

Verbal and Non Verbal Signs on *Webtoon Seasons of Blossom*

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Abstract--This article is entitled Verbal and Non Verbal Signs on Webtoon Seasons of Blossom. This article mainly focuses on analysing verbal and non verbal signs on *webtoon Seasons of Blossom*. It was aimed to identify the signifier and signified of verbal and non verbal signs, and explain the relationship between the verbal and non verbal signs to determine a meaningful event on *webtoon Seasons of Blossom*. The theory by Saussure is used to analyze the signifiers and signified of the verbal and non verbal signs as the first problem. The theory by McCloud is used to analyze the second problem about relationship between words and pictures. Qualitative method are used in this article. The source of data is the 28th episode with the sub-title *Bomi's Flower (28)* by using documentation method. The data were presented in the form of pictures and table. The result of analysis shows that the signifiers and the signified are found in the verbal and non verbal signs on webtoon Seasons of Blossom. The verbal and non verbal signs are work well to support each other in delivering the idea. The relationship between verbal and non verbal signs are also determine a meaningful event in the analysis.

Keyword: Verbal Sign, Non Verbal Signs, Webtoon

Abstrak--Artikel ini berjudul Verbal dan Non Verbal Signs on Webtoon Seasons of Blossom. Artikel berfokus pada analisa tanda verbal dan non verbal pada webtoon Seasons of Blossom. Itu ditujukan untuk mengidentifikasi signifier (tanda) dan signified (penanda) dari tanda verbal dan non verbal, dan untuk menjelaskan hubungan antara tanda verbal dan non verbal untuk menentukan rangkaian cerita yang memiliki arti pada webtoon Seasons of Blossom. Teori oleh Saussure digunakan untuk menganalisa tanda dan penanda pada tanda verbal dan non verbal di webtoon Seasons of Blossom sebagai masalah pertama. Lalu, teori oleh McCloud digunakan untuk menganalisa masalah kedua tentang hubungan antara kata-kata dan gambar. Metode kualitatif digunakan dalam artikel ini. Sumber data yang digunakan dalam artikel ini adalah episode ke-28 dengan sub judul webtoon Bomi's Flower (28) dengan menggunakan metode dokumentasi. Data disajikan dalam bentuk gambar dan tabel. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa signifier dan signified terdapat pada tanda verbal dan non verbal webtoon Seasons of Blossom. Tanda-tanda verbal dan non verbal bekerja dengan baik untuk mendukung satu sama lain dalam menyampaikan gagasan. Hubungan antara tanda-tanda verbal dan non verbal juga menentukan peristiwa yang bermakna dalam analisis.

Kata Kunci: *Tanda Verbal, Tanda Non verbal, Webtoon*

1. Introduction

Language sign is a sound of a language which represent a certain object. (Manaf, 2021). According to *Course in General Linguistic* (Saussure, 1916). A sign is made up of two parts: the signifier (the sound or image) and the signified (the idea). The signified is what is being referred to, and the signifier takes the shape of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. In this context, the signified might be thought of as a sign's meaning. (Chandler, 2001)

There are two main categories of signs, namely, verbal and nonverbal. (Lanir, 2019) Signs spoken verbally can be broken down into various parts by reading the text. (Putri, 2020) Nonverbal communication may take the shape of visuals, sounds, animations, or even colors.

Comics rely on both verbal and nonverbal signs for their meaning and the quality of the pictures they offer their audience. (Cohn, 2005) Talk about comics, which are one of the forms of media that may be used to communicate our thoughts. In his book *Understanding Comics* (McCloud, 1993), Scott McCloud described sequential art and comics as sequences of visual components, such as images or paintings, that are intended to convey meaning or evoke an emotional response from the reader. McCloud also classified comics as a kind of sequential art. The ability to read and enjoy comics in digital format is growing in popularity. *Webtoon* is one of several online comic book options. *Webtoon* is a comic from South Korean. (Wikipedia, 2023)

This article is necessary because it was aimed to identify the signifier and the signified of the verbal and non verbal signs on *webtoon Seasons of Blossom* and to explain the relationship between the verbal and non verbal signs to determine a meaningful event on *webtoon Seasons of Blossom*.

Semiotics is not a new topic of discussion. It has been discussed in a huge number of articles and article. "A Semiotics Perspective of Text: the Picture Story Book Event" by Golden (Golden, 1990) is the

first article related to my article. This article examines picture book graphics and words and the picture storybook event from a semiotic standpoint. The relevance of this article is this article addresses the relationship between words and pictures.

The following article that is related to this topic is "Semiotic Analysis of The Simpsons Memes in Memes.com Instagram" written by Sumeisey (2019). Because of this article, the audience now comprehends the significance of memes and knows of the statements, explanations, and messages that meme users are attempting to express. The main difference between my proposal and this article is because this thesis applies Pierce's theory to evaluate the sign and the meaning of The Simpsons Memes. My proposal focuses on analyzing a different set of memes.

