

Semiotic Study on Visual and Verbal Signs of Taylor Swift's Music Video "You Belong With Me" and Its Song Lyrics

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Abstract

Tulisan ini berjudul "Semiotic Study on Visual and Verbal Signs of Taylor Swift's Music Video" You Belong With Me ' and Its Song Lyrics" yang bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi unsur-unsur tanda visual yang ditampilkan di dalam video musik dan menganalisis makna tanda verbal yang terkandung di dalam lirik lagu dari video musik. Sumber data diambil dari video dan lirik lagu "You Belong With Me" oleh Taylor Swift. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode dokumentasi dan langkah-langkahnya diawali dengan mengunduh video melalui situs resmi kemudian di putar dan di tonton secara berulang ulang. Selanjutnya, memotong setiap adegan untuk menemukan unsur-unsur dari tanda visual yang ditampilkan di dalam video. Kedua, lirik lagu dari video di cari dari situs internet dan dibaca dengan seksama. Ketiga, lirik lagu diklasifikasikan berdasarkan atas jenis-jenis makna. Tulisan ini menggunakan dua teori utama yaitu teori komunikasi visual yang dikemukakan oleh Dyer (1993) untuk mengidentifikasi unsur-unsur dari tanda visual. Teori kedua adalah teori makna oleh Leech (1983) digunakan untuk menganalisis jenis-jenis makna dari tanda verbal. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa unsur-unsur tanda visual mencakup beberapa kategori seperti umur, jenis kelamin, rambut, badan, ukuran, pakaian, tampilan, ekspresi, kontak mata, sikap badan, sentuhan, pergerakan badan, alat peraga, tempat yang ditemukan dalam semua model terkecuali posisi komunikasi yang hanya ditemukan pada model utama. Terdapat tiga jenis makna yang terkandung dalam tanda verbal yaitu makna konseptual, konotatif dan afektif.

Kata kunci: visual, verbal, video musik.

1. Background of Study

Language is a spoken or written communication media used by human beings to convey thoughts, ideas, feelings. Foley (1997:27) stated that language is usually defined

as a system of signs. The study about a system of signs and the whole thing involving meaning as a part of communication is known as semiotics. Saussure declares semiotics is a science which studies the role of signs as a part of social life and it is also a part of social psychology, and general psychology (Chandler, 2002:2).

Sign as a part of semiotics takes forms of words, sound, images, object which refer to something else. Generally, the sign can be divided into two parts; they are visual and verbal signs. A visual sign commonly refers to a picture. The verbal sign is associated with the word or phrase which implies meaning. Signs occur in many aspects of daily life, one of them can be found in the music video and its song lyric.

A music video is a short film combining songs and pictures, produced for promotional or artistic purposes. Music video is considered a real view on the content of the song lyrics. The music video itself contains words that make up a song. The music video and its song lyrics are closely related and are used to convey the meaning of a song.

In this study, music video and its song lyrics are analyzed entitled "*You Belong with Me*" made to be well-known by Taylor Swift. The reason for choosing this music video was that such a music video is unique and illustrates two different characters; however, it is played by the same person. Besides, music video and its song lyrics contain visual and verbal signs which are interesting to be analyzed.

By knowing visual and verbal signs the music video and its song lyrics contain, understanding the messages of a song conveyed by the song writer will be easier.

2. Problems of the Study

Based on the background stated above, this study covers the problems that are formulated as follows:

1. What elements of visual signs were presented in the music video of Taylor Swift "*You belong with me*"?
2. What was the meaning of verbal signs which the song lyrics of Taylor Swift's music video "*You belong with me*" contain?

3. Aims of Study

In relation to the problems stated above, there are two aims of the study as follows:

1. To identify the elements of visual signs presented in the music video of Taylor Swift "*You belong with me*"
2. To analyze the meanings of verbal signs which the song lyrics of Taylor Swift's music video "*You belong with me*" contain.

4. Research Method

In this study, the research method is divided into four parts: data source, method and technique of collecting data, method and technique of analyzing data, method and technique of presenting analysis.

4.1. Data Source

The data used to support this study were collected from the music video of Taylor Swift entitled "*You Belong with Me*", and its song lyrics. The music video of Taylor Swift entitled "*You Belong with Me*" was released on April 18, 2009 by Big Machine Records. The song lyric "*You Belong with Me*" was written by Taylor Swift and produced by Nathan Chapman. It was chosen because it was interesting to be analyzed and relevant to the problems of the study.

4.2. Method and Technique of Collecting Data

The method used in the study was the documentation method. In collecting the data, the process was divided into several steps.

First, the music video was downloaded from the official website <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VuNIsY6JdUw>. It was played in GOM player and watched repeatedly. Afterwards, every scene was cut to find the elements of visual signs presented. Second, the song lyrics were searched from the internet <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/taylorswift/youbelongwithme.html>. Furthermore,

reading carefully the whole lyrics. Third, the song lyrics were divided into several parts and classified based on the types of meanings by note taking.

4.3. Method and Technique of Analyzing Data

The collected data were analyzed using the descriptive qualitative method. The data were analyzed descriptively through the following steps. First, visual signs in the music video were analyzed using the theory of visual communication proposed by Dyer (1993). Second, verbal signs in the song lyrics of music video were analyzed based on the theory of meaning proposed by Leech (1983).

