

ANALYSIS OF SEMIOTICS ON “PART OF ME” MUSIC VIDEO BY KATY PERRY

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Abstract— This research study was conducted in order to find the semiotic signs and provide explanation of the denotation, connotation and myth meanings contained in the “Part Of Me” music video by Katy Perry, which became one of her masterpieces in the music industry. As it used a self-empowerment theme, the music video contains empowering pictorial scenes and hidden meanings behind it. The music video tells a story of a woman’s struggle named Katy Perry to achieve her dream of becoming marines after an unpleasant thing happened to her love life. In the training period, she learned hard to become a strong and formidable female soldier to carry out her duties well and busy herself to be drawn from the shadows of her painful past. This research used a descriptive qualitative method in order to deliver the meanings behind each sign found in the data source. Observation method is used along with some procedures in order to collect the data. In analyzing the data, this research used semiotics theory proposed by Roland Barthes (1983). As a result of the study, this obtained 47 data of visual and verbal signs that have meanings of denotation, connotation and myth.

Keywords— Semiotics, Signs, Denotation, Connotation, Myth, Music video

1. Introduction

Semiotics is considered as a philosophical study that concerns the understanding about how humans make meaning using a sign/symbol. As stated in Sebeok (2001), signs can be found in forms of figure, gesture, word or phrase or sentence, sound and object that stand for something else. Generally, signs are divided into two parts, namely visual signs (refer to figures) and verbal signs (words or phrases) containing meanings. From Barthes’ book entitled *Element of Semiology* (1983), there are terms namely denotation and connotation that used to describe the relationship between signifier and it signified, nor myth as a mode of signification. Signs can occur in every aspect of life as a communication tools to convey messages. Communication can be seen as the elements’ division of behavior or way of life with a set of mutually agreed terms in the use of signs (Putri, 2020). Nowadays, with the rapid development of digital technology there are a lot of digital media which aim to share information or messages behind the product for society. One of them can be found in music videos.

According to New World College Dictionary (2014), music video is a recorded short performance film that accompanies music or song with a synchronized action that dramatically interpret the music or song lyrics. In this evolving era, music video is created to bring songs to television and uploaded on YouTube to promote and market the song sales. Besides, music video is created to convey the messages of the song in purpose to influence the viewers with its contained values or just to entertain people who listen or watch it. The message is delivered through interesting and creative work in the music video that is made by the creative staff, the record label or the artist itself. One of the musicians who have such deep meaning behind their music video is called Katy Perry. In this research paper, “Part Of Me” music video by Katy Perry is chosen to be analyzed. The reason is because the music video contained such an emotionally illustrated video and empowering meaning. Katy Perry tries to convey messages through the properties, backgrounds, facial expressions and objects that are used, which makes “Part Of Me” music video can be further analyzed.

Based on the background above, there are some problems that could be solved in this research paper, namely: (1) What semiotic signs are found in “Part Of Me” music video by Katy Perry? (2) What are the implied meanings in “Part Of Me” music video by Katy Perry? In conducting this research paper, the aims are

to identify the semiotic signs presented and to analyze the meaning of semiotic signs contained in the music video. The result of this study is hoped can be an orientation and research representation for the next researchers to study video semiotics. It is also expected to provide a description that semiotic theory proposed by Roland Barthes can be applied in music video. This research study also expected to give information about signs meaning and how to absorb it in music video.

2. Literature Review

Related to the previous study in analyzed semiotics, the first article entitled *A Semiotic Analysis of Public Service Advertisement* was written by Wahyuni, N.M.S., et al. (2022). The first previous paper aimed to find out and describe the verbal and visual signs' meaning in public service advertisements. In analyzing the music video, there are two main theories used by the previous researcher, namely semiotics theory by Saussure (1983) and meanings theory by Leech (1981). This previous study used an observation method. As the result, this paper obtained that verbal and visual sign found have essential rules to make a good and attractive advertisement. In the verbal signs, there are excellent words selected to entice people's attention and interest to read the advertisement. Whereas, in the visual signs, there are unique images presented to support the verbal sign in order to help reader to easy understand the context of each advertisement.

