Shōjo Character in Miyazaki's *Kiki's Delivery Service* as Challenging the Archetype: A Semiotic Study

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ARTICLE INFO

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ABSTRACT

Studio Ghibli has made great animated films for more than three decades. One of its great animators is Hayao Miyazaki. Being famous for his award-winning and picturesque films, Miyazaki has proven to be a highly skilled animator presenting a catchy *shōjo* with distinctive characters. His *shōjo* named Kiki in *Kiki's Delivery Service* has peculiar traits. This research aims at proving the opposition of Kiki to the common Japanese female character archetype. Eight pieces of data are in the form of screen captures to be studied semiotically. As part of social science research, this study is qualitative in nature. By employing Barthesian semiotic theory and Sugawa-Shimada's theory of *shōjo*, it is evident that Kiki opposes the archetype of Japanese female characters. Kiki is portrayed as independent, assertive, not depending on one specific type of magical weapon, wearing a simple black witch dress, able to make prompt and clear decisions, doing daily chores, and having magical power that might be gone anytime due to some psychological reasons. Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of the linguistic field, particularly the stream of semiotics. This research also benefits researchers, filmmakers, film audiences, and Studio Ghibli's enthusiasts in a semiotic way that Kiki as *shōjo* is constructed with great empowerment opposing the common stereotype of a female character.

How to cite (APA Style):
Wedhowerti, W. (2024). Shōjo Character in Miyazaki's Kiki's Delivery Service as Challenging the Archetype: A Semiotic Study. JOALL (Journal of Applied Linguistics and Literature), 9(2), 417–435. https://doi.org/10.33369/joall.v9i2.34233

INTRODUCTION

Film has advanced in various ways. One of the ways is by establishing a studio that produces films prolifically. Studio Ghibli is no exception. It is famous for its picturesque animated films. After receiving many prestigious

film awards, Studio Ghibli has proven to be a studio with highly skilled filmmakers and animators. One of the greatest names in this field is Hayao Miyazaki.

Miyazaki's fantasy world enlightened and coloured the world through his film productions even before Studio Ghibli was established in 1985. Miyazaki shared his fantasy world in *Lupin III: The Castle of Cagliostro* (1979) and *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (1984). *Castle in the Sky* (1986) becomes his first Studio Ghibli production. Miyazaki then makes Studio Ghibli a fantasy manufacturer (Denison, 2023). The fantasy world, or other world, to be precise, includes nature (trees, forests, fields), urban life, and beautiful architecture.

Besides the fantasy world, Miyazaki adds other significant elements to his films. Those significant elements include his imaginative world, which shows female characters as changing, growing, and having great empowerment (Napier, 2005). The type of character is called *shōjo* (girl or young female character). Additionally, Freiberg (2006) mentions that *shōjo* is "in-betweenness" or any age between childhood and adulthood, and *shōjo* is associated with freedom. Some other experts have also dealt with the *shōjo* (Napier, 2005; DeWeese-Boyd, 2009; Freiberg, 2006; Hairston, 2015). Miyazaki has shown the *shōjo* in his film productions as Satsuki and Mei in *Totoro, Kiki* in *Kiki's Delivery Service*; Chihiro in *Spirited Away*; San in *Princess Mononoke*; Sophie in *Howl's Moving Castle*, and Nausicaä in *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (DeWeese-Boyd, 2009).

Kiki's Delivery Service is a movie depicting a shōjo character to be studied in this research. *Kiki's Delivery Service* is made based on Eiko Kadono's novel of the same title, written in 1985, placing Kiki as the main character. The story takes place in the 1950s in a coastal town. The story depicts the meeting between urban life and village life. Kiki is a thirteen-year-old witch *shōjo* growing up from childhood to adulthood. She must obey the tradition of leaving home at thirteen to achieve her complete witch-hood (Odell & Le Blanc, 2015). Accompanied by her talking cat, Jiji, she starts flying with her broom, and to her surprise, she arrives at the town of Koriko, where she meets Osono, a lady running a bakery. Finally, she works at the bakery as a delivery service courier serving consumers at Koriko with her witch-flying ability. Her witch-flying ability has captivated and charmed people she encounters. She is soon welcomed and accepted by the new community in the town, including by Tombo, a boy whose desire to be able to fly never fades. She also meets a new friend, Ursula, the artist.

