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An Analysis of Semiotic Signs Found in Trailer of Quarantine Tales

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ABSTRACT

Quarantine Tales is a film that presents various problems in the context of quarantine during the Covid-19 pandemic. This study discusses how the trailer of the film gives a semiotic sign to the audience. This qualitative study aims to describe semiotic signs in the trailer for the movie Quarantine Tales (2020). The analysis of Charles Sanders Pierce's semiotic theory is used in this study, namely the analysis using a triangle of meaning by combining representamen, objects, and interpretants. The data is screenshots from the Quarantine Tales movie trailer, which can be accessed on the official BASE Indonesia YouTube channel. Data collection methods used are documentation and observation. The results show that the meaning of representamen, objects, and interpretants is related to social, economic, and moral issues due to the COVID-19 pandemic. One of them is poverty, a prank that leads to cyberbullying, pornography, and household or family problems. In conclusion, the semiotic signs in the Quarantine Tales movie trailer provide a dramatic picture of the problems during the pandemic for the audience.
Keywords: Semiotics, Trailer film, Quarantine Tales

1. Introduction

In a short period, the spread of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic has altered the global order (Abodunrin et al., 2020). Perhaps no one anticipated that this pandemic would cause such widespread humanitarian suffering, and even in a short period (the outbreak began in December 2019), this pandemic has spread rapidly on a large scale and claimed many lives. Sociologically, the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in unintended social changes, which occur sporadically and are not desired by the community. As a result of people's lack of preparedness for this pandemic, it has resulted in social disorganization in all spheres of life. Additionally, the condition of those who are unwilling to accept the changes brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic has the potential to undermine the social values and norms that have been developed and embraced by the community thus far (Zhao, 2019). The Covid-19 pandemic, with its diverse social dynamics, is also an intriguing topic for discussion in various media outlets. Among the various existing media, this is the film as a medium that also serves as a forum for discussing the social dynamics surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic. This is because film has become ingrained in people's lives; a plethora of film media have been produced, and a plethora of fans have entered the world, demonstrating that film as a phenomenon has a sizable influence on people's mindsets (Ariyani et al., 2015). As a result, research into this phenomenon is becoming increasingly important.

The film is a visual representation of the process by which meaning is created and exchanged between group members within a culture. The representation of concepts in our minds is accomplished through the use of language, which enables us to interpret real objects, people, and events, as well as the imaginary world of objects, people, objects, and events that are not real (fictional) (Toni & Fachrizal, 2017). Typically, before the

film is screened, a trailer is created to serve as a promotional tool. A trailer can be defined as a brief excerpt from a film that gives the audience a taste of the film that will be screened. (Dewayani, 2020). Film semiotics is the study of the signing process (semiosis), which includes any kind of behavior or activity that incorporates signs, such as the creation of meaning, as these signs relate to moving visuals. Every kind of art contains certain veiled signals that the viewer is free to interpret.

In a semiotic analysis of the film, there are four distinct kinds of signs and codes (Alawi, 2021): These are the most fundamental movie indicators. Indexical indicators serve as clues to preexisting knowledge by obliquely pointing to a certain meaning. For instance, smoke denotes a fire, panting denotes activity, and a bell signals the end of class. This paper discusses the semiotic signs found in the trailer for the film Quarantine Tales, which was released on December 16, 2020, on the YouTube channel and on December 18, 2020, on the online cinema platform. This is a drama-thriller film about various social issues that arise during the quarantine period of the Covid-19 pandemic. Charles Sanders Pierce's semiotic theory is used to analyze the various signs and symbols in this film's trailer (Toni & Fachrizal, 2017). This theory is considered relevant in analyzing the trailer for the Quarantine Tales film, which contains symbols in the footage that contain various representative and interpretive meanings. So how the Quarantine Tales movie trailer presents a semiotic sign that gives the audience an overview of the film's story is discussed in this paper.

Pierce defines semiotics as the study of signs and everything associated with them, including their mode of operation (synthetic semiotics) and their relationship to one another (semantics semiotics), as well as the sender and receiver of signs (pragmatics semiotics). As a result, Peirce asserts that signs are associated with language and culture and acquire intrinsic characteristics. They encompass all natural phenomena (pan semiotics). Humans can interpret life with the help of signs. Language is paramount in this regard, as it is the most fundamental sign system used by humans. Meanwhile, nonverbal signs such as gestures and other common social practices are viewed as a form of language composed of meaningful signs communicated through relationships. (Rusmana, 2014, p. 107)

According to Pierce, the fundamental principle governing the nature of signs is their representative and interpretive properties. The sign's representative nature implies that it is something that represents something else, whereas the sign's interpretive nature implies that it allows for interpretation by the user and recipient. Pierce believes that the process of meaning (signification) is critical in this context because humans assign meaning to the reality they encounter (Kuhn et al., 2000). This presupposes a close relationship between language and reality. According to Pierce, signs emerge dynamically from human cognition(Feng & O'Halloran, 2012).