The second article was written by Sagimin, E.M., Sari, R. (2020) entitled *A Semiotics Analysis on LAY's and EXO's Selected Music Videos*. Pamulang University. This second previous paper aimed to identify the signs found and explained the denotation, connotation and myth contained in the data sources: LAY's music video entitled "Goodbye Christmas" and EXO's music video entitled "Universe". In analyzing the data, this previous paper used a descriptive qualitative method. To support the analysis process, this research used semiotics theory from Roland Barthes (1967). From the results of the study, it was found that visual communication implies meaning conveyed through visual images.

The third previous article entitled *Semiotic Verbal and Visual Sign Found in Kuta Five Star Hotels Advertisements*, which was written by Anggela, Y.K. et al. (2022). This previous paper concerned to find out the messages carried by both verbal and non-verbal signs in the data source. The data source were taken from internet and collected by observation method. The researcher of this previous paper analyzed the data by qualitative method. It using semiotics theory by Saussure (cited in Chandler 2001), theory of meaning by Barthes (1967), and color theory by Cerrato (2012). This previous paper obtained that the verbal signs appeared have its connotative and denotative meanings that can delivered meaningful messages to the readers. Then, the visual sign represent several images and colors that contained various meanings following the context behind each advertisement.

3. Methods

The data source of this research paper was taken from Katy Perry's music video entitled "Part Of Me" that was released on March 22, 2012 in YouTube platform. The data used are taken in the form of figures, ideas, words, sentences and symbols that contained in the music video. To get the data to be analyzed, there are some procedures done, namely (1) downloading the "Part Of Me" music video from Katy Perry's YouTube channel, (2) watching the music video entirely and capturing partial scenes that contained signs, (3) listing the signs, then analyzed them as a number of figures. Considering the result study cannot be obtained quantitatively or statistically in the analysis process, this research paper used a qualitative descriptive method in order to consider explanation and description of the data found. To support in analyzing data, this research uses semiotics theory by Roland Barthes (1983) to distinguish the explanation of meanings that are denotation, connotation and myth in each sign. The findings of this research are presented by formal and informal presentation. In a formal method, the findings are presented by using a table of data found in "Part Of Me" music video by Katy Perry. Then, the informal method is applied to present the findings with detailed explanation descriptively based on Barthes' semiotic theory that is used in this study. This research paper applied to serve the findings of data analysis in order to be easily understood by the readers and future researchers of semiotics analysis.

4. Result and Discussion

This section presents the findings of semiotics analysis in "Part Of Me" music video by Katy Perry. The findings are presented in the form of table to show each of the verbal and visual sign as served as below:

A. The Result of Semiotic Signs in "Part Of Me" Music Video by Katy Perry

TABLE 1
 The Occurrences of Semiotic Signs in “Part Of Me” Music Video by Katy Perry

No.	Data	Visual Signs	Verbal Signs
1.	Data 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perry hits Jason with some papers - Jason's hands raised up in front of his face 	
2.	Data 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perry stopped by in a petrol station - A convenience store seen in area of the petrol station 	- 2CQN654
3.	Data 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The symbol of U.S Marine Corps - The U.S Marine Corps' advertisement quote is surrounded by other advertisement papers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS - ALL WOMEN ARE CREATED EQUAL, THEN SOME BECOME MARINES
4.	Data 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perry has cut her hair off very short - Perry covering her face and lowering her head while crying loudly 	
5.	Data 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The trainer give Perry the new marines trainee uniform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PERRY - U.S. MARINES
6.	Data 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perry is briefed loudly and firmly by the trainer 	
7.	Data 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perry and another trainee lifting their other fellow trainees in physical exercise 	
8.	Data 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jason's mail using capitals letter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dear Katy, it was nothing. Please forgive, and let's move past this. I'm still the guy you fell in love with. I just made a stupid mistake. Look deep inside, and try to remember what we are. I miss your face. - Jason
9.	Data 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perry and other marines member using full attribute and holding each rifles - The member of marines are out of the tank vehicle 	- 3A102

