

## A Visual Semiotic Analysis on the Spongebob Movie

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**Abstract:** Visual Semiotics is a new semiotic branch that analyzes how visual signs or visual images convey messages. In visual semiotic, a sign can be a word, sound, or visual image. Spongebob Movie is one of category of visual semiotic. It consists of picture and subtitle on it. By using visual semiotic analysis, this research aimed to identify the sign found in the Spongebob movie: Sponge Out of Water and how it is interpreted. The Spongebob Movie: Sponge Out of Water as the data of the research are collected by using qualitative audio and visual materials from [Spongebob.fandom.com](http://Spongebob.fandom.com) as the source of the data. It is twenty nine data analyzed by using visual semiotic with the theory proposed by Charles Sanders Pierce. This research uses qualitative data analysis as the method of the study. Each data of the research consists of the sign and meaning. The signs was identified based on Charles Sanders Pierce triadic sign (Representament, Objet, and Interpretant) and there are three steps in interpreting the sign namely, non-verbal communication legisign, framing techniques and communicative act.

**Keyword:** Spongebob Movie: Sponge Out of Water, Visual Semiotic, Pierce, Sign, Meaning

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### 1. Introduction

In general, Semiotics is a study of signs. Signs conveying information so that it is communicative, able to replace something else that can be thought of or imagined (Broadbent, 1980). Visual Semiotics is a new semiotic branch that analyzes how visual signs or visual images convey messages. Semiotic visuals emphasize the way visuals communicate and systems dominate their use. In Visual Semiotic, a sign can be a word, sound, or visual image (Parsa, 2009: 847). Semiotics is the study of signs, while Visual Semiotics studies the signs that we see.

In this research, it analyzed The Spongebob Movie: Sponge Out of Water that by using visual semiotic analysis. Through this research, the writer wants to examine one of the cartoon shows

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on television that is quite popular among everyone, namely 'Sponge Out of Water'. With the Spongebob's character which is certainly familiar to everyone and also this film attracts many people's attention, as does the writer.

The following is an example of a visual image in the Spongebob cartoon and its subtitles. The picture, taken by the author from the internet (<http://rebloggy.com/post/spongebob-spongebob-squarepants-patrick-star-subtitles/72479782499>).



(Figure 1.1 Example of Spongebob Squarepants Cartoon)

The picture is about one of the Spongebob Squarepants cartoons, where in the picture Spongebob is sitting on a chair with a scared face.

Based on the example of The Spongebob Movie above, the category of the cartoon is the snapshot with subtitle which consists of visual and verbal sign, therefore it is analyzed using visual semiotics: the study of signs that consists of Visual and Verbal with Interpretants.

The following example is a comparison of the sign actions on Ferdinand de Saussure Dyadic theory and Charles Sanders Peirce theory.



(Figure 1.2 Example for Sign Action Comparing)

According to Saussure, a sign consists of a Signified and Signifier and it is a combination of concepts and words or sound-images. Based on the picture above, the Image (Signified) shows that Patrick is standing and points towards the top and the concept (Signifier) Patrick is angry about something that is above him. The image (Signified) also shows Patrick's angry expression that the concept (Signifier) has gone too far. Based on the word (Signifier), You broke my heart, now I'm gonna break something of yours.

By using Saussure Dyadic Sign, the Signifier and Signified may differ based on one's perspective because there is no clear framework in identifying the signifier and signified. It is signifier if it is a word or sound image and it is signified when people think or interpret a word or sound image.

Meanwhile, when using Pierce Dyadic Theory, Pierce clearly divides the triadic sign (Representament, Object, and Interpretant) to Trichotomy. Representament is divided into Qualisign, Sinsign, and Legisign. The objects are divided into Icon, Index, Symbol. Interpretants are divided into Rheme, Dicisign, and Argument.

The first trichotomy (Qualisign, Sinsign, and Legisign) refers to the sign, the second Trichotomy (Icon, Index, Symbol) refers to the relationship of the sign to the object and the last Trichotomy refers to the relationship between the sign and its Interpretant.

Pierce classifies the act of the sign, after that we can find that how the function of the movie with subtitles as communication by using visual and verbal signs as the nature of the rhetorical function.

There is a lot of research on semiotics, but most of these studies refer to the same problem where the signifier and signified and its function on the film or object, while researchers focus more on the sign and how to interpret the sign in the cartoon film which concern to visual semiotic.

## **2. Review of Literature**

Semiotics is the study of sign. According to Eco (1979:16) propose to define as a sign everything that, on the grounds of a previously established social convention, can be taken as something standing for something else. So, semiotics is study of sign and everything that can be related to it.

The process of representing it occurs when the sign is interpreted in relation to what it represents, it can be in the form of shapes or colors in art. The process is called semiosis, Semiosis is a process in which a sign serves as a representative of what it marks. The thing that brings the focus in the study of semiotics here is semiosis itself, which is a process that

combines entities called as representations of the represented entities called objects. The process of semiosis is often referred to as significance.

Visual semiotics is one of the streams of semiotics. Visual semiotics is one field of study that specifically studies the investigation of all kinds of meanings conveyed through the means of the sense of sight.

In this research, the data is a cartoon movie with consist of picture or snapshots with subtitle on it, so the signs take from of an image or visual material.

Since the sign takes from of image, it is used visual semiotics analysis. Visual semiotics emphasizes the ways visuals communicate and the system dominating their usage.

The sign is the key term in any semiotics. A sign is simply anything that stands for something else. A sign can be a word, a sound, or a visual image (Parsa, 2009:847).

