

DVD COVERS: A STUDY OF SEMIOTIC

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Abstract

Penelitian ini berjudul DVD Covers: A Study of Semiotics. Semiotik adalah bidang akademis yang mempelajari ilmu tentang tanda. Semiotik secara umum memberikan kita penjelasan mengenai segala sesuatu yang berhubungan dengan tanda seperti: tulisan, gambar, pertunjukkan, produksi multimedia, sinyal lampu jalan, kehidupan sehari-hari, dan lain-lain. Sampul DVD dapat dikatakan sebagai iklan yang ditujukan untuk menarik perhatian dari calon pembeli. Desain sampul DVD sangat berperan karena hal itu merupakan unsur pemasaran yang digunakan untuk menarik pembeli. Berdasarkan penjelasan di atas, sangat menarik untuk membahas studi semiotik di sampul DVD karena beberapa alasan. Pertama, semiotik di sampul DVD jarang dibahas. Di samping itu, cukup menantang untuk menganalisa apa saja unsur semiotik (penanda – arti) dan koherensi antara tanda verba dan visual dari sampul DVD.

Data diambil dari lima macam sampul DVD yang berbeda, yaitu Skyfall, MAMA, Ted, Love Actually, dan The Smurf. Ada dua tahap dalam pengumpulan data. Pertama, lima sampul DVD yang digunakan sebagai data di penelitian ini diunduh dari www.getdvdcover.com yang menyediakan berbagai macam sampul DVD. Lalu, data yang terkumpul diobservasi dan diklasifikasikan. Data di penelitian ini akan dianalisa menggunakan metode kualitatif.

Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa setiap sampul DVD memiliki aturan tersendiri dari konsep penanda dan artinya yang memberikan makna baik secara verba dan visual yang membentuk karakteristik dari film. Penanda verba di sampul DVD adalah sinopsis, fitur special, logo dan akreditasi. Sementara itu penanda visual adalah gambar (tokoh), keadaan (tempat, waktu) dan suasana hati (warna)

Makna penanda verba dan visual yang ditemukan dalam sampul DVD yang digunakan sebagai data penelitian adalah untuk menyampaikan pesan kepada calon pembeli. Penanda verba memiliki peran untuk memberi informasi, sementara penanda visual mempercantik sampul sehingga menarik perhatian dari calon pembeli. Koherensi dari penanda verba dan visual dalam iklan akan membantu konsumen untuk mengerti pesan yang terdapat dalam film.

Kata Kunci: *Semiotik, Penanda Verba dan Visual, Sampul DVD*

1. Background

Semiotics is the academic field dedicated to the study of signs. According to Chandler (2001), semiotics can be applied to anything which can be seen as signifying something - in other words, to everything which has meaning within a culture. Even within the context of the mass media we can apply semiotic analysis to

any media texts (including television and radio programmes, films, cartoons, newspaper and magazine articles, posters and other ads) and to the practices involved in producing and interpreting such texts.

Based on some empirical studies, Rahmayanti (2006) mentioned that each advertisement has its own set of signifiers and signified concept and thus produce meaning, both verbally and visually.

DVD covers can be seen as an advertising means to draw attention of the prospective buyers. The design of a DVD cover is very important as this is also a marketing element that is used to attract the buyers. Based on the description above, it is interesting to discuss or study semiotics in DVD covers for some reasons. First, semiotics of DVD covers is rarely discussed. In addition to that, it is quite challenging to analyze what the semiotic elements (signifier – signified) are and the coherence between the verbal and visual signs on the DVD cover.

2. Problems

There are three problems in this study; First, what are the verbal and non verbal sign used in the DVD covers? ; Second, what are the meanings of verbal and non verbal signs? ; Third, how are verbal and non verbal signs coherent with one another?

3. Aims of The Study

The aims of this study are; First, to identify the verbal and no verbal sign used in the five DVD covers used as the data source. Second, to explain the meanings of verbal and non verbal signs in the five DVD covers used as the data source. Third, to describe the coherence between the verbal and non verbal signs in the five DVD covers used as the data source.

4. Method

The method use in this study was qualitative method which means the data analysis is provided in descriptive sentences. There are two steps in collecting data.

First, the five DVD covers used as the data in this study were downloaded from www.getdvdcover.com. Second, the data were observed and classified.

5. Analysis

The analysis focused on the identification of the verbal and visual signs in the five DVD covers, followed by the coherence between the verbal and non verbal (visual) signs thus to produce meaning.

5.1 The Verbal and Visual Signs in SKYFALL (Data 1)

SKYFALL is an action movie released on 2012, the twenty-third James Bond film. The movie adapted from the novel under the same title by Ian Fleming. The film focuses on Bond investigating an attack on MI6; the attack is come from former MI6 operative Raoul Silva who want to take a revenge to M for betraying him at the past.



(Back and front side)

From the images, the verbal signs are title, spine of the DVD, synopsis, special features, and logos and accreditation. Meanwhile the visual signs are the images (figures), setting (place, time), and mood (color).

The verbal signs as mentioned previously consist of several elements which now will be further analyzed. Every DVD cover must contain at least title, spine of the DVD, synopsis, special features and logo and accreditation for their verbal signs. In SKYFALL, the title is written in all capital letter indicating a firm meaning and below the word SKYFALL is the logo 007 with the gun which is the symbol of secret agent James Bond. At the synopsis, the sentences are written in ordinary letter with some words that have been given different color to indicate the important parts of the movie, like where the movie take place, the protagonist, and the antagonist cast. The special features of the DVD are written in all capital letter to make the prospective buyers can read the features in the DVD easily. The information about the cast, director, production house and etc in the logos and accreditation are written in eye catching font in order to attract the attention of the prospective buyers.