The *shōjo* character of Kiki in this movie has been studied for some years for its intriguing and challenging traits (Meshcheryakova, 2022; Cho & Macomber, 2022; Greenberg, 2018; Lenburg, 2012). This movie is chosen because it depicts a girl's independence, ability, and adaptability to survive in

a new town represented by Kiki, the main character. The appearance of Kiki allegedly opposes the common Japanese main characters' traits, which will be studied semiotically to prove such opposition.

It is very interesting yet challenging to study semiotically the construction of female characters in films produced by Studio Ghibli, Korean CJ Entertainment, and Indonesian film studios. This is due to the evolution of the female characters' on-screen representation, which is seen from different semiotic models (Fiske's, Barthes', and Saussure's). Semiotics provides tools to analyze a film and see the representation from its semiotic codes. Semiotics enables researchers to explore semiotics codes to see how Kiki's portrayal opposes the common *shōjo* traits.

Past studies have observed and analyzed how female characters were presented, produced, constructed, and contextualized from a semiotic perspective. The reviewed studies analyzed the portrayal of female characters in an Asian context (Taskin & Inanc, 2023; Hakim & Kurnia, 2023; Nugraheni, et. al 2022; Pirry & Poernomo, 2023).

Taskin & Inanc (2023) studied female identity construction by identifying posters of Hayao Miyazaki's movies produced between 1984 and 2022 in connotation, their signifier, signified denotation and connotation framework. The difference between Taskin & Inanc (2023) and this study lies in the manner of analysis where Taskin & Inanc (2023) analyzed ten Miyazaki's animated films (*Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*, *Castle in the Sky*, *My Neighbor Totoro*, *Kiki's Delivery Service*, *Princess Mononoke*, *Spirited Away*,*Howl's Moving Castle*, *Ponyo*,*From Up on Poppy Hill*, and *The Wind Rises*). Taskin & Inanc did not only focus on Kiki's Delivery Service as their object of study, but they also worked on the other nine of Miyazaki's animated films (2023). This study, however, focuses on *Kiki's Delivery Service* only as its object of the study, and it does not analyze the poster of the film. It studies the whole film scene by scene to find out the construction of Kiki as the main character of the film.

Semiotic codes regarding female characters in a film are also interesting to study, as they are for Hakim and Kurnia (2023). The results showed that the female characters were independent, strong, and brave enough to fight for women's rights and justice. The difference between Hakim and Kurnia's study and this study lies in the theories employed. Even though both studies employed a semiotic approach, Hakim and Kurnia employed Fiske's, while this study employed Barthes. Fiske's emphasized three-levelled analysis (reality, representation, and ideology). Barthes, however, offered denotation and connotation that finally arrived at myth as the ideological meaning.

Another Asian context is also presented by Nugraheni, Bezaleel, and Utami (2022) in their semiotic analysis of Cho Chang in the Harry Potter

series. *Cho Chang* turned out to be a brave, easygoing, smart, confident, friendly, kind-hearted, and sociable. The difference between Nugraheni et al.'s research and this research lies in the context of the female characters. Nugraheni et al.'s. Presented the context of female characters in general Asia without any interference from mythology. At the same time, this study analyzes the context of female characters in Japan, and this research seeks to understand the portrayal of Kiki as influenced by Japanese mythology.

Another context of female characters occurs in Indonesia (Pirry & Poernomo, 2023). The two researchers studied two Indonesian films, *Kartini 2017* and *Perempuan Tanah Jahanam*. *Kartini* voiced her emancipation to spread to society and parents that women could go to work and become workers and that women had to be well-educated. The difference between Pirry and Poernomo's and this research is evident in the context of female characters and communication systems. In Pirry & Poernomo's, *Kartini* spoke up about her emancipation, raised her inner voice, and delivered her messages to families, society, and parents in the context of Javanese tradition during the Dutch colonial era, while this research studies Kiki in the context of witch tradition of moving out to another town to sharpen her witch skill. Kiki's messages of emancipation do not specifically address particular parties either. In other words, they work universally.

