

SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF THE LITTLE MERMAID MOVIE POSTER USING PEIRCE (1996)

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ABSTRACT

Movie poster has a commercial value and is used to advertise the movie. This research is conducted to analyze the sign depicted as well as the meaning from the Little Mermaid movie poster. This research used qualitative descriptive analysis method to explain the sign and its meaning. Furthermore, Semiotic from Charles Sander Peirce is used to analyze the sign and its meaning. To support the analysis, various journals and books are used as the reference. The result of this study indicated that there are two types of signs found in movie posters, namely qualisign and sinsign. The Little Mermaid movie poster also contained two different kinds of objects, namely Icons and Indexes, where the index is also further divided into spatial and temporal indexes. The last thing from the poster found was the interpretant which is the connection and the meaning of signs and objects. From the result, it can be concluded that each sign that depicted in the movie poster is represented well, not only through the visual one, but also the non-verbal one. It is because we could also get an official information on where we can find or see the movie, which is very crucial for the movie poster.

Keywords: Semiotic, Peirce, Sign, Object, Interpretant

INTRODUCTION

People communicate through various ways. In various languages, communication can be categorized into two things, namely verbal communication and non - verbal communication (Saleha, 2023:2). Those many ways are divided into face-to-face communication through words, eye movements, changes in facial expressions, body movements, and so on. One of the ways for people to communicate is through language. Language is a system that set to be used as a way to communicate in community to carry a message (Simatupang, 2019:120). Language, in this aspect, can be called as sign that carry messages. Language signs are often utilized in two forms, which are verbal (written) and non-verbal signs (visual). These signs usually represent and convey meaning, which can be expressed in explicit or implicit meaning. To communicate, we also need media because it can assist people in properly and effectively transferring information from one person to another. Many media can be intermediaries for communication between humans such as radio, tape recorder, television, advertiser, and others. One of the media that can help people to communicate is movie poster. Movie poster is one of media used by movie production companies. Juliantri (2014:3) explains that movie poster is a significant aspect that cannot be left out from movie production. It is because it (the movie poster) allows the company to reach a bigger audience and deliver or promote more detail about a movie. The reason it can reach a bigger audience is because the messages (signs) are conveyed or unraveled. Semiotic is a study on how messages can be shown or communicated through signs (Simatupang, 2019:124). Meanwhile Zoest stated that the semiotics is a science used to study signs. And in his view, semiotics is everything that can be observed or made observable can be called signs and signs are not limited to objects (Zoest,

1993:18) In Peirce's theory of signs, a sign is something that stands in a well-defined kind of relation to two other things, its object and its interpretant sign (Peirce, 1996: 23).

According to Peirce (1996), there are three aspects of signs. The three aspects are divided into sign, object, and interpretant, and this is commonly referred to as the triadic semiosis. In addition to this, according to Peirce, a sign or representamen is the first thing to stand in a true triadic connection to a second thing, known as its object, in order to instruct a third thing, known as its interpretant, to stand in the same triadic relation to its object as it does to itself. A representamen is something that anyone can use to stand in for another person in some capacity or recognition. It makes an identical sign, or maybe a more sophisticated sign, inside the ideas of any individual it targets. Additionally, the object is anything that should be a sign and it must "represent.". The interpretant, according to Peirce in Febriani, (2021:17), is a term for a sign's meaning. It is depicted by the interpreter as a possible factual or rational sign. In short, a sign is a representamen, object is something that is referred. Meanwhile, interpretant is the result from the object and the sign relationship.

Each term here has types. Sign is divided into Qualisign, Sinsign, and Legisign. According to Peirce (1996:90), qualisign is a sign that consists in a quality of feeling or a possibility. The example is the color of red could mean several things, which are love, danger, etc. Sinsign is sign based on shape or form in reality (Peirce, 1996:90). And the legisign expresses a conventionalized sign but most important, it is also a sign which denotes lawfulness in nature. Examples of legisign are passwords, insignias, tickets for a show, and etc. Object is also divided into three types, which are icon, index, and symbol. An icon is a sign that closely resembles what it stands for, or one that uses the same traits as what is meant. A sign is intended to simulate or reflect a reference source using an equation. Example: Signs directing people to the men's and women's restrooms at the restroom's door. symbol is A symbol is a sign that is established by a widely followed law or established by mutual consent. The symbol is a conventional and arbitrary type of sign. For instance, roses are often used as a sign of love. Dove as a blessings-related sign (Sinaga, 2022:32). In addition to index, it is also important to determine that index is also divided into three types, which are:

1. Spatial index: refers to the location or space of an object, creature and event in relation to the user of the sign. For example: an arrow can be interpreted as an explanatory word that shows something, such as there.

