



Semiotic Analysis of Barbie Movie Poster

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Abstract. The poster was a type of visual media used mostly for cinema marketing and the sense of sight to communicate messages that required visual communication and message symbols to be comprehended. One of the popular movies in 2023 is Barbie Movie, which has a unique gesture in the poster. This article offers a qualitative semiotic analysis of the "Barbie" movie poster from 2023, taken from the movie's official website. Investigating the numerous semiotic aspects in the poster uses a content analysis methodology. Based on the fundamental theories of Saussure's sign theory, Wierzbicka's color theory, and Dyer's verbal and aspect theory, the study aims to reveal the complex interaction of signs, symbols, and meanings influencing the poster's communicative efficiency. This study uses qualitative methods and advances our knowledge of the collaborative construction of the movie poster's meaning and attractiveness. The findings highlight the importance of visual and verbal clues in transmitting narratives and evoking audience involvement, providing insightful information on the complex semiotic methods used in movie marketing. As a result, this semiotic analysis of the "Barbie" movie poster illuminates the practice of cinematic marketing and cultural message. It exemplifies how theoretical frameworks can peel back the layers of meaning in visual communication to show the gender issue.

Keywords: Barbie, Movie poster, Semiotics, Sign.

1 Introduction

Semiotics is the study of signs. Linguistics is the study of how meaning is generated and communicated. (Seliverstova et al., 2022). Salupere (2011) defines semiotics as a science investigating the signs in people's lives. Signs might be in the form of movements, images, or patterns that transmit a message. Pierce described a sign as "something that stands for something to somebody in some respect or capacity." The study of signs is known as semiotics. According to Eco (1979), a symbol is based on a previously established social convention. At the same time, Saussure describes semiology as the study of the life of signs in social life. It is discussed in Saussure's book (Chandler, 2002).

One of the media that is full of signs is movie posters. Visual communication serves as dynamic canvases on which symbols, signals, and meanings collide to fascinate audiences and deliver storylines (Popat et al., 2023). Theatres advertised future screenings

to audiences with their letterpress-printed posters in the early days of the movie since they frequently needed access to movie posters created by movie companies.

These days, visual culture serves as the primary inspiration for cinema poster design, with its composition serving as its structural backbone. The primary components of visual culture are machinery, institutions, discourse, and visual text. Movie posters are not an exception to the rule that any product based on image design can be visual text. The philosophy that underpins visual culture is reflected in visual discourse, which also covers the idea and goal of design (Shetty et al., 2020). These posters were text-based and designed to be read from a distance (Andriani & Anti, 2022). In order to draw in onlookers, they used bold typefaces and vivid colors (Blakemore, 2023). As a choice rather than a necessity, the letterpress design is now frequently utilized to convey nostalgia and a rustic charm. A single poster can lure viewers by giving them a tantalizing insight into the universe of the movie it represents (Juliantari, 2014). In this perspective, the "Barbie" movie poster, launched in 2023 and obtained from the movie's official website, stands out as an intriguing subject for semiotic research. It exemplifies the sophisticated combination of visual and linguistic signals, colors, and symbols that characterize the art of cinematic marketing. This study uses Wierzbicka's color theory and Dyer's verbal and visual aspect theory, which are both used in the semiotic analysis of movie posters (GÜZEL, 2023; Juliantari, 2014; Perry, 2020; Utami et al., 2021).

This study begins on a voyage into the semiotic world of the "Barbie" movie poster. We start on a journey to unravel the intricate web of signals and symbols that lay beneath the surface of this seemingly simple promotional artwork, drawing on the core theories of Ferdinand de Saussure's sign theory, Wierzbicka's color theory used to identify the meaning of colors found in the movie poster, while Dyer's verbal and visual aspect theory is applied to identify verbal and visual signs in the poster (Juliantari, 2014; Utami et al., 2021).

The fundamental goal of this study is to uncover the intricate dynamics of signs, symbols, and meanings that influence the poster's communication efficiency. We hope to shed light on how the joint production of the meaning and attractiveness of the movie poster takes place by diving into the rich weave of semiotics. Furthermore, we want to emphasize the importance of visual and linguistic cues in conveying tales and eliciting audience participation.

In our search for meaning, we will examine the linguistic and non-linguistic features of the "Barbie" movie poster, peeling back the layers to reveal the hidden cultural meanings. In addition, we will investigate how this semiotic analysis can be used as a lens to evaluate gender-related issues within visual representation, giving depth and insight into our understanding of the poster's implications.

1.1 Research Questions

- 1) What semiotic signs are found in "The Barbie" movie poster?
- 2) What insights may be derived from the semiotic examination of the visual and symbolic aspects of the "Barbie" movie poster?

2 The Objective of The Research

The study focuses on the Barbie movie poster, including pictures and text, such as verbal, nonverbal, and color signs. In this study, researchers examine the semiotic aspects of the poster movie “Barbie.” The study tries to reveal explicit and implicit meaning using semiotic signs, color meaning, and verbal and visual features of movie posters. The Barbie movie poster is examined using Dyer’s visual and verbal concepts (Dyer, 2009), and the idea of color is discussed by Wierzicka’s theory of color term (Wierzbicka, 1996). The ad line, movie title, producer, tagline, release date, and movie logo can be seen as verbal signs. On the other hand, the background illustration of the poster, colors, and the character position can be seen as visual signs in selected movie posters. The study analyses the selected movie poster’s communication codes and textual and visual elements.