Based on the reasons and four previous related studies, it is evident that the Asian context of female characters in films is challenging to study semiotically, specifically from the point of view of media semiotics. Semiotics is one among several approaches to analyzing films. As it is the study of the sign system, the centre of attention of film analysis employing semiotic study is the message the films deliver (Okuyama, 2015). In this context, the films become the sender, and the audience becomes the receiver of the message, meaning that films are the media through which the message is conveyed. This study is in the domain of media semiotics. In semiotics, the physical recording of messages is called representation (Danesi, 2019).

Concerning media semiotics, Roland Barthes is the first scholar to show the noteworthiness of how films create meanings through the messages they represent and then convey them to the audience (Okuyama, 2015; Danesi, 2019). Barthesian model of semiotics was developed in the school of Structuralism by integrating de Saussure's model of semiotics. Concerning the basic theory of the Barthesian model, Barthes proposes levels of signification. In this case, levels of signification also mean levels of representation or levels of meaning (in Chandler, 2022). Hence, *denotation* is the first order of signification, and *connotation* and *myth* form the second order. Accordingly, in *connotation*, a denotative sign becomes the *signifier* of a connotative *sign* (in Chandler, 2022). To summarize, Figure 1 below is presented.
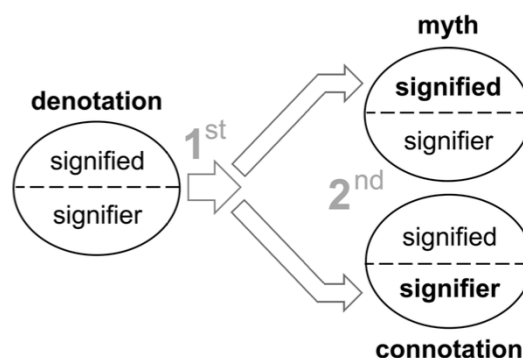
Figure 1. Barthes Levels of Signification

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, Barthes also introduces the term myth (ideological meaning). Myth works as a set of ideas widely understood and accepted by society based on its foremost epitome. Taking Martin & Ringham's definition and example, the myths of the bourgeois are all generated by mass media, meaning that all products or ideas are understood and promoted to validate and underpin a particular view of the world and its values (2000). Barthes offers a semiotic theory to make society easy and clear to understand, and analyzing films as media to convey messages is off, and analyzing films as media to convey messages is no exception (Chandler, 2022). Therefore, the contribution of the Barthesian semiotic model is truly immense.

An important matter to note is that the Analysis Section also deals with the concept of colours emerging in Japanese culture. In Japan, for instance, wearing black is very important in a significant or powerful event, such as a graduation ceremony or getting a new job that symbolizes a fresh start (Shalina & Vorobyova, 2022). The idea of colour is very important to understand to discover the regularities and patterns applied to specific groups and to find the common and specific semiotics of colours in all cultural and social domains (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2002).

Concerning the representation of female characters in animated films, the case of Kiki in *Kiki's Delivery Service,* produced and directed by Miyazaki, is in accordance with the fact that Miyazaki is famous for two matters in his films, his fantasy world and catchy female characters as being highly distinctive, independent, and assertive (Napier, 2005). The emergence of *shōjo* characters in Miyazaki animated films is said to defy the archetype of Japanese female characters. Archetype is an image reoccurring in mythology, folklore, and contemporary artworks (Okuyama, 2015).

In general convention, Japanese female characters are often associated with *kawaii* (cuteness). the female characters are depicted as sweet and shy (Gajdos, 2023). The term *shōjo* in its original Japanese sense is not merely

translated as "girl". It, however, brings along the sense of "female purity, chastity, susceptibility, sentimentality, sexuality, and profanity" (Sugawa-Shimada, 2019). The Japanese animated film industry has two opposing notions concerning *shōjo* (Sugawa-Shimada, 2019). The first one is mainly on adult men's consumption, where the *shōjo* is depicted as hyper-sexualized. This happens because, in the industry, this type of shōjo is dedicated to meeting the desires of men. This results in a *shōjo* being vulnerable, needing men's protection, and an object of men's desire. Consequently, this type of *shōjo* becomes immensely obedient.