The next relevant article is by Sary (2021) "A Visual Semiotic Analysis on *Webtoon Ghost Teller*". The result of this research is both the writer and the reader understand the meaning behind the drawing of the *webtoon* also to identify the signs that are found in the *webtoon Ghost Teller*, and to interpret the meaning of the signs found in the *webtoon Ghost Teller*. This article uses a different main theory, which is by Charles Sanders, and only focuses on explaining legisign, icon, and the rheme. However, the relevance of this article lies in the fact that it discusses the same issue as the previous one, which is analyzing verbal and non verbal signs in the webtoon. (Andhika Dhananjaya et al., 2019)

An article by Suardani (2022) with title "An Analysis of Verbal and Visual Signs Found in the Posters of Korean Pop Idol" also has the same topic with this article. (Suardani et al., 2022) The result of this article is those ten posters of Korean pop idol show the verbal and visual signs that support the agencies to promote their idols. In the verbal and visual signs of the posters album and concert of Korean idol show most all of them conveys connotative meaning. In the non verbal signs of the advertisements almost all of the posters of Korean

idol used the member of the idol group as a model, The differences between my article and this article is, this thesis uses Barthes' theory to analyze the meaning of verbal and visual signs in the posters of Korean pop idol.

2. Research Method

This article' research approach involves the data source, method and technique of collecting data, method and technique of analyzing data and method and technique of presenting data.

2.1 Data Source

The *webtoon "Seasons of Blossom,"* authored by HONGDUCK and illustrated by NEMONE, was used for this article. The data came from episode 28 with the sub-title *Bomi's Flower (28)*. This *webtoon* was published in March 2021 and can be viewed at https://www.webtoons.com/en/romance/seasonsofblossom/ep-28-bomis-flower-28/viewer?title_no=2509&episode_no=28. This article only covers *webtoon Seasons of Blossom* episode 28 because it has similar data to the previous episodes. This *webtoon* was converted into a TV drama in 2022. The *webtoon* is about spring youth and love blossoming in all seasons.

2.2 Method and Technique of Collecting Data

Documentation method was used to collect data by downloading the *webtoon* application from the *App-Store*. The data was collected using note-taking.

The data was collected via multiple steps. First, download the application namely "WEBTOON" on the *App-Store* then search "Seasons of Blossom" story. Second, softcopy data was acquired from the *webtoon*. Third, read all the chapters on the *webtoon* and pick an episode to be analyzed. This article was used 28th episode because the data already consisting of words and pictures and enough to presented the whole data. As such, a selection of panels was made

with the aim of effectively conveying the entirety of the chapters. Finally, notes both verbal and non verbal, that may be found throughout the chapters of the *webtoon*.

2.3 Method and Technique of Analyzing Data

Since all data were written, this article used qualitative and library methods. First, the selected *webtoon* episode 28 was screenshotted panel by panel to analyze data. Tables separated each panel into two sections. The first section contains verbal signs, the second non verbal signs, and each of them was divided again into two columns of signifier and signified. The *webtoon Seasons of Blossom* analyzes the signifiers and signified of verbal and non verbal signs using Saussure's semiotic theory. Then, McCloud's theory is applied to determine the relationship between words and pictures.

2.4 Method and Technique of Presenting Analysis

This article was applied descriptive method to analyze the first and second problems. The *Seasons of Blossom webtoon* episode 28 pictures was used to display the data. This proposal analyzed the first problem using the table. Verbal and non verbal signs were separated into two tables. For the second problems, this proposal was described in a paragraph.

3. Result and Discussion



1.	There is white Cherry blossom flowers are blooming means blooming on the tree	it was spring season
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Panel 1 depicts Korean cherry blossoms in spring (Hilde, 2022). This photo shows the story's spring setting. A rectangular bubble with no tail contains the **I wonder when it happened. I hadn't been interested in much else beside gaming and my friends.** Ilkaperea (Perea, 2021) defines caption as a rectangular bubble without a tail it conveys the narrator's words to advance the story. Therefore, it can be interpreted as the story's narration.

The relation between words and picture in this panel is used a **Word Specific Combination** since all the words in this panel take a dominant role to explain the course of the story.

3.1

3.2 Panel 1

Table (3-1)

VERBAL SIGNS		
NO	SIGNIFIERS	SIGNIFIED
1.	I WONDER WHEN IT HAPPENED.	The narration of the story tells about someone wondering something
2.	I HADN'T BEEN INTERESTED IN MUCH ELSE BESIDE GAMING AND MY FRIENDS.	The narration of the story tells about someone did not interested with other beside games and his friends.
NON VERBAL SIGNS		
NO	SIGNIFIERS	SIGNIFIED

3.3 Panel 2

Table (3-2)

VERBAL SIGNS		
NO	SIGNIFIERS	SIGNIFIED
1.	IT'S BOMI YUN AND JAEMIN LEE	One of the students is telling his friends that in front of them are Bomi Yun and Jaemin Lee
NON VERBAL SIGNS		
NO	SIGNIFIERS	SIGNIFIED
1.	Three of the five uniformed	They are walking to

people headed their school
the way, while
the others
followed
behind.