3 Research Methodology

The present investigation utilized a qualitative analytical approach utilizing visual semiotics as its methodology to explore the complex levels of meaning present in the Barbie movie poster. The goal was to decipher the cultural contexts and semiotic codes that underlie the poster’s total expressive potency by carefully examining its visual components, symbols, and signals. The method, which is based on the interpretive nature of qualitative research, sought to identify the socio-cultural implications and individualized readings that are connected to the visual elements in order to offer a comprehensive and intricate picture of the semiotic environment in relation to Barbie’s cinematic portrayal.

4 Data Analysis

Barbie Movie 2023 has several posters to attract the audience. The data in this study were taken from a movie poster entitled “Barbie.” It was published by the Movie Database (TMDB) <https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/346698-barbie/images/posters>, published in June 2023. The Movie Database (TMDB) is a movie and television database created by the community. Since 2008, our incredible community has contributed every piece of data. TMDB’s international emphasis and range of data are unrivaled, and they are proud of it. The data was collected through some steps. The first step was to download the movie poster from the site on the internet. Second, by observing the visual message from the advertisement, such as color, shape, and background, and third, by following the verbal message applied to the text on the movie poster.

4.1 Analysis

The analysis of this data is divided into two aspects: visual and verbal. The elements of visual communication in a visible sign, according to Dyer (2009), include positional communication, activity, touch, activity, age, gender, nationality, race, size, body, look, manner, expression, eye contact, stance, dress, and form.



Fig. 1. The Barbie Movie Poster

Source: <https://www.themoviedb.org/movie/346698-barbie/images/posters>

Figure 1 is a sample of the Barbie Movie Poster to analyze. It's because the picture shows the two main characters in the movie. The gestures of both are really unique and meaningful.

Table 1. Data of Verbal Aspect Analysis of the Movie Poster

No	Verbal Aspects	Messages
1	Margot Robbie – Ryan Gosling	The main characters are written to inform the audience about the main characters in the movie. The two main characters are written to pay attention to the audience. The two main characters' names indicate that the movie has a good quality using these players. Based on this, the movie's cast is essential for the movie's success.

No	Verbal Aspects	Messages
2	She's everything. He just Ken.	Gender Role Subversion: The text subverts traditional gender roles by portraying Barbie as "everything," suggesting she possesses many qualities or abilities. In contrast, Ken is reduced to a humorous and simplistic role, implying that he is merely "Ken," a toy figure with limited attributes. This subversion challenges stereotypes and highlights Barbie's empowerment.
3	Barbie	"Barbie" is the title of the movie poster. The thematic or assertive title is not used in this movie poster. From this perspective, this title does not convey a specific message and only maintains information or raw data about the movie. The Capital letters, bold and white colours are used in the text. This usage indicates that the main title is the movie poster's primary focus. These textual preferences are used to draw the audience's attention, which tells the audience what the movie is.
4	Only in Cinema	The text informs the audience about the location to watch the movie.
5	July	July is written to convey information about the release month of the movie, and it does not mention the exact date to establish the audience's curiosity.
6.	Dolby Cinema	Dolby Cinema is a high-end cinema experience that blends cutting-edge audio and visual technologies to provide an advanced movie-watching experience. It is intended to deliver the finest possible sound and image presentation for viewers.

Table 2. Data of Visual Aspect Analysis of the Movie Poster

No	Visual	Explanation
1	Colour	Blue, Pink, Green, Brown, White
2	Shape	Barbie, Ken, Coconut Tree
3	Background	Blue

4.2 The Color of the Movie Poster

At this point, the colour scheme of a few movie posters is evaluated. Colour is a sort of communication that carries pre-established connotations (Cobley, 1997). This particular movie poster has three colours that stand out. They are blue, light pink, and pink. Colours act as a medium for conveying beliefs and hidden messages (Wierzbicka, 1996). The sensory and social colour of the selected movie poster is analysed in this stage. These visual colours may be subliminal stimuli in the movie poster chosen (Culler, 2005). Based on this, visual colour is used to generate meanings (Danesi, 2004). Blue is frequently connected to dreaminess and awe. It can imply that the movie will take spectators to a beautiful and whimsical world where creativity knows no limitations in the context of a Barbie movie poster. Barbie's distinctive pink is frequently paired with blue as a complementing hue. This colour scheme can make the poster aesthetically appealing and visually harmonious while also expressing the fusion of various aspects in the story. It can also conjure up ideas of the sky or the sea, depending on the shade of blue employed. This may represent a spirit of exploration and adventure, alluding to thrilling adventures and discoveries in the movie.

4.3 The Shape of Movie Poster

In this section, the shape of the selected movie poster is examined. It can be noted here. The genre of the movie is drama and adventure. Barbie's iconic status is highlighted in the poster, which strengthens and enriches Ken as her boyfriend for such a well-known sweet couple. The coconut tree shows the movie will have a beach setting and activities there. The audience perceives the hidden message of the poster, such as the position of Barbie, who Ken lifted. The hands of Barbie and Ken also reflect something that shows the gender characteristic. Barbie's hand shows the cheerful, and Ken's hand shows the power of man. Nevertheless, one hand of Barbies covers the half face of Ken and shows something "interesting" to the audience to show the entire movie in the Cinema.

4.4 The Background of the Movie Poster

In this stage, the background of the selected movie poster is analysed. Pink and blue are the background of the movie poster, and these colours are associated with the girl and boy. Likewise, feelings of dependability and trust might be connected to blue and pink. When a movie stars Barbie, it can mean that