The second one focuses on a female character having superpowers yet still being innocent and pure superpower yet innocent and pure, with girls as the targeted market; this type of character is called *mahō shōjo* (magical girl). Since this type of *shōjo* is dedicated to little girls or teenagers, the traits and appearance also accommodate the sense of "girl cuteness" and female superpower. Therefore, this character is associated with the ability to transform magically, makeover, dress up stylishly, and solve problems around her local environment using her superpower. In other words, the *mahō shōjo* emerges as a local heroine.

The statement stating that the emergence of *shōjo* characters in Miyazaki animated films defies the archetype of Japanese female characters needs to be proven semiotically. Therefore, this research aims at revealing how semiotic codes represent the *shōjo* character of Kiki in *Kiki's Delivery Service* in order to prove the opposition of Kiki to the common Japanese female character archetype.

METHOD
Research Design
 Considering this research studies film as a form of text in the semiotic domain, then it is classified as social science research and qualitative (Bloor, 2016). The data in this research are in the form of images taken from certain scenes depicting the *shōjo* character of Kiki. The excerpt of each scene is taken where Kiki represents her opposing characters against common *shōjo* traits. Since this is semiotic research, the researcher has outlined a semiotic framework starting from data collection to arrive at the analysis and conclusion employing Barthes's semiotic model and Sugawa-Shimada's theory of *shōjo*.

The two theories are essential to answer the research question of whether Kiki opposes the common Japanese female characters' traits. The Barthesian semiotic theory is important to find out the representation of Kiki through Barthe's levels of signification that finally lead to *myth* (Barthes, 1972). Meanwhile, Sugawa-Shimada's theory of *shōjo* is utilized to strengthen and confirm the identification of signifier, signified, denotation, connotation, and

myth in each image of the captured scene. In other words, all identification and explanation of each semiotic element in this research is based on Sugawa-Shimada's theory of *shōjo* (2019).

Data Analysis Procedures

The research procedures are summarized below. The first step is watching the movie and classifying each scene. The second step is collecting the data in the form of an image taken from the excerpt of a scene containing the act where Kiki represents her opposing traits against the common *shōjo* traits. The third step is encoding and numbering the data based on the time sequence of the film duration. This means that the data presented in the Analysis Section is sequenced based on the appearance of each scene in the film. The fourth step is analyzing the data by identifying the signifier and signified to arrive at the denotation level. Finally, the analysis is directed to the connotation level and myth. To sum up, the semiotic research framework is presented in Figure 2 below.
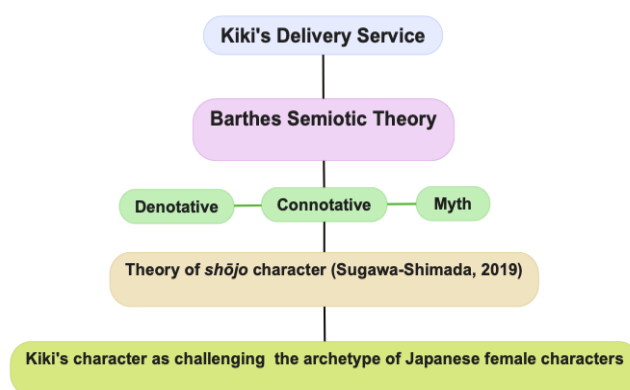

Figure 2. Semiotic Research Framework

FINDINGS

This section answered how semiotic codes represent the *shōjo* Kiki in *Kiki's Delivery Service*. There were eight images to analyze semiotically in order to find out the representation of Kiki as challenging the archetype of the Japanese female character (*shōjo*). The film's total duration was 102 minutes. As previously mentioned in the previous section, the data selection was based on a criterion, i.e., the image was taken from the excerpt of a scene containing the act where Kiki represented her opposing traits against common Japanese female characters' traits. Eight images were selected after watching the film, which lasted 102 minutes. Therefore, the eight selected images were typically those containing Kiki's opposing representation only. Other scenes which did not contain such were not selected. All scenes being analyzed were sequenced based on the appearance of each scene in the film. Each datum is presented below.