In visual semiotics signs determining temporary objects are not common, therefore affecting classification of the sign. In visual semiotics, photos are indices because the signs are present, whereas in general semiotics they are icons because the signs are similar to objects.

In analyzing the sign, started with determining the given sign. If we determined the sign as a sign, thus it exists, it illogical to classify the object as a symbol. So, after determining the sign, classify the object based on the sign existing. The final step is determining how the interpretant, wether it is based on someone's personal, fact or reasoning.

### **3. Research Method**

The method that is used in this research is qualitative analysis. The research deals with the meaning of cartoon movies. So, it is suitable to use qualitative analysis. Since cartoon movies consist of picture (visual) and subtitle (verbal), the author also uses visual and verbal approach with semiotic analysis by using Charles Sanders Pierce theory.

Data of this research is The Spongebob Movie: Sponge Out of Water visual and verbal sign. The data was published on February 6th, 2015. The visual sign represented by the picture of the Spongebob's cartoon character. The verbal sign represented by the text or subtitle which consists of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences as show in the subtitle. The source of data is "Spongebob.fandom.com". The data of semiotic signs especially in The Spongebob Movie: Sponge Out of Water were analyzed by using Pierce's theory namely Diagram of Semiosis known as the Triangle semiosis. In this research, it is used qualitative audio and visual materials since the data is capture of the Cartoon Movies.

In collecting the data, the researcher applied the following steps:

1. Open the The Spongebob Movies: Sponge Out of Water that has been downloaded before.
2. Play the movies.
3. Turn on the English subtitles
4. Screenshots the parts of The Spongebob Movies: Sponge Out of Water that can be analyzed.

The data is analyzed based on interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014). In this research, there will be data selection that is suitable with the issues raised. The existence of data will be grouped and also the end result of this research can be reviewed by adding previous data of relevant studies. Data analysis consist of three phases. It consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification.

#### 4. Result and Discussion

Data analysis is the process in transforming raw data to the useful information. The result of the data analysis is to answer the problem of the study. The raw data in this research is The Spongebob Movie : Sponge Out of Water and there are about 29 snapshot of the Spongebob Movie : Sponge Out of Water that is analyzed.

The result of the data is expected to answer the problem study about the sign found in the Spongebob Movie : Sponge Out of Water and its interpretation. These following are the analysis of the data by using Pierce’s visual semiotic analysis. The sign that is found in the Spongebob Movie: Sponge Out of Water will displayed in a table as the answer of the first problem and followed by meaning explanation as the answer of the second problem.

##### 4.1 Data Analysis



(Figure 4.1.19 Data Analysis at time 6:26)

From the following picture above found :

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 4. Sign (Qualisign)     | : Feeling happy and sleepy  |
| 5. Object (Icon)        | : Spongebob and Patrick   |
| 6. Interpretant (Rheme) | : The picture shows that Spongebob is feeling cheerful and patrick is sleepy. |

After identifying the signs found in the data, then analyze the meaning through the 3 steps. The first step is identified the meaning, we analyze the legisigns, in this cartoon movie, it is analyzed based on Spongebob and Patrick posture. Spongebob is cheerful and Patrick is sleepy. According to Joumana Medlej in human anatomy fundamentals series (<https://design.tutplus.com>), happy is partially the eyes widen but you can still see the narrowing of the lower lid, eyebrows raised, and also big grin. While sleepy eyes is partially eyebrows tensed above eyes that are forced to remain open, the eyes and other eyebrows relax completely as if sleeping, and also neutral mouth.

The second step, we analyzed the framing techniques. The frame takes Spongebob waving at Patrick and Patrick smiling with sleepy eyes.

The third step, we analyzed the communicative act. The verbal signs that found in the cartoon movie is the subtitle "Morning Patrick!". The sentences is a statemet because it ends with exclamation mark. The waving by the Spongebob happen because he wants to greet patrick.

#### **4.2 Findings**

The sign found in data 19 qualisign is Feeling happy and sleepy by the object Spongebob and Patrick with the rheme Spongebob is feeling cheerful and patrick is sleepy. The qualisign of feeling happy and sleepy are represent by non-verbal communication legisign especially happy is partially the eyes widen but you can still see the narrowing of the lower lid, eyebrows raised, and also big grin. While sleepy eyes are partially eyebrows tensed above eyes that are forced to remain open, the eyes and other eyebrows relax completely as if sleeping, and also neutral mouth. The framing which shown by Spongebob waving at Patrick and Patrick smiling with sleepy eyes. The subtitle shows that Spongebob is greeting patrick. By the sign found in and the interpretation of the sign the snapshot want to express that in the morning, Spongebob and Patrick are meet each other.

#### **5. Conclusion**

This section must be based on the findings. In this section, the prospect of the development of research results and application prospects of further studies (based on result and discussion) can be added. After analyzing the Spongebob Movie: Sponge Out of Water, the researcher conclude some point such as:

1. The signs found in the Spongebob Movie are representament (Qualisign), Object (Icon), and Interpretant (Rheme). The qualisign shows the feeling of the object, which are feeling happy and sleepy represented by the icon Spongebob. The rheme are Spongebob is feeling cheerful and patrick is sleepy.

2. The meaning of Spongebob movie : spongebob out of water is analyzing the non-verbal communication legisigns, framing techniques, and communicative act. The non-verbal communication legisign is identified based on the character's facial expression, posture, and gesture. The framing technique is identified based on what the picture shows. The communicative act is identified based on the verbal signs found in Spongebob movie.

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