Peirce sees the subject as an inseparable part of the signification process. Peirce's triadic model (representamen + object + interpreter = sign) shows the major role of the subject in the process of transformation of language (Praminatih et al., 2022). Signs in Peirce's view are always in a continuous process of change, which is called the process of infinite semiosis, namely the process of creating an endless series of interpretants.

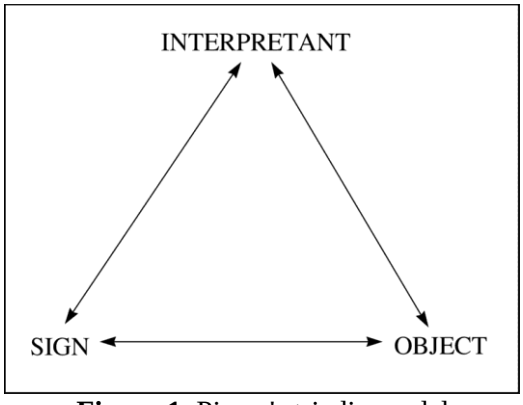

Figure 1. Pierce's triadic model

Pierce's triadic model shows three main elements forming a sign, namely the representant (something or who represents another), the object (something that is represented), and the interpretant (one's interpretation of the sign). The elements of this triadic modal are described in more detail as follows (Piliang, 2012, p. 310).

When Pierce examines objects, he views them from three logical perspectives, namely as follows. Firstly, is the Representamen (R) relationship with the type of Representamen? This category covers Quali-sign (from quality signs): a representation of the color's quality and the object's quality (Sinaga et al., 2018). For instance, white denotes purity, innocence, wisdom, purity, kindness, and decency; black denotes impurity, guilt, evil, sin, insincerity, and immorality, among other things. Green represents hope, insecurity, naivety, candor, belief,

life, and existence. Red is associated with blood, desire, sexuality, fertility, fruitfulness, anger, and sensuality, among other things. Yellow is associated with vitality, sunshine, happiness, and peace, peace, peace. Blue represents hope, the sky, heaven, serenity, mysticism, and mystery, among other things. Brown = earthy, natural, unique atmosphere, constant state; Gray = bland, foggy, hazy, mysterious, and so on. The second category is Sinsign (from the singular sign): a representation related to real facts. and the third category is Legisign (from leitmotif sig; lex = law): a representamen relating to rules or regulations.

The second aspect is the relationship of the object (O) with the type of Representamen (R; Basic). Among Peirce's most significant concepts is his classification of signs from the reference side (typology of signs) into three categories: icon, index, and symbol(Yang, 2021). This aspect consists of Icon. Icon refers to the relationship between Representation (R) and object (O) that bears a resemblance to the shape of the object (similitude or resemblance) (seen in pictures or paintings). The second is Index. It refers to the relationship between the representamen (R) and the object (O) that exists as a result of the base and the object having a relationship or causal relationship. For instance, smoke (R) is an indicator of fire (O) is the odor of burnt meat, and (R) is an indicator of satay stalls (O). The third is the symbol or actual sign. The relationship between a representation (R) and an object (O) is formed by convention.

The third aspect is the Interpretant relationship (I). This aspect consists of the representamen (R), Rheme that refers to the resentment that still has various possibilities (probability) to be interpreted by the interpreter. The third one is Decent or decision. It refers to a representation that can be used as a real fact and has a certain meaning. The last one is an argument. It refers to a representamen that has been associated with certain rules or propositions.

2. Literature Review

Semiotics, also called semiology, is the study of signs and sign-using behaviour. It was defined by one of its founders, the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, as the study of the life of signs within society (Khafaga, 2022). The term "semiotics" has roots in classical Greek, but Ferdinand de Saussure's studies in the 19th century gave it new life in contemporary linguistics. Saussure, a Swiss linguist, made significant contributions to the field of semiotics, often known as semiology.

Words may not necessarily have inherent meanings, according to current linguistics researchers (Zhao, 2019). That is, neither the sounds nor the letter symbols used to spell out "rabbit" have anything to do with the characteristics of a small, furry herbivore. Except for the fact that humans have given them a value, the term, its sounds, and its letters have nothing to do with the animal that we refer to as the rabbit. We can describe abstract meanings because the language has evolved into the capacity to convey meaning.

Saussure created a semiotics paradigm that is still in use today. Understanding his paradigm requires an understanding of the distinction he made between la langue (language) and la parole (speech). Every speaker is familiar with a set of language rules known as la langue, including how to turn sounds into words and phrases into sentences. The actual spoken word is called la parole. Cognitive semiotics investigates how people use sign systems to conceptualize meaning. The study of social and cultural semiotics focuses on how various cultures create and employ their sign systems. The study of non-linguistic visual signs in art and design is the focus of visual semiotics (Murphy, 2020).