Datum 1
Table 2. Kiki's excitement wearing her witch dress for the first time

	00.04.01 - 00.04.38
Denotation	Kiki's wearing her witch dress for the first time with the help of her mother. Her mother gave her advice before leaving. Kiki promises her mother that she will be the best witch with a good heart
Connotation	Kiki wanted to prove to her mother that being the best witch with a good heart was even the utmost choice.
Myth	Kiki was born into a good family with witch ability emphasizing values, virtues, self-confidence, and great belief (Napier, 2005)

Kiki was born into a good family with witch ability in a traditional village named Karikiya. Her mother, Kokiri, was an expert in mixing potions. Being raised in values and virtues, Kiki realized that what she called "a dull-coloured dress" was nothing compared to her privilege of being able to fly in"a dull-coloured dress" was nothing compared to her privilege of being able to fly at a very young age. Kiki herself decided to go on a full moon, obeying her family tradition of moving out at the age of thirteen to complete her witch-hood ability.

Datum 2
Table 3. Kiki's determination to fly

	00.05.50 - 00.06.50
Denotation	Kiki flew for the very first time using her mother's broomstick, wearing a black

	witch costume and taking Jiji, her black talking cat, with her
Connotation	Kiki's determined to move out to complete her witch-hood by wearing something black as her witch dress, using the magical broomstick, and taking her best companion, Jiji
Myth	The black dress was important in Japanese culture as it marked a new beginning and strongly related to a new position (Shalina & Vorobyova, 2022). Meanwhile, black cat in Japanese tradition was believed to be a good cat with useful skills good cats with useful skills, including telling the weather forecast (Taulbee, 2021).

Kiki prepared herself to fly for the first time using her mother's legendary broomstick. Her friends and neighbours gathered to wave goodbye. Concerning her black dress, it was mentioned above that black colour is important in Japanese culture. Her black talking black-talking cat, Jiji, was a very skilful and trustworthy cat. While flying, Kiki asked him to turn on the radio. Jiji also became a good listener to what Kiki said and helped Kiki out with a lot of suggestions.

Datum 3

Table 4. Kiki was approaching a clock tower watcher

	00.15.15 - 00.15.30
Denotation	Kiki was wondering a new town from above including approaching a clock tower watcher and greeting even starting a little conversation with him.
Connotation	Kiki was very comfortable in the first place being in that new town even though she just arrived and finally decided to make that town her destination
Myth	Being a thirteen-year-old village little girl, Kiki was brave to even to start a new life and to settle down completing her witch-hood skill (Berton, 2021)

Kiki went from a village where she knew everybody there to a new town where people did not talk much to their neighbours. She wandered from above, seeing a crown below her, including many cars, buses, and passers-by, and a crown below her, including many cars, buses, passers-by, and a market. Soon, she decided to settle a new life in that town, and she finally knew that the town was called Koriko. She saw everything very much different from what she had in her home village of Karikiya. She bravely greeted a clock tower watcher and initiated a little conversation.

Datum 4
   Table 5. Kiki offered her help to Osono to deliver the baby's pacifier

	00.20.45 - 00.21.22
Denotation	Kiki was looking around the new town and having a conversation with Jiji as Osono, bakery owner, called out her costumers as they had left their baby's pacifier. Then Kiki initiated and offered assistance to Osono to deliver the pacifier.
Connotation	Kiki started making new friends in the town and offering some help with her flying ability
Myth	Kiki's assertiveness was shown here (Cavallaro, 2006)

Kiki was having a little conversation with Jiji about her impression of Koriko when Osono called her bakery's customers, for they had left their baby's pacifier. Osono was afraid of the baby crying without the pacifier. Kiki's assertiveness was represented here by talking to Osono, offering her help to deliver the baby's pacifier in no time as she had flying ability. Kiki was confident to offer her assistance, realizing that it was in a state of emergency. She also observed that with her flying ability, it was certainly possible to help Osono and the baby needing a pacifier, even in her new beginning in Koriko.