4.4. Method and Technique of Presenting Analysis

The study used descriptive method in presenting analysis. The analysis was shown in the form of screen shots and explanation.

5 Result and Discussion

This part explains the result and discussion of the elements of visual signs presented in the music video and the meanings of verbal signs in the song lyrics of music video” *You Belong with Me* “.

5.1. The Elements of Visual signs in the Music Video.

This analysis was conducted on eight models as follows: nerdy girl, handsome boy, cheerleader girl, American football teams, cheerleader teams, marching band members, spectators and party guests. Based on the theory of visual communication, the elements were divided into five components such appearances, manner, activity, prop and setting.

5.1.1. Appearances

Appearance was divided into six parts as follows: age, gender, hair, size, body and look.

5.1.1.1. Age

The age ranges of eight models were approximately 17 to 25 years old.

5.1.1.2. Look

5.1.1.2.1. The Nerdy Girl



She was a nerdy girl who completely loved the handsome boy. In one part of the song lyrics *I'm the one who understands you*" which showed that she was the only one who was always at his side. In the beginning of the video where she accidentally made him laugh with her funny dances and one of the song lyric which she sang showed that she was a funny girl.

5.1.2. Manner

Expression, eye contact, pose and clothes were the elements of manner as explained as follows:

5.1.2.1. Expression

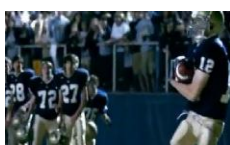
5.1.2.1.1. Cheerleader Girl



Cheerleader girl's attention showed happiness, anger and hatred expressions. In the middle of the music video, the cheerleader girl showed her happy expression when the handsome boy played the football. However, her expression changed into anger when a handsome man saw her being teased by one of the football players and then, he scolded this girl. She was also seen mad at the handsome boy who ignored her at the end of the music video. The hatred expression could be seen when she hugged her boyfriend in the car while gazing sharply toward the nerdy girl who was visible in her eyes and cynical smiles on her lips.

5.1.2.2. Eye Contact

5.1.2.2.1. American Football Teams



Based on the picture above, the eye contacts of American football teams focus staring at the handsome boy who managed to catch the joy ball. In different scenes, a football player was seen staring at the cheerleader girl who talked something to himself. Besides, he was also gazing at the handsome boy who disputed with the cheerleader girl.

5.1.2.3. Clothes

5.1.2.3.1. Cheerleaders Teams



Cheerleader teams wore blue and white cheerleading costumes with white shoes in the music video.

5.1.3 Activity

5.1.3.1. Touch

5.1.3.1.1. Cheerleaders Teams



In the music video, they were presented as cheerleaders who danced to enliven the football match. They made a movement of applause in which their hands consist of the finger to finger touching each other.

5.1.3.2. Body Movement

5.1.3.2.1. Marching Band Members



They did the opposite physical movement in the video. It could be seen when the nerdy girl (narrator) sang "you belong with me" four members were seen playing musical instruments and then, the two members lifted their musical instruments. When she sang "standing by and waiting at your back door", two members who played instruments lifted their musical instruments and one of the members lifted instruments and played them.

5.1.4. Prop



Props of books and eyeglasses were the symbols of a nerdy girl and the folded paper with the word *I Love You* was the symbol of love between the nerdy girl and handsome boy.

5.1.5 Setting.



The outdoor setting consists of two places. Firstly, the weather looked very bright at the park. Secondly, in the sports stadium there was a place where American football match took place. There were two indoor settings used. The first was in the bedroom where the nerdy girl and handsome boy communicated. The second was at the prom where the handsome boy and a nerdy girl showed their feelings.

5.2. The Meanings of Verbal signs in the Song lyrics of the Music Video.

The meanings of verbal signs with the song lyrics contained were analyzed using the theory proposed by Leech and the lyrics were divided into some parts as follows:

Part One

“You're on the phone with your girlfriend, she's upset,
she's going off about something that you said cause she
doesn't get your humor like I do.”

Those parts have the conceptual meaning where she felt that the girl was a person who could not understand the personality of her own boyfriend.

Part Two

“I'm in the room, it's a typical Tuesday night.
I'm listening to the kind of music she doesn't like and
she' ll never know your story like I do.”

The first lyrics showed conceptual meaning where she had a daily habit that was typically done. The previous lyric which was supported by the next lyric conveyed conceptual meaning that they differed in terms of preference for something.

Part Three

“But she wears short skirts, I wear T-shirts.
She's cheer captain and I'm on the bleachers.”

The third part conveyed the conceptual meaning. The first lyric showed a condition in which she realized a significant difference between herself and the girl in dressing. The second part of the lyrics indicated that she knew the girl had a higher position than herself.

Part Four

“Dreaming about the day when you wake up and find that what you're looking
for has been here the whole time.”

Those parts conveyed connotative meaning. In the first part of the lyrics, the word “dreaming” could refer to expectations or desires of the girl. “You wake up” did not mean someone who woke up from his sleep but someone who realized or knew something. In the second part, the words “has been here” were referring to herself who loved him.

6. Conclusion

Based on the analysis above, the elements of visual signs which included some categories such age, gender, hair, body size clothes, look, expression, eye contact, pose,

touch, body movements were found in all models. However, positional communication was only found on the main models. Props and settings were in the music video. There were three types of meanings; they were conceptual meaning, connotative meaning and affective meaning.

7. Bibliography

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