- | | | |
|----|---|------------------------------|
| 2. | A young man with light brown hair and an open mouth carries a toska bag. | This character is Jaemin Lee |
| 3. | A young woman with short red hair and a white bag on her shoulder caressing her head. | Unnamed character |
| 4. | A young woman with brown hair and a pink purse, her lips wide. | This character is Bomi Yun |

Five members of the panel can be seen strolling around the scene. Bomi Yun and Jaemin Lee are the main characters of this story since everyone else in their school are likely to have heard of them.

This panel shows how words and pictures can work together to say something that neither one could say on its own. This is called an **Interdependent Combination**. So, the words explain what the pictures are, and the pictures show what the words mean.

3.4 Panel 3

Table (3-3)

VERBAL SIGNS		
There are no verbal signs in this panel		
NON VERBAL SIGNS		
NO	SIGNIFIERS	SIGNIFIED
1.	A person with	Look towards

half a face and black hair turned his head and looked ahead.	the direction that his friend mentioned before.
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This panel shows a half-faced boy with no emotion, which shows that the person is quite mysterious and stares at someone in front of him. The last picture shows that this boy looks to the front to glimpse the person his friend told him about.

In this panel, the relationship is **Picture-Specific Combination**. This panel does not convey much with words it is mostly a picture. The people would only understand what the author means by looking at the picture.

3.5 Panel 4

Table (3-4)

VERBAL SIGNS		
There are no verbal signs in this panel		
NON VERBAL SIGNS		
NO	SIGNIFIERS	SIGNIFIED
1.	Portrait of a girl from the back with brown hair opens her mouth	She was joking with her friends beside her

In this panel, a girl with brown hair and some of her friends are shown laughing. This panel depicts the scene from the boy's point of view in the previous panel. It is unclear how the female character is feeling because the author has not yet shown her whole face.

Since there are no verbal signs or words to explain the occurrence, **Picture Specific Combination** was again employed in this panel.

Furthermore, the first to the second panel indicate the application of **Aspect to Aspect Transition**. This panel shows different aspects coinciding within the same scene in an ongoing event. Then, the second panel until the last panel indicates the use of **Subject to Subject Transition**

since the second until the last panel shows a different character on each panel.



3.6 Panel 1

Table (3-5)

VERBAL SIGNS		
NO	SIGNIFIERS	SIGNIFIED
1.	BUT BECAUSE OF SOMETHING UNEXPECTED THEY SAY...	The unfinished narration of the narrative reveals that one of the characters made an unexpected statement.
2.	I...	A young woman with brown hair and pink outfits has something she wants to communicate.
3.	...LIKE JINYEONG!	A young lady with brown hair and pink outfits said haltingly that she has feelings for Jinyeong.

NON VERBAL SIGNS		
NO	SIGNIFIERS	SIGNIFIED
1.	A girl with dark hair and an open mouth, showing only half of her face, is sweating.	She reveals that she likes Jinyeong, although with some hesitation.

A narrative can be found at the beginning of the panel, and it says, **but because of something unexpected they say...** The ellipsis at the end of the sentence signifies that the sentence is not ended yet and that further information will follow. (Merriam, n.d.) A signifier **I...like Jinyeong**, is a verbal sign related to text and words. In this sentence, the character named “Jinyeong” is mentioned by the girl, who is likely the main character. Her statement begins with "...". She did not express full conviction when stating that he had feelings for Jinyeong.

This discussion utilized the **Interdependent Combination** approach. It was not very clear from the pictures in this panel that a girl meant to convey something other than the words "I...like Jinyeong." As a result, this sentence provides support for the picture by speaking the words about how she feels to Jinyeong.

3.7 Panel 2

Table (3-6)

VERBAL SIGNS		
NO	SIGNIFIERS	SIGNIFIED
1.	SPLUTTER	The choking noise

NON VERBAL SIGNS		
NO	SIGNIFIERS	SIGNIFIED

1.	There were three students eating, one of them coughed and spat at his friend who was in front of him, while his other friend tried to avoid getting hit.	While another student was enjoying a cola, one of them was startled and choked on some of the drink.
2.	There is a brown table and chairs	They are at the canteen

In the panel, it is shown that the boy on the left side of the page just choked on his drink and spat out his friend who was sitting in front of him. He was surprised by what he heard. The other boy on the right side of the plate was disgusted by his buddy, who spit out his drink, and as a result, he chose to avoid him while guarding his hamburger.