2. Temporal index: this index relates things to each other in terms of time. Example: Time graph with before and after captions.

3. Persona index: this index connects the parties who take part in a situation. Example: personal pronouns (I, we, he).

Lastly, interpretant according to Peirce (Nurma 2019:5) more directed to the meaning of signs and objects. Peirce also stated that the meaning resulting from the sign 'chain' is then called as interpretant. On the other hand, interpretant is defined as the result of the connection between sign and object. Several studies regarding movie poster using semiotic approach have been conducted. Rezeki et al in their study conducted research regarding KKN Desa Kenari using Semiotic approach by Peirce. They stated that all the signs included in the poster represents the stereotype of "horror" movies in Indonesia (Rezeki et al, 2023:27-32). However, they did not specify it which sign elements are in accordance of horror" movies stereotype in Indonesia. Octavia et al also conducted research about semiotic signs using Peirce's perspective. The study object is 'Transformania' movie poster. In the study, they analyzed the signs using Barthes' perspective.

According to Charles Sanders Peirce, one form of signs are words. Something can be called as a sign if it fulfills two conditions which are:

1. Can be perceived both with the five senses and with feelings or thoughts.
2. Has a function as a marker (can represent something else)

The sign of triadic semiotics in this movie poster are sought using qualitative research methods.

METHOD

This study used a descriptive qualitative method with a semiotic approach from Peirce (1996). Descriptive method is utilized to explain the research analysis in a more accurate way (Sahin, Saugfta, and Cashew, 2021:1). Meanwhile according to Mukhtar (2013:10) the descriptive qualitative method is a method used by researchers to find knowledge or theory of research at a certain time. Furthermore, descriptive qualitative method is also used to gain more insightful ideas and better knowledge on how to do the analysis, such as the perspective to do the analysis. In addition to this, the authors also gathered variety of library as well as internet or journal sources to make the process of writing this journal run well. The data of this study is mostly are words or images. Therefore, this could mean that this research is classified as qualitative research. The source of the subject data is through www.bing.com to see which movie poster is the official movie poster used to advertise The Little Mermaid movie. The data consists of one official movie poster of The Little Mermaid movie and then the semiotic sign is sought from every element and everything contained in the movie poster which has been released in 2023.

RESULTS


In this study, the author uses movie poster as a media which will be analyzed using the semiotic theory put forward by Charles Sanders Peirce, and uses The Little Mermaid movie poster as the only object of this research. Figure 2 shows the movie poster of the Little Mermaid. In the movie poster, we could see words and images which can be classified as a sign. All these signs held meanings. From the picture, we can see that there are three (3) verbal signs and one (1) non-verbal sign as a unit, which consists of the visualization of the mermaid, the prince, the villain, the King of the sea, as well as the visualization of the sea itself (various fishes and the color of the sea).



Figure 1. The Little Mermaid Movie Poster

Furthermore, “IN CINEMAS SOON” as well as the list of the actors as well staff names are counted as one unit. Hence, the verbal sign in this movie poster is as follows: “Disney”, “The Little Mermaid”, and “IN CINEMAS SOON (one unit)”. Table 1 shows the analysis of the whole movie poster.

Table 1. Analysis of The Little Mermaid Movie Poster

Movie Poster	Sign / Represent	Object	Interpretant
	<p>Qualisign found in this poster is the color which are blue, white, green, and black. While the sinsign found in this poster are in the form of several characters and the expression they show such as little mermaid sitting on top of a rock, a man on the left standing with spear on his hand and crown on his head, a woman at the top of the poster, and a man standing on the top right.</p>	<p>Icon found in this poster is the Little Mermaid character sitting on a rock. Symbol found in this poster are spear, crown, and octopus tentacles. Index found are spatial index in the form of the seabed, temporal index in the form of daylight, and persona index in the form of the little mermaid, a man who is on the left side of the poster, a woman who is on the top side of the poster, and a man who is at the top right side of the poster.</p>	<p>Interpretant found in this poster are the meaning of the colors used such as blue which interprets the color of the sea and produces serenity in the poster, then the position of the Little Mermaid Character who sits on a rock in the middle of the poster and interprets that this figure is the main character in this poster. Then the gaze that is given by the Little Mermaid character has the meaning of hope for what is in the world above the sea.</p>

DISCUSSION

The Little Mermaid is a live action movie. The movie was originally shown in 3D images. The movie, though, received backlash from the viewers because of the choice of the actors as well as the movie posters made. Hence, this study is using The Little Mermaid's movie poster to analyze the signs depicted here. The Little Mermaid is about Ariel, the youngest of King Triton's daughters, is a charming and vivacious young mermaid with a desire for exploration. Ariel visits the surface out of a desire to learn more about the world above the water and falls in love with the handsome Prince Eric. She follows her heart and strikes a deal with Ursula, the wicked sea witch, to experience life on dry land.

After analysing the sign, object, as well as the interpretant from the Little Mermaid movie poster, further explanation is needed. Furthermore, in this case, the qualisign of The Little Mermaid movie poster is the colors shown in the movie which are blue that represent the color of the sea, white that represent the color of the light that descends from the sky and illuminates the seabed, green that represent the color of the moss that attached to the rock, and black that represent the color of the clothes worn by the woman on the upper side of the poster. The signs found in this poster are in the form of several characters and the expression they show such as little mermaid sitting on a rock and looking up with a "dreamy" look on her face, a man on the left standing with spear on his hand and crown on his head with a straight face, a woman at the top of the poster with a "serious" face as if she was staring at something, and a man standing on the top right who is looking at something with a sideways body position.

In this movie poster, the icon found is in the form of the Little Mermaid who sits on a rock and set as the main focus of the poster. Her presence as an icon of this poster is also supported by the use of various colors on her body compared to other characters which are made as if "one color". In another case, symbol found in this poster are in the form of spear, crown, and the octopus' tentacles. Spear as a weapon or hunting tool usually symbolizes that the user is a fighter. The spear that appears in this poster is not an ordinary spear but a three-edge spear or commonly called a trident symbolizing purity, honesty, and courage. The crown that appears in this poster is a symbol of power, glory, and prosperity for its user. Just like the trident, the crown is not used by just anyone and the user usually has a high throne and power. The octopus' tentacle is a symbol of emotion, intelligence, and flexibility. The octopus is one of the smartest animals and is often able to trick its enemies or targets under the sea. Besides of the icon and symbol, this poster also contains index such as temporal index, spatial index, and persona index. The temporal index found in this poster is the time setting of this poster which is in the daylight as evidenced by the presence of sunlight from above the sea shining on the seabed to hit the body of the Little Mermaid. The spatial index found in this poster is the setting of the place, which is in the ocean. This is evidenced by the blue color produced by the sea water, swimming fish, and some of the characters in the poster don't have legs but have tails similar to those of fish to move underwater. The persona index found in this poster is in the form of the characters seen in the poster. First, the woman sitting on the rock in the center of poster, namely Little Mermaid. Then the man on the left who holds a trident, and uses a crown and is named King Triton. Then there is also a woman at the top of the poster, named Ursula, who looks like a witch wearing all black and has legs shaped like octopus' tentacles. And there is a man at the top right of the poster who stands sideways. The man's name is Prince Eric.

The interpretant found in this poster is the meaning of the signs and objects found in this poster. The meaning of the colors found in this poster is translated into blue which

interprets the color of the sea and means serenity. Then the white color that interprets sunlight and means purity, cleanliness, and honesty. The green color that interprets the moss that is above the rocks and in the coral reefs at the bottom of the poster. The green color has the meaning of growth, fertility, to health and well-being for those who see it. Then there is the black color which interprets the clothes worn by Ursula. The black color has a meaning of mystery, silence, and power that leads to negative things. Then the position of the Little Mermaid herself, who is in the center of the poster, made with a large size and a brighter color than the other characters, interprets that she is the main character in the film poster and is the center of attention. The gaze given by the Little Mermaid interpreted that she was amazed and curious about what was above the ocean. This is supported by the presence of sunlight shining on her and her position that looking up with a little smile drawn on her face.

CONCLUSION

According to the study's findings, there are two different sorts of indicators that can be seen on movie posters: qualisign (shown by any colors that detected in the movie poster) and sinsign (shown by expressions given by the characters in the poster). The movie poster for *The Little Mermaid* likewise used three distinct types of items, namely Icons (the character), Indexes, and Symbols. With the latter further broken down into spatial (the location), temporal indexes (the time setting of the poster) and persona indexes (which is any characters involved in the poster). The final type of interpretant we discover in interpretants is the meaning of signs and objects found from the poster. From the findings, it can be inferred that each indicator displayed in the movie poster is accurately represented, both visually and non-verbally. The official information on where to find or watch the movie, which is essential for the movie poster, might also be obtained from this poster.

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