Datum 5
Table 6. Kiki's on her delivery duty replacing the fallen cat doll with Jiji

	00.37.15 - 00.38.45
Denotation	Kiki was flying on the way to her delivery duty when a flock of angry crows attacked her, which made the cat doll fall down. Kiki then initiated to replace the fallen black cat doll with Jiji, which had a more or less similar appearance.
Connotation	Kiki was responsible for delivering the present punctually
Myth	Kiki, being at her young age, already had a sense of agency (Finley, 2023)

Featured as a young hardworking witch, Kiki appeared to be delivering a present containing a black cat doll inside. On the way to the receiver, Kiki was attacked by a flock of angry crows. It resulted in the falling cat doll. Kiki was responsible for delivering the present on time as she thought hard in time constraints. She then quickly took action by replacing the falling cat doll with her cat, Jiji, as both shared quite a similar appearance. She already developed a sense of agency despite her young age.

Datum 6
Table 7. Kiki's cleaning Ursula's floor

	00.41.15 – 00.42.50
Denotation	Kiki's cleaning Ursula's floor.
Connotation	Kiki was doing a chore in return for Ursula's goodwill to stitch the damaged cat doll.

Myth	Kiki's getting payment for her labour (Reinders, 2016)

Kiki's trying to find out the falling cat doll when she suddenly got stumbled upon the doll in a window of a cabin in the forest. She then shouted out to the cabin owner, Ursula the artist. Knowing that the doll was damaged, Ursula offered Kiki to stitch it, providing that Kiki cleaned the cabin floor. Kiki had no other choice in such a dull situation. She eventually agreed and cleaned the floor in return for the stitching. In Reinders' terms, it was called work (labor), and Kiki earned payment for it (2016).

Datum 7

Table 8. Kiki broke her magical broomstick

	01.16.44 – 01. 17. 58
Denotation	Kiki broke her mother's magical broom stick
Connotation	She lost her magical power to fly with it
Myth	Kiki was in her human being state (Finley, 2023)

Kiki made new friends in Koriko. Tombo, a young boy whose flying ambition was realized in a specially-designed bicycle, had captivated Kiki's attention, with whom she soon made friends. Being comfortable sharing each other's stories, Kiki then felt like an outsider to Tombo when Tombo's friends came by, and Tombo chose to go with his friends. Consequently, her tantrum resulted in her losing her magical power to fly, including breaking her mother's magical broomstick, and losing the ability to talk to Jiji.

Datum 8

Table 9. Kiki was saving Tombo

	01.35.02-01.39.17
Denotation	Kiki's saving Tombo from falling off the dirigible
Connotation	Kiki regained her super magical power again
Myth	Kiki addressed daily earthy human's problem (Finley, 2023)

Kiki saw somebody hanging in the dirigible. It turned out that it was Tombo. She then borrowed a broom from a bystander and started focusing her mind to regain her magical power to fly again. Having focused and developed great confidence, she finally went up to the sky and managed to help Tombo from falling off. The whole town was watching her rescue action. Finally, Tombo is saved by her and lands soundly.

DISCUSSION

Shōjo in *Kiki's Delivery Service* is represented differently. It challenges the stereotypical archetype of the *shōjo* character in Japanese animated films. From the eight data above, Kiki is depicted as truly a distinctive *shōjo*. From the beginning of the film, Kiki is seen as somebody growing up in her *shōjo* stage. She already realizes and observes her next step of moving out to fulfill her life as a witch and train her magical ability. The tradition says that a witch must move out at the age of thirteen to perfect her witch-hood.

