Semiotic Analysis of Four Popular *"Memes"* in Memecenter.com

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Abstrak

   Studi ini berjudul "Semiotic Analysis of Four Popular 'Memes' in memecenter.com". Studi ini menggunakan empat macam meme yaitu, "Oh God" meme, "Forever Alone" meme, "Poker face" meme dan "Fuu" meme. Adapun studi ini bertujuan untuk mencari tahu penanda dan petanda dari keempat meme yang digunakan, serta mencari tahu fungsi dan deskripsi dari masing-masing meme sesuai dengan rumusan masalah yang diterapkan.

   Teori yang digunakan untuk menganalisis penanda dan petanda dalam masing-masing meme adalah teori tentang semiotic oleh Ferdinand de Saussure (1983), untuk menganalisis fungsi dari meme itu sendiri menggunakan teori oleh Pierce (1885), dan untuk menganalisis deskripsi dari meme sesuai konteks situasi adalah teori yang dikemukakan oleh Dell Hymes tentang S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model. Data pada studi ini didapatkan dari internet dalam situs memecenter.com yang menyuguhkan segala bentuk meme. Data dipilih dengan cara diamati, lalu mengklasifikasikan meme sesuai dengan meme yang digunakan dalam studi ini, kemudian data yang sudah diklasifikasiakan didownload, data pada studi ini dianalisis dengan metode kuantitatif. Data yang didapatkan ditampikan dalam bentuk deskripsi.

   Setiap meme yang digunakan dalam studi ini memiliki penanda dan petanda. Masing-masing meme memiliki fungsi khususnya tersendiri karena meme pada dasarnya diciptakan dari ekspresi wajah manusia dalam bentuk kartun. Ketika meme digunakan dalam sebuah postingan di memecenter.com, di dalamnya pasti memiliki tema dan bagaimana meme itu mendeskripsikan situasi dan kondisi di dalam postingan.

Kata kunci: meme, fungsi, penanda dan petanda, deskripsi

1. Background of the Study

   Internet is very famous nowadays for satisfying people with various services related to various different fields. It is a very versatile facility which can help you complete many tasks easily and conveniently with few clicks. It can be any work of daily usage or any specific service which needs a lot of research and formalities to be done beforehand. Nowadays, people have made use of internet for various purposes in order to meet their needs. People use internet to earn a living, support their jobs, access social networks, or just to entertain themselves after exhausting daily activities. Starting

from a need for entertainment from the internet, sites that contain jokes began to emerge. Among the sites thatgive you some of entertaining things, there is one site which is more popular among the other sites that people usually visit,that is, memecenter.com. The jokes that were posted on memecenter.com come from various backgrounds, but all the people who visited the site understand the *memes* and used it, the typical comical sign used in memecenter.com.

2. Problems of the Study

1. What are the signifiers and signified of the *memes* used in memecenter.com?
2. What are the function and the description of the *memes* used in the post?

3. Aims of the Study

The aims of the sudy are to find out the signifier and signified of the memes, and also to find out the function and descripions of the memes when they are used in the post.

4. Research method

This study was conducted through three steps, determination of data source, data collection and how the data were analyzed.

4.1 Data source

The data to be analyzed in this study were taken from the memecenter.com. This study took four popular *memes*. Actually, there are many kinds of *memes* based on specific regions, for example, the original *memes* of Indonesia, Java *memes,* Western *memes* etc. This study took western *memes* to be analyzed, they are "Oh God" meme, "Poker face" meme, "Forever Alone" meme and "Fuu" meme.

4.2 Method and Technique of Collecting Data

Library and online research. First, in order to get some information about the theory of semiotics, context of situation, meaning, the concepts of signs, library research were applied, it is needed to be used in analyzing the second problem of this study. Next, online research was applied to collect the data from memecenter.com.

There were three steps in collecting data from internet, The steps were observing, classifying, and downloading the meme. The *memes* were observed on the website of the *memes*, it is memecenter.com. Then, the writer classified the *memes*

based on the four *memes* used in this study, they are; "Oh God" meme, "Poker Face" meme, "Forever Alone" meme and the last is "Fuu" meme.

4.3 Method and Techniques of Analyzing Data

The data analyzed based on the theories applied in this study. There are three theories used; they are the theory of semiotics by Saussure, theory of signs by Pierce, and the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model from Dell Hymes. First, to find out the signifiers and signified of the *memes* using the Saussure's theory. Second to find out the function of the memes and how the memes describe the current situation when they are used in the post based on theory proposed by Pierce and Dell Hymes.