A foundation for comprehending how people use signs to interpret their environment is provided by semiotics theory. Semiotics makes the crucial assumption that symbols do not have inherent meanings that are shared by the objects they represent (Bennett, 2010). The word "chair," for instance, has nothing to do with the object's inherent characteristics; it simply defines the thing that people sit on. Instead, by consistent association with the idea of a chair, the word "chair" has acquired meaning in the English language through repeated use(Bennett, 2010).

Peirce was a pragmatist philosopher who was particularly interested in how humans interpret signs in social interaction. He developed a three-part schema to classify the function of signs in the production of meaning. According to Peirce, signs can fulfil the following functions: Iconic is first. It speaks of symbols that mirror the things they stand for. Graphically speaking, a map resembles the area it depicts. The index comes in second. It speaks of Signs that are directly related to the things they stand for. A close-up shot of the sun might be used in a movie to depict heat. Because sunny days feel hotter than gloomy days, moviegoers comprehend this idea.

The third is Symbolic. It refers to signs that are haphazardly related to the things they stand for. Words are symbolic signs, except onomatopoeia, because they do not necessarily correspond to the things they signify.

3. Methods

This is a descriptive qualitative study. The data is derived from screenshots taken from the film's trailer, viewed on *YouTube* at the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rPTyQGzY83E. The observation and documentation approach is used to collect data. The data analysis utilized Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's (Miles et al., 2014) interactive model with Charles Sanders Pierce's semiotic theory. The data is collected in image footage by capturing the screen (screenshot) indicated by the semiotic marker (representation + object + interpreter). Data collection is condensed, namely the selection of image samples for analysis; each screenshot image is described with a brief explanation of the sign and its context. Additionally, the data is presented in a table and analyzed using Charles Sanders Pierce's semiotic theory. Conclusions are drawn from the analysis's findings that address the study's problem.

5. Results and Discussion

Quarantine Tales is a collection of five directors' stories about life during the pandemic. The first story, *Cook Book*, is about a chef who is attempting to complete his book. It is undeniable that the majority of people are learning to cook and pursuing new hobbies during the pandemic. *The Protocol* is the title of the second story. It is about a robber who escaped from a robbery and discovers that one of his colleagues died on the way. According to health protocols, the robber's situation became even more complicated when he was required to secure himself and properly bury his friend. The third story, *Nougat*, is a family-themed tale about three brothers who pioneer the video call phenomenon, which explodes in popularity once lockdown (PSBB) rules restrict people's mobility. The fourth story, titled *Prankster*, explores the Prank phenomenon, which, while entertaining, leaves its victims in a state of grief. Finally,

Table 1. Screenshot and sign elements

Screenshot	Representant	Object	Interpretant
	Qualisign : Blue fire Sinsign: the sentence "pandemic, there is absolutely no income, sir" Legisign: the stove is turned on for cooking	Icon: Fire and Stove Index: the fire that is turned on is the cause of the stove burning Symbol: live stove marked with fire	Theme: stove fire as a symbol associated with the fulfillment of food needs Dicisign: income during a pandemic that affects the fulfillment of needs Argument: turning on the stove fire makes it easy to meet needs during the pandemic
	Qualisign: bright red at the top of the food Sinsign: the sentence "too long alone at home." Legisign: men are active in the kitchen	Icon: man cooking Index: pandemic causes men to cook Symbol: opened/arranged food	Theme: the kitchen is generally used for cooking by women Dicisign: pandemic creates new habits Argument: activities at home during the

		wearing an apron		pandemic make men take on the general role of women in the kitchen, namely cooking.
	   	Qualisign: red money, opaque color cellphone, black plastic shroud, and red money Sinsign: theft of money, pornography in front of the camera, processing of corpses that cost money Legisign: violation of immoral norms and humanity. Funeral management	Icon: money, high school student clothes Index: money is the cause of immorality and death Symbol: money, sexuality, and death	Theme: Money is very much needed during a pandemic Dicisign: economic hardship makes people willing to commit a crime Argument: due to the difficulty of the economy during the pandemic, people are trying to find shortcuts to get money by stealing and pornography.
	   	Qualisign: bright and clear color on the face Sinsign: video call activity. Legisign: looks good when meeting other people even though virtual	Icon: computer screen front view Index: virtual meetings can be held anywhere and become the cause of various conversations Symbol: make-up and accessories during a video call	Theme: virtual meeting activities during the pandemic are like normal daily meetings Dicisign: virtual meetings and communications are common during a pandemic Argument: pandemic makes communication done virtually so that various life problems are reflected in the virtual layer display

The story Happy Girls Do Not Cry discusses the phenomenon of giveaways to underprivileged families.