In Datum 1, Kiki is depicted as a girl being born in a witch family. At least this is seen by her mother as an expert in mixing potions. The semiotic code of mixing potion shows that Kiki was born in a witch family. Kiki's magical power is different, however. She is not an expert in concoction. She has the magical power to fly using a broomstick. Her mother in the scene emphasizes the significance of a good heart. Good heart also becomes another semiotic code in this datum. Kiki ensures her that she will be the best witch with a good heart. Kiki, in this case, challenges the archetype of *shōjo*. As mentioned before, *shōjo* in Japanese animated films emerges as somebody's vulnerable in need of a man or at least other people to protect her. This then

hinders her from speaking her mind and brings about her loss of self-esteem. In Kiki, however, she turns out to be a very self-independent *shōjo* having the ambition to become the best witch with a good heart at even the start of her journey as a young witch and moving out to another place.

Moving on to Datum 2, Kiki is wearing her black witch dress. Black dress is a Japanese semiotic code. She represents the traditional Japanese belief of wearing a black costume in her most important stage of life, as well as her new life beginning as a witch. Kiki, in this film, is depicted as challenging the stereotypical archetype because, so far, shōjo has been exhibiting as wearing a stylish dress with make-up on the face. "girl cuteness" is defined as wearing a stylish dress, styling the hair, and wearing make-up. In the case of Kiki, the idea of "girl cuteness" is represented differently. She wears a very simple black dress. Her dress is plain, meaning that it bears no ornaments at all. From her appearance, it is evident that Kiki is far from being considered or able to fulfill the sense of "girl cuteness".

Besides her simple appearance, Kiki is also depicted as a brave *shōjo*. Kiki is brave to greet and start a little conversation with a clock tower watcher in the new town where she knows nobody (Datum 3). This fact opposes the portrayal of *shōjo* in other animated films where the *shōjo* is portrayed as shy, timid, and having little initiative to start a conversation with others. Kiki shows no doubt to start the conversation. She also decides to make Koriko destination and new life to train her skills as a witch. Moving out and starting a new life is a trait and self-esteem Kiki has lived with. Moving out, greeting, and starting a conversation all at once become semiotic codes of Kiki. She is neither shy nor timid when she has to deal with new people in Koriko, and this reality continues in the next scene to be explained in the next paragraph.

Kiki still holds on to her belief of starting her new life in Koriko despite shocking experiences in the first place when she reaches that town, such as almost being hit by cars, being caught by the town police, meeting unfriendly people, and being considered as old-fashioned for wearing such a simple dress resembling old women style (Datum 4). A lot of disappointment does not stop her from being assertive in helping Osono deliver her customer's pacifier. Kiki challenges the archetype of *shōjo* as becoming a local heroine. In this scene, she is somebody from the village, meaning that she was not born in Koriko. Her first act to help Osono, the bakery owner, is the result of her assertiveness towards the baby. Being a stranger or newcomer to Koriko and disappointed by some shocking experiences does not fail her emphatic feeling. Her act of helping is a strong semiotic code. In other words, Kiki is not a local heroine yet in this scene. However, in the next scenes, she is eventually celebrated as a local savior. In the first place, however, she manages to help Osono and her customers.

Staying in Osono's place, Kiki continues helping with the bakery by delivering customers' orders and packages (Datum 5). When she has to deliver a package containing a cat doll, suddenly, she is attacked by a flock of angry crows, causing it to fall down. Her sharp and prompt decision to replace it with Jiji, as they both have quite similar looks, proves her agency. Her agency is another semiotic code shown in Datum 5. This is then against the archetype of *shōjo* in Japanese animated films. As *shōjo* is often famous for sentimentality, Kiki takes the other way around. She does not fall into sadness. Her clear mind enables her to make the right decision to not be late in delivering the present. As a result, the present reaches its destination punctually.

Soon after delivering the present, Kiki searches for the falling cat doll in the forest, and she meets Ursula, the artist there. Ursula offers her a deal to clean the cabin's floor in return for Ursula's goodwill to stitch the damaged cat doll (Datum 6). Kiki accepts the deal, and then she cleans the cabin's floor. Cleaning the floor is considered a daily chore. Therefore, when Kiki is cleaning Ursula's, this activity is part of daily human tasks. The cleaning activity done by Kiki makes Kiki more human. The daily task humanizes her. The human side of Kiki in this scene is also shown when Kiki earns payment (getting the cat doll stitched). Two semiotic codes of cleaning the floor and earning payment occur and portray Kiki's opposing trait. This fact challenges the archetype of *shōjo*. *Shōjo* is represented as doing non-daily chores such as saving people or rescuing somebody, dealing with extreme disasters, and fighting bad spirits.