5. Semiotic Analysis of *Memes* in Memecenter.com
5.1 Signifier and Signified of "Forever Alone"*Meme*

"Forever alone" meme is a meme in form of facial human being expression used quite often in Memecenter posts. The characteristics and appearance of this meme is described below:

a. A messed up swollen face

b. A forced-like smile on the face

c. Crying eyes, with tears stream on the face

d. The name of the meme, "Forever alone"

The "Forever Alone" meme has some its own signifiers and signified. The signifiers and the signified of the meme are the features from original form of the meme-itself. There are:

Signifiers	Signified
A messed up swollen face.	A messy face with many lines and dots around the face indicating that the person is not well to maintain him/herself. No one cares to him/her.
A forced-like smile on the face with a tear stream on the face.	Indicating a person who is in the deep sadness but they are still pretending to be okay.
A Phrase of "Forever alone" as the name of the meme.	The name of the meme is "Forever alone" means that he/she always does anything by him/herself, no one accompanying in his/her lifetime.

5.2. The Function and Descriptions of the *Memes* Used in M*emecenter.com*

Every *meme* hastheir own specific function that appears in the post. Firstly the writer classified the signs in the post, which one is symbol, icon, or index. Secondly, the writer finds out the theme of the meme, every *meme* used in the post in memecenter.com must have a theme. The last is the function and description of the meme that can be assumed by seeing how the meme and the other sign act and what they are representing that time based on the theme applied in the post.

There is a symbol that can be seen in the post, there are;

a. A "heart" on the letter representing or symbolizing a love.

Icon/iconic: a mode in which the signifier is perceived as *resembling* or imitating the signified (recognizably looking, sounding, feeling, tasting or smelling like it) - being similar in possessing some of its qualities: e.g. a portrait, a cartoon.

There are some icons that appear in this post, they are;

a. The letter
b. The mailbox

Index/indexical: a mode in which the signifier is *not arbitrary* but is *directly connected* in some way (physically or causally) to the signified - this link can be observed or inferred.

There is an index that appears in this post, there are;

There is a mail in mail box means someone has sent it; in this case, the character got a mail and the one who send it is himself because he is so sad and lonely that no one ever pay attention to him.

The theme of the story is about loneliness. This is about the loneliness felt by the character on the story because no one cares about him.According to the symbol, icons, index and the theme of the meme above, it can concluded that the function of "Forever alone" *meme* is used to represent a facial expression of someone who is sad, because he lives without any companion and he is pretending to be okay.

The situation in the post is described by "Forever alone" meme. The series of events are analysed as follows:

a. Setting and Scene

The setting in this post is in front of the main character's house. Scene is the "psychological setting" of a scene. The psychological setting in this post is the sad feeling of the character.

b. Participants

The participants are the speaker and the hearer in this story. In this case, the participant in this story is the main character himself.

c. End

The end of this story is the sad feeling of the character, no one put an eye or even care about him. The end of this story is also emphasized by the "Forever alone" meme by indicating that he is in the state of sadness and pretending to be okay.

d. Act Sequence

Act sequence is the form and order of the event. The story of the post begins when the character looks in the mailbox and gets a letter, but the truth is the letter is sent by him to himself.

e. Key

The key in this post is the "Forever alone" meme and the expression that shows us a facial expression of someone who is "sad", it means that the main character undergoing a hard life because no one cares about him.

f. Instrumentalities

Instrumentalities are the form and style of speech. This post is using some kind of daily spoken English.

g. Norms

It must be hard for people to live a life by their own, we need someone or companion because human cannot live their life by themselves.

h. Genre

The story is telling a one-shot experience of the main character in a comic story. This story is more or less just like an anecdote, it is a short interesting story of the main character in the story.

From above analysis, it can be concluded that the "Forever alone" meme describes and emphasizes the psychological setting in this post, the character's feeling shows that he is so desperate, lonely and sad because no one puts an eye on him or even cares a bit about him. The end of the story is also emphasized by the "Forever alone" meme, indicates of someone who is sad

6. Conclusion

The four *memes* used in this study are "Oh God" meme, "Poker face" meme, "Forever alone" meme, and the last is "Fuu" meme which has signifier different from each other, so that the signified would be different from each other and there is no meme which is having the same signified.Different memes have different functions, and they could also describe the current situation when they are used in the post.

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