The visual signs of the DVD cover of SKYFALL are the images, setting, and mood. The images of the front part of the DVD cover contained by the figure of the main actor. He is holding a gun that indicates the movie is full of action, especially use of weapons. He wears black tuxedo which is the well-known costume of secret agent James Bond. The use of black color dominated whole part of the DVD cover (front and back) associated with power, elegance, formality, death, evil, and mystery. Most of the text uses white color associated with light, cleanliness, and simplicity. This color is used to make the text readable. Meanwhile at the back part, the images are the main actor, supporting actress and some scene of the movie. It can be said that it will bring up the imagination of the prospective buyers to guessing about what the movie will be.

The coherence between the verbal and visual signs in this DVD cover is supporting each other in producing message and meaning. In this DVD cover, the verbal and visual sign works together in order to make the image of the action movie of secret agent James Bond. The verbal sign, which is the sentences, has given brief explanation about the movie. For example: from the title "SKYFALL" which indicated another sequel of secret agent James Bond, adapted from the novel under

the same title by Ian Flemming. The visual sign, support the verbal sign in order to attract the curiosity of the prospective buyer. It make up the package of the DVD more interesting and eye catching.

5.2 The Verbal and Visual Signs in Ted (Data 2)

Ted is a comedy movie released on 2012, the movie is about John Bennett's teddy bear, Ted, that came to life since he was a child as the result of a childhood wish. Ted, has been by John's side ever since - a friendship that's tested when Lori, John's girlfriend of four years, wants more from their relationship.

Bellow is the image of the DVD cover of Ted



(Back and front side)

The verbal signs as mentioned previously consist of several elements which now will be further analyzed. In ted, the title is written in ordinary letter indicating simplicity. "ted" refers to the famous teddy bear doll. At the top of the DVD cover, it mentioned the version of the DVD and also the cast and the director. Below the title, there are statement which attract the attention of the prospective buyer, a short review from the critic, and also a notice which give advice that the movie is for teenager or adult. At the synopsis, the sentences are written in ordinary letter with some words

that show us who is the creator and the main actor of the movie. In this DVD cover, there is not special feature of the DVD like the previous one, but it has many quotes and review from well known critic or company. The information about the cast, director, production house and etc in the logos and accreditation are written in unique font in order the use of the space which is limited.

The visual signs of the DVD cover of ted are the images, setting, and mood. The images of the front part of the DVD cover contained by the figure of the main actor. There are two figures, the first one is an ordinary man and the second one is a teddy bear doll. As we know the teddy bear is associated with kids, fun, cute, etc, but this image, the show that it is holding a beer while take urinate. It can be said that it is an adult teddy bear with an eccentric characteristic. The images take place at a restroom which gives meaning that this movie is a little bit dirty. The uses of white and green color dominated whole part of the DVD cover (front and back). The white color is associated with light, goodness, innocence, purity, and virginity. The appropriate meanings of white color in this DVD cover are goodness, innocence, and purity. Meanwhile the green color is associated with growth, harmony, freshness, and fertility. The appropriate meanings of green color in this DVD cover are harmony and fertility, but it also can be said that it is related to the use of drug. Most of the texts also use white and green color. Meanwhile at the back part, the images are the main actor, supporting actress and some scene of the movie. It captured the expression of the main actor, supporting actress that full of smile and laugh.

The coherence between the verbal and visual signs in this DVD cover is supporting each other in producing message and meaning. In this DVD cover, the verbal and visual sign works together in order to make the image of the comedy movie. The verbal sign, which is the sentences, has given brief explanation about the movie. For example: from the title “ted” which indicated the movie is about a teddy bear doll. The visual sign, supports the verbal sign in order to attract the curiosity of the prospective buyer. It make up the package of the DVD more interesting and eye catching.

As can be seen from the analysis above, the verbal and the visual signs in the five DVD covers under this study are; title, spine of the DVD, synopsis, special features, and logos and accreditation as the verbal signs. The visual signs are the images (figures), setting (place, time), and mood (color). DVD covers, as a printed advertisement, has its own verbal and visual sign which produce correlated meaning. Rahmayanti (2006) stated that each advertisement has its own set of signifiers and signified concept and thus produce meaning, both verbally and visually.

The meaning of the verbal signs is to inform and attract the prospective buyers to buy the product (the DVD). Meanwhile, the visual signs make up the product so it can be more attractive. Both of them convey the message intended to the prospective buyers. The verbal and the visual signs are coherent to each other in the five DVD covers under this study. They are coherent because they support each other to produce meaning and help the audiences to understand the message that contained in the movie.

6. Conclusion

Each DVD cover has its own sets of signifier and signified concept that produce meaning, both verbally and visually that makes the characteristic of the movie. The verbal signs in the DVD cover are the verbal signs such as title, spine of the DVD, synopsis, special features, and logos and accreditation. Meanwhile the visual signs are the images (figures), setting (place, time), and mood (color).

The meanings of verbal and visual signs found in the DVD covers used as the data study is to convey the message intended to the prospective buyer. The verbal sign has role to inform, meanwhile the visual sign make up the package so it attract the attention of the prospective buyers.

The verbal and the visual signs in each DVD cover under the study are coherent each other in produce meaning. The coherence of verbal and visual signs in advertisement will help the audiences to understand the message that contained in the movie.

7. Bibliography

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