Based on the table of findings above, it can be concluded that the data source, which is “Part Of Me” music video by Katy Perry, contained semiotic signs that can be further discussed. There are 20 data consisting of 14 visual signs that appear in the form of figures, backgrounds, properties, symbols and objects used, whereas the verbal signs with 6 data appear in the form of words, phrase sand sentences. Furthermore, the data that have been found is analyzed in accordance with Roland Barthes' semiotics theory (1983) to explain the meaning contained behind each sign, namely denotation, connotation and myth meanings.



B. The Analysis of Semiotic Signs and its Meaning in "Part Of Me" Music Video by Katy Perry

In this section, the semiotic signs found in "Part Of Me" music video by Katy Perry are analyzed to describe the implied meaning behind them. The analysis of data are presented as below:

Data 1



Figure 1. Perry hits Jason with some papers
(Source: minute 0:27)

In the data one, there are two visual signs to be discussed. The data one sets in Jason's workplace. He is Perry's boyfriend who is caught by Perry herself cheating with his female fellow worker there. The first visual sign shows Perry who hits her boyfriend, Jason, with some papers. It indicates how fed up she feels with her boyfriend's demeanor behind her. The denotation in the first visual sign is Katy who comes to Jason immediately after she catches that he betrayed their relationship. The connotation conveyed is that it is the only way for Perry to vent her emotion toward Jason after breaking up their relationship and leaving the office without giving an opportunity to Jason for explaining what just had happened before.

The signifier on the second visual sign is Jason raising his hands up in front of his face. It signified that he tries to cover himself from the papers Katy has thrown to him. The denotation conveyed is Jason giving a reaction to Perry's treatment of hitting him with the papers. The connotation conveyed in the second visual sign is that Jason cannot avoid the treatment he gets after being caught by her girlfriend when he cheats with another woman, who is his fellow worker.

The myth contained in the data one is that office workers tend to be trapped in illicit relationships with fellow employees because of the intensity of time together that fosters feelings of being more than friends. This can be intentional or not because of different human nature. There are those who think before they act, but unfortunately there are those who act before they think. Like what happened to Jason who without thinking about his girlfriend's feelings outside the office, but instead he had an affair with his own fellow worker.

Data 2



Figure 2. Perry stopped by in a petrol station
(Source: minute 0:46)

There is one verbal sign found in data two which is signifier "2CQN654". It is the license plate of Perry's car found on the back of her car. It has denotative meaning which is the license plate is a metal or plastic plate with series number that attached to a vehicle in purposes of an official identification. The

connotation conveyed is Perry shows that she is a vehicle owner and a good citizen by using a number plate on her car.

The first visual sign in data two is signifier Perry who stopped by in a petrol station. This depicts that she is buying gasoline before leaving for a trip. The denotation conveyed is that the petrol station is a place where vehicles' gasoline is sold. The connotation conveyed is that she is heading there after leaving her ex-boyfriend, Jason's workplace. She just wants to buy gasoline for her car to head somewhere and escape from Jason.

The signifier on the second visual sign is there is another building which is a convenience store in the petrol station area. It signified as a place for people who come to the petrol area to stop by. Convenience store have a denotative meaning which is a part of a petrol station so customers can purchase goods while refueling their vehicle. The connotation conveyed is that the convenience store in the area of a petrol station is a place where customers can break and buy some things like food and beverages before and after going for a trip.

The myth conveyed that it is very important for vehicle number plates to be attached on the vehicle to facilitate identification during vehicle raids or other purposes involving the ownership of each person's vehicle. The other myth contained in data two is that people tend to want to leave their current place after experiencing unpleasant things in their life. This is because sometimes the place makes the people remember the unpleasant things that have happened to them.

