolution which was transformed from ideas, thoughts, ideas, habits, songs or fashion as examples of human culture. This is where the process begins the creation of human culture which continues to this day. Therefore, like genes, memes are able to replicate themselves, and evolve in the realm of culture. In its

later development, memes were then understood as the result of an image,
photo or video product with content containing thoughts from the creator
himself.

After the creation process, the creator will disseminate it on various
social media platforms including Twitter. Along time, memes evolved
through the creation of new memes with hot topics or phenomena. Even old
memes will be replaced with new memes that are fresher and more updated.
The evolution of memes on the internet happened very fast following what
was currently popular at the time.

As a cultural product, memes known by teenagers in the world, that is
disseminated and has gone viral quickly. The spread viral is greatly helped
by internet technology which allows each user to connect to each other in
cyberspace. This also gave birth to a new term, namely internet memes as a
product of cyber culture that emphasizes the visual side in the form of
images and flicking words

The presence of memes in Indonesia has become a social
phenomenon as a consequence of the consequences of freedom of
democracy and expression through the media. The very existence of social
media is also very popular making memes flourish in various conversations
on the mass lines of social media. Not infrequently too, citizens use memes
as a communication tool or creating opinions on social media. Meme often
contain satirical content in the form of photos or narrative which are funny
and tend to be satirical. However, in the last few months, there are many

memes which often use an online game that is being loved by young people around the world, namely "among us"

A multiplayer Personal Computer and mobile game suddenly became popular and one of the most popular video games of 2020. Even though it was released in June 2018, Among Us did not get much attention until recently, when a video game streamer was on the service. Amazon's Twitch realized that it was the perfect game during a quarantine in the midst of a pandemic.

Developed by InnerSloth, a small studio in Redmond, Washington, Among Us was downloaded nearly 42 million times on Steam in the first half of September. Among Us has also been downloaded nearly 84 million times on iOS and Android that month, Not only being downloaded a lot, Among Us also earned a sizable income, namely up to US $ 3.2 million or around Rp.47 billion. It is easy to play, fun, and cheap, and has emerged as one of the best pastimes for virtual socializing amid the pandemic. Among Us is a modern version of classic social deduction games like Mafia and Werewolf.

Using a PC or mobile device, users play as a team and must be able to find importers among them or complete tasks to win. Meanwhile, the impostors achieve victory by killing their crew or sabotaging the spacecraft. Impostors will be randomly selected in each game. With virtual gameplay and a reliance on social interaction, Among Us is perfect for virtual socializing. Plus some popular streamers, gamers and influencers love to

play and talk about this game. With his own streamers, gamers and influencers, he introduced Among Us to his followers.

This game has also grown due to its low cost and simplicity. Although the user must complete the assignment, this action is easy and can be performed by anyone. As the game grows in popularity, memes about the game Among Us also have a bigger effect in attracting more users and keeping them coming back to play the game. We also can find funny moments and capture them to make a meme. However, many people still misinterpret the meaning of the meme. among them think that the meaning conveyed from the meme is not funny at all and even makes confusion. Departing from this case, the phenomenon of among us meme becomes interesting researched.

The formulation of the problem in this study is to look for the semiotic elements contained in the meme among us which are widely used by netizen in conveying their aspirations and criticisms. By finding this semiotic element, researcher can get the meaning and purpose of the meme creator when producing the meme on social media, including searching for the signs and phrases that creators use to create these memes. Furthermore, this research is expected to add new knowledge to science, especially in the field communication in understanding new cultural products in the form of memes from its creators on social media.

**B. Question and Scopes of the Research**

**1. Question of the Research**

Based on focus of the study above, the Researches arrange this research through the following questions:

**A.** What is the meaning contained in the meme "among us" based on the viewpoint of semiotics?

**B.** What types of meme are occurred in "among us"?

**2. Scopes of the Research**

The Scope of the research is needed. It has the function to prevent a broadness in doing a research. In conducting this research, the researcher focused on icon, index, and symbol of semiotic which relate to meme. The theories are used: 1. Icon, Index and Symbol, 2. Semiotics, 3. Meme. By classifying and analyzing those data, we can understand the meaning of icon, index, symbol of semiotic its taken from meme .that occurred in "among us".

**C. Objective and Significance of the Research**

**1. Objective of the Research**

In accordance with the research questions that have been described previously, there are objectives of the research as described as follows:

a. To explain the implicit meaning found in meme "Among us"

b. To classify the types of memes which are often used in the application of the game character "Among us".

## 2. Significance of the Research

This research was conducted with the expectation of significant results both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research is expected to provide a better understanding of memes in English and increase the development of linguistic fields, especially in linguistic studies.

Practically, this research is able to provide something new to enrich linguistic studies, through this research readers will also gain new knowledge about memes so that readers can apply their use in communicating and telling jokes on social media through memes.

## D. Operational Definition

To avoid misunderstanding in interpreting the term used in this study, the definitions are given as follows:

### 1. Semiotic

Semiotic is the study of the meaning of decisions. This includes the study of signs and indicative processes, names, similarities, analogies, metaphors, symbolism, meaning and communication.

### 2. Semantic

Semantic is a term used for the field of linguistics that studies the relationship between linguistic signs and the things they signify, or in

other words, a field of study in linguistics that studies meaning or meaning in language.

3.  **Linguistic**

    Linguistic is the study that focuses on language and its use as a communication tools.

4.  **Meme**

    Meme is an expression of emotion (happy, sad, angry), it can also be an intention, expressed in the form of writing, currently included in visual media such as images that are considered to represent these feelings and intentions.

5.  **Among us**

    *Among us* is a multiplayer video game where you have to guess who the impostor then complete the task of fixing the components of the spaceship that was damaged by the impostor disguised as a crewmate.

E.  **Systematization of the Research**

    Systematization of the research means to exist the paper well-editing compositions. The research is divided into five chapters as follow:

    Chapter I Introduction explains about background of the research and reason why the researcher choses the research, questions and scopes of the research, objective and significance of the research, operational definitions, and systematization of the research which contain the resume of the research as a whole.

Chapter II Theoretical description contains the theory used by researchers to analyze data consisting of types of memes, meme functions, and relevance research that shows previous research that has been done.

Chapter III Methodology of the research involves method of the research, procedure of the research, technique of data collection, technique of data analysis and data source.

Chapter IV analysis data shows the description of the data in memes, data analysis where the author analyzes all the data that the authors find in the corpus data, data interpretation of research finding.

Chapter V Conclusion and suggestion give the summary of the conclusion which relate of discussion, suggestion which relate to significant of the research.