The process of humanizing Kiki in *Kiki's Delivery Service* also happens in the scene where Kiki breaks her magical broomstick and loses her power to fly (Datum 7). She also loses her ability to communicate with Jiji. This earthy phenomenon is caused by Kiki's insecurity and disappointment related to her new friend, Tombo. Even though Kiki finally can regain her power to fly again, her ability to communicate with Jiji is gone forever. Her loss of power is a test of her independence, concentration, and self-esteem. As the archetype of *shōjo* mentions, *shōjo*'s magical power is always innate, inherent, and due to lineage or ancestry. This archetype, however, does not work for Kiki. Kiki's magical power is innate, yet it does not mean that it stays there forever. This is proven by Kiki's inability to communicate with Jiji. This fact does not meet the expectation of witch *shōjo* as portrayed in the archetype. The earthy and humane phenomenon of losing ability in this datum turns out to be a strong semiotic code portraying the different Kiki's traits.

The last scene of the film depicts Kiki saving Tombo from an accident of falling off the dirigible (Datum 8). As mentioned before, Kiki loses her magical power to fly when her magical broomstick is broken. When she sees Tombo hanging in the flying dirigible, she borrows a broom from a bystander.

She focuses on her mind and improves her self-confidence, and eventually, she flies with the broom. In the *shōjo* archetype, a *shōjo* always relies on certain magical weapons in order to perform her duties. This magical weapon is irreplaceable. Kiki, however, does not fit this archetype. In the mission of saving Tombo, Kiki borrows a broom which is not something magical since that broom belongs to a bystander. She grasps and picks any available nearby broom randomly. This random broom is a semiotic code showing how different Kiki's characteristic is. To end the section, Kiki's representation in all eight data is presented in Table 10 below.

Table 10 Kiki's Representation

Stereotypical Archetype of *shōjo*	Kiki's Representation
Being shy, timid, sweet, cute (*kawaii*)	Being distinctive, independent, and assertive
wearing stylish dress, styling the hair, and wearing make-up	wearing black costume, believing in traditional Japanese culture in her most important stage of life and also her new life beginning as a witch
Being sentimental over some bad experience	having a clear mind, making a sharp and prompt decision
Doing non-earthy tasks	Doing simple daily human chores
Possessing innate and timeless magical power	Possessing innate magical power that might be gone due to certain reasons
Relying on one magical weapon	Making any broom her weapon

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the whole discussion on Kiki, her portrayal in *Kiki's Delivery Service,* is truly distinctive as opposing the archetype of *shōjo* through semiotic codes in eight scenes. The semiotic codes in eight scenes (mixing a potion, strong will move out, the emphasis of having a good heart, plain black dress, the initiative for greeting and starting a conversation, the act of helping in a new place, strong agency, doing a daily human chore, earning payment, losing power to communicate with Jiji, and random broom) represent Kiki's opposing traits. Her traits are different from what has been depicted in common Japanese *shōjo*. Her assertiveness and independence are shown not only in doing the daily human chores such as delivering packages, delivering a pacifier, and cleaning the floor, but also in the time when she loses her magical power due to a personal psychological problem.

Besides, her belief in herself to become the best witch with a good heart is evident in her wearing a simple black dress, which eventually turns out to be an important Japanese colour to wear at a significant moment. Having a clear mind to make a sharp and prompt decision in emergency situations also becomes a valuable emotional and psychological trait of Kiki. Finally, Kiki can represent herself as a *shōjo* having innate magical power that still makes her an earthy human being in the sense that her magical power can be gone anytime due to certain reasons. In order to regain it back, she has to rely again

on her valuable traits as a human being by focusing on her mind and improving her self-confidence.

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