Despite their disparate narratives, these films share one thing in common: they are all about the emotions associated with these isolated times. These stories are woven by a cast of characters who have experienced separation from family, from the past, from close friends, and even from their selves. Separation during this pandemic creates a slew of social, economic, and moral complications.

The trailer contains semiotic symbols that describe the synopsis of the five stories, each of which has a deeper meaning about society's dealings with Covid-19. The following are a few of the symbols depicted in the trailer.

Sample Analysis based on a screenshot

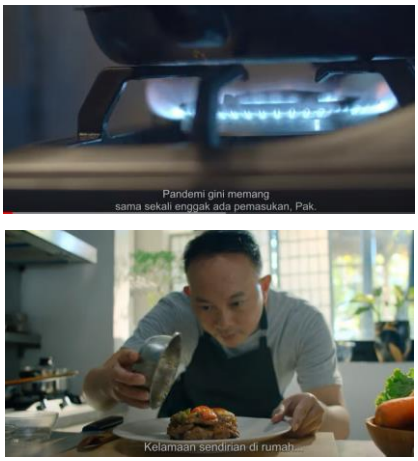

Figure 1. Screenshot from trailer

The following is the representation in the screenshot of figure 1. Firstly, Qualisign (image quality of a sign); the color contrast of the blue flame on a stove. The blue flame of a gas stove heating the pan above it in figure 1 demonstrates that the pandemic is a new mystery that is causing various life problems. This is made even clearer by the fact that the fire becomes the focal point of the image, while the surrounding images are blurred. Secondly, the scene's sin sign; the events that transpire. When a man says in a worried tone, "the pandemic has no income at all, sir," this can be interpreted as the economic difficulties encountered during the pandemic as a result of disrupted work and the policy of working from home, thus establishing a new habit in which a male chef generally works outside the home, unable to cook in his kitchen. Thirdly, a leg sign is a type of sign that is predicated on general rules. The scene demonstrates that the stove has been turned on for cooking and that the cooking process is being carried out in the kitchen while wearing an apron.

The following is the object depicted in the screenshot. The first dominant icon in the picture is a stove and a man cooking. The man is a chef who has been affected by the pandemic, and he is unable to work so he has plenty of time at home to cook and finish writing books. The index of signs that are the cause and effect could also be the presence of someone making a mark, on the screen, it is the fire that is turned on, which causes the stove to turn on and the start of the cooking process. Symbols related to signs and markers agreed upon by the community on the screen are the first sight of a gas stove being turned on. The stove for cooking food symbolizes daily needs. "Faulty stove" is an idiom for fulfilling daily needs. Meeting daily needs is the main issue discussed amid a pandemic. Furthermore, the opened food is a symbol of something new-found during social restrictions during a pandemic.

The interpretant is the image screenshot is as follows. Rheme; a sign that shows the relationship with the object, is generally associated and agreed upon, the fire of the stove is seen as a symbol related to the fulfillment of food needs, which is followed by a sentence of complaint spoken by a man (Kurilla, 2020). Design; Income is reduced during a pandemic, affecting the fulfillment of basic needs, and the pandemic creates new habits. Argument; when a sign and its interpretation exhibit common characteristics. The screenshot of household activities during the pandemic, in which men assume the role of women in the kitchen to cook, demonstrates how the pandemic affects people's lifestyles and habits. Numerous people have developed new hobbies and made various attempts to adapt to various spheres of life.

The concept of the semiotic sign is useful in explaining why humans give particular items particular meanings. According to Saussure, there are two components: the signifier and the signified. A sign's physical representation—such as a sound, printed word, or image—as opposed to its meaning is referred to as the signifier. Semiotic analysis is the process of analyzing the denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings of

all the signs in a given medium of communication (such as a book, blog, poster, textbook, advertisement, etc.). When undertaking discourse analysis, semiotic analysis can be used.

6. Conclusion

The trailer for Quarantine Tales demonstrates a variety of semiotic meanings about the sharing of social, economic, and moral conditions and problems resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The icon in this film trailer represents the visualization of characters through scenes such as cooking scenes, video calls, and criminal acts such as theft and pornography. The habit of video conferencing is a significant feature of the pandemic, as it prevents people from meeting face-to-face. People being forced to stay at home due to a lack of clarity in meeting basic needs is economical. Additionally, this situation forces some people to commit criminal acts such as theft. Some screenshots depict the pandemic's financial crisis as a catalyst for moral violations such as pornography, corpse handling during the covid period, and prank and bullying behavior. All of the semiotic signs in the Quarantine Tales film trailer paint a dramatic picture for the audience of the state of affairs during the pandemic.

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