Data 3



Figure 3. Perry reads a quote on the bulletin board
(Source: minute 1:00)

In the data three, there are found two verbal signs. The first verbal sign is signifier "UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS" which indicates the advertisement is officially from one of the country organizations. USMC have denotative meaning that is a branch of the United States Armed Forces responsible for delivering task forces on land, at sea, and in the air. The connotation of this visual sign is that the country organization such as the U.S Marine Corps is also using an advertisement to persuade those who want to be a member of marines.

The second verbal sign is the statement "ALL WOMEN ARE CREATED EQUAL, THEN SOME BECOME MARINES". It is signified as the words that encourage enthusiasm and courage for women who have a desire to become a marine member. The word "equal" has a denotative meaning which refers to gender equality between male and female. The connotation is USMC also wants to convey encouragement for people, especially women, that they are welcome for everyone regardless of gender.

The signifier of the first visual sign in data three is the U.S Marine Corps symbol. It is signified as the logo of one branches of the U.S Armed Forces. The denotation in this visual sign is that the logo is an identifier for the USMC so more people may be interested to read or just have a look at the promotional quote. The connotation is that the quote is hoped can be reached by people who have an interest in the military, especially the marines.

The second visual sign is signifier the USMC's advertisement quote is surrounded by other advertisements. It signified that the bulletin board is functioning to place advertisements. The denotation contained is that the bulletin board is a board which is usually attached to a wall in order to display notices giving information about something. The connotation conveyed is for whoever offering services and things, they can place the promotion/advertisement papers on the board.

The myth contained in the data three that is the stereotype that women are weak creatures compared to men has existed for a long time. However, it has been broken by proving that women can also do anything

like men. From the quote advertisement by the U.S Marine Corps, it conveys encouragement and enthusiasm for human regardless gender to believe and challenge themselves with their ability more than their thought or other's opinion.

Data 4



Figure 4. Perry seen release her emotion
(Source: minute 1:22)

There are two visual signs found in the data four. The signifier on the first visual sign is Perry changing her hair style as the man's haircut style, which indicates she changed her look before undergoing the marines training period. The connotation conveyed is that Katy decided to change her look to be more masculine than before. It describes her stance that wants to change her identity to be stronger than before.

The second visual sign is signifier that Perry covering her face and lowering her head while crying loudly, which indicates how broken she feels after being cheated by her ex-lover, Jason. The denotation found in this data is that Perry seems to vent her emotion by cutting her hair and crying as loudly as she can, before she undergoes the training period. The connotation conveyed is that Perry is really upset and broken-hearted. Otherwise, she is also digesting the thing that had happened to her relationship with Jason.

The myth found in data four is that unpleasant things tend to make people make a different choices for their future life. As what Perry does, after she got betrayal by Jason. She seem have no direction before getting the courage to join the marines. However, she encourages herself to pursue her desire for her own future.

Data 5



Figure 5. The trainer give a set of uniform to Perry
(Source: minute 1:38)

In the data five, there are found two verbal signs to be analyzed. The signifier of the first visual sign is "Perry" that is known as the last name of hers. The denotation of this sign is the last name of Perry's name that attached on her uniform is used as an identification of her ownership of the uniform itself. The connotation conveyed in is the name attached on the uniform is can be considered as a pride for its owner, so that Perry can maintain her dignity after wearing it while on duty.

The second verbal sign is signifier "U.S MARINES" which indicates that the set of uniform Perry has received by the trainer is given officially by the U.S Marine Corps. The denotation contained in the second verbal sign is that the U.S Marine Corps is a branch of the United States Armed Forces responsible for

delivering task forces on land, at sea and in the air. The connotation conveyed is to make people who see Perry know that she is a part of the country organization which is the USMC.