The **Duo Specific Combination** was utilized for this panel since the word and the picture together express the same concept.

3.8 Panel 3

Table (3-7)

VERBAL SIGNS		
NO	SIGNIFIERS	SIGNIFIED
1.	GROSS	He feels disgusted

NON VERBAL SIGNS		
NO	SIGNIFIERS	SIGNIFIED
1.	A young man with black hair can be seen eating a hamburger with his lips open while gazing at his next	He was protecting his hamburger with a disgusted expression

In light of the fact that this boy's character's face was not revealed clearly in the previous panel, this picture of a boy with his complete face is evident by zooming in on the character. Considering that the other character's face was not displayed clearly, this boy can be inferred to be the main character of the story. Therefore, his name is Jinyeong. His expression already tells that he feels disgusted. So, the caption on this picture is **gross** which means something dirty. (Dictionary, 2023a)

3.9 Panel 4

Table (3-8)

VERBAL SIGNS		
NO	SIGNIFIERS	SIGNIFIED
1.	I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!	An expression of surprise and confusion at what they had just found out
2.	JINYEONG CHOI?	The character's name
3.	OH MY GOSH! WOW.	An expression of surprise by another character
4.	GLANCE	He catch a glimpse to the back
5.	...YOU BECOME AWARE OF THEIR	The continuation of the previous narration, which

EXISTENCE FOR THE FIRST TIME.	describes how the character becomes aware of the presence of another people.
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NON VERBAL SIGNS

NO	SIGNIFIERS	SIGNIFIED
1.	The character was glancing at someone.	Jinyeong was curious and glancing at someone who talked about him behind him

This panel illustrates the situation in which someone spreads rumors about Jinyeong. Jinyeong cast a sideways glance in their direction because they were talking about him, and he got the impression that they were calling him.

In **Interdependent Combination**, the relationship between the verbal and non verbal indicators on this panel is utilized as a tool. The photos and the words in this panel complement one another to provide more depth of meaning and to depict an entire event.

3.10 Panel 5

Table (3-9)

VERBAL SIGNS

There are no verbal signs in this panel

NON VERBAL SIGNS

NO	SIGNIFIERS	SIGNIFIED
1.	Portrait of a girl from the back who is not clear	Bomi was silent and give no expression

It was revealed in the panel before this one that Bomi is currently in the midst of a conversation through the dialogue. Because the author chose not to

portray her expression in this panel, we can infer that Bomi is not revealing how she is really feeling.

Panel 2 applies a **Picture Specific Combination**. There are no words supporting this picture that describe the activity that is taking place on this panel. The primary idea is conveyed by the illustration of a faceless woman standing behind another who is looking forward.

3.11 Panel 6

Table (3-10)

VERBAL SIGNS

There are no verbal signs in this panel

NON VERBAL SIGNS

NO	SIGNIFIERS	SIGNIFIED
1.	The character was opening her mouth and little bit sweating on her cheeks	Bomi was smiling

The illustration in panel 3 shows that Bomi was smiling while a little sweat was appearing on her cheeks. According to Cambridge Dictionary (Dictionary, 2023c) A smile is characterized by the corners of the mouth turning upwards ever-so-slightly, and the lips parting slightly to expose the teeth.

Panel 3 applies **Picture Specific Combination** because in this panel, there are no words that consist.

In addition, the application of **Aspect to Aspect Transition** is shown in both the first and second panels. It is clear that each of these panels depicts a different aspect of the same event; however, they all relate to the same story. Following that, from the second panel up until the fourth panel, there is evidence of the use of a **Subject to Subject Transition**. This is because the author is displaying a shift in how they regard the character. After that, the panel that came before the last one used a transition

called **Moment to Moment Transition** to show the character going from having no expression to smiling.

4. Conclusions

This article is a qualitative descriptive analysis which has aims to identify the signifier and the signified of the verbal and non verbal signs on *webtoon Seasons of Blossom* and to explain the relationship between the verbal and non verbal signs to determine a meaningful event on *webtoon Seasons of Blossom*.

The study shows that HONGDUCK's *webtoon Seasons of Blossom's* verbal and non verbal signs contain signifiers and signified. The verbal signals help work with the non verbal signs by indicating character's identity, conversations, and emotion. The non verbal indicators are shown in photos of the character's expression, plot locations, and actions.

Both verbal and non verbal signs have a variety of forms that work together to define a meaningful occurrence in the *webtoon Seasons of Blossom*. Word-specific, image-specific, pair-specific, additive, parallel, and interdependent combinations all appear in this dissection of the *webtoon Seasons of Blossom*. Moment-to-moment, action-to-action, aspect-to-aspect, and subject-to-subject transitions all help establish the significance of an event in this *webtoon*.

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