Then, there is one visual sign found in the data five which is signifier the trainer give Perry her marines training uniform. This describes that Perry gets her uniform as a new registered trainee of United States Marine Corps. The denotation contained in the visual sign is that Perry has been received as the official trainee by the country organization that is the U.S Marine Corps that she can follow the training period there.

The myth conveyed in this data is that a set profession uniform that have the owner's name attached on it becomes the pride and happiness symbols of people who can reach their dream job.

Data 6



Figure 6. Perry is briefed firmly by the trainer
(Source: minute 1:45)

The signifier of the visual sign found in data six is Perry getting briefed loudly and firmly by the trainer. It indicates that she and the other trainees are getting a test of mental endurance as an initial activities of the training session. As shown in the figure six above, the trainer performs a mental endurance test by being briefed hard and firmly in front of Perry, who is one of the trainee of marines. The viewers can see that Perry says the words following the trainer no less as loudly and firmly. The connotation conveyed is that the test of mental endurance given by the trainer to prepare the trainees strength and ability not only physically but as well as mentally. The myth contained in this data is the trainees have to follow all the regulation to become the official marines. They will get a well prepared by the trainer by given some hard and firm training session, that one of them shown in the visual sign above. They must have strength in physical and mental in order to become soldiers who are not easily defeated during their duty or even when a war happen.

Data 7

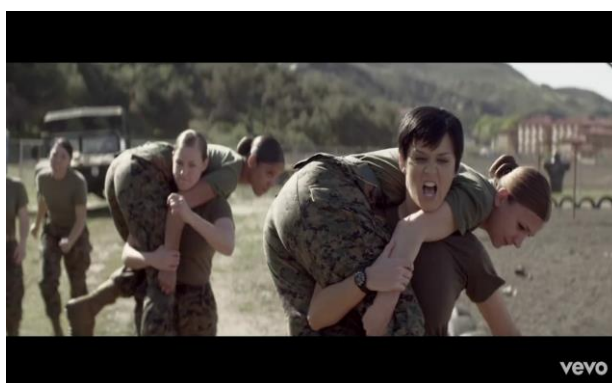


Figure 7. The trainees undergoing physical exercise
(Source: minute 2:12)

There is one visual sign found in data seven which is signifier Perry and another trainee lifting their fellow trainees when doing physical exercise. It signified that that they are doing cooperative exercise by carrying each other on their shoulders. The connotation to be conveyed in this visual sign is that the activity shows the ability to help each other among trainees if in the future someone experiences an urgent event in the field of duty. The myth contained in data seven is a teamwork becomes an essential aspect in a heavy job, one

of them is soldier profession. Therefore, it also needs to be trained so the enlistees to get used to doing it when needed. This aspect is also important to be carried to avoid or reduce the presence of inconsistency from fellow workers.

Data 8

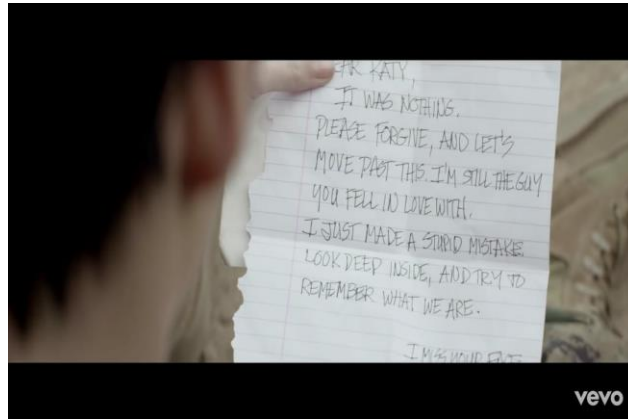


Figure 8. Perry reads Jason's mail
(Source: minute 2:44)

In data eight, there is one verbal sign found that reads "Dear Katy, it was nothing. Please forgive, and let's move past this. I'm still the guy you fell in love with. I just made a stupid mistake. Look deep inside, and try to remember what we are. I miss your face. – Jason". The mail that Jason sent containing his apologies and regrets of his bad deeds in the past when he ruined his own relationship with Perry. The denotation contained in the verbal sign is the mail Jason sent to Perry is containing his intention of getting Perry's apologize and delivered his longing toward Perry. The connotation conveyed is Jason tries to express the repentance he feels after losing Perry in his life. It also delivered a request from Jason who wants Perry back to his life although unfortunately Perry does not want that anymore.

The visual sign is signifier Jason's mail using capital letters. Capital letters has denotative meaning, which is a letter that written a larger size than and often in a form differing from its corresponding lowercase letter; an uppercase letter. The connotation conveyed in the visual sign found in data eight is that Jason used capital letter in all words contained in his mail which indicates that he tries to get more attention from Perry to digest the content of his mail.

The myth contained in data eight is that the feeling of regret tends to strike too late after doing a risky thing because people tend to act first before thinking longer of the cause and effect that will happen later. The other myth is that people tend to realize the lost feelings after someone disappears or from their life. Just like what happen to Jason, he feels a deep regret for what he had done in the past.

Data 9

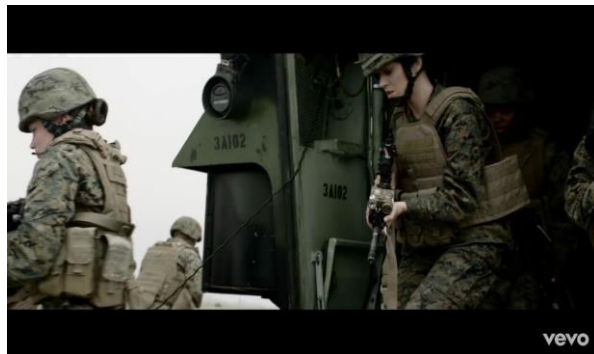


Figure 9. Marines out of the tank vehicle
(Source: minute 3:22)

There is one verbal sign which is signifier “3A102” found in the data nine. It is a written code found on the marine tank and considered as the code number of the vehicle. Code number has a denotative meaning. It is a series number that used to identify something. The verbal sign’s connotation is that the series number appear in the music video found on the marine tank is an identification of the vehicle that it belongs to the U.S Marine Corps.

Then, there are two visual signs found in data nine. The first visual sign is signifier Perry and other marine members using full attribute and holding rifles on each arm. It depict the marines are in their practice on carrying out their duties as a marine soldiers. The connotation conveyed is they seen practice really hard to become a good soldiers for the country’s future.

The signifier on the second visual sign is Perry and the other member of marines are getting out of the marine tank vehicle. It indicates that they are already arrived at the practice location. Seen from their faces, it showed their seriousness in carrying out the last session of the training period them undergoing there. The connotation is they are in a ready position before carrying out their duties which have the aim of deceiving the enemy.

The myth conveyed in data nine is in carrying out the duties and missions as marine members, they must show seriousness that show the marines are really focused on carrying out the work.

5. Conclusion

Related to the focus of this research paper, the result of the research can be concluded with some points. There are found 20 data of semiotic signs, which are 14 visual signs and 6 verbal signs from the interesting scenes in the music video. The visual signs become the prominent data with 14 data, because the verbal signs with 6 data are only appear in several scene to help viewers of the music video to know the plot of every scenes that runs in it. The semiotic signs found in “Part Of Me” music video by Katy Perry is contained with 15 denotations, 21 connotations, and 11 myth meanings based on semiotics theory proposed by Roland Barthes in his book entitled *Element of Semiology* (1983). The signs from each scene used to attract people’s attention to watch the music video and find out the messages conveyed behind it. Through “Part Of Me” music video, Katy Perry tried to come up with something different. She wanted to give an overview of the power, strength and self-empowerment of women that she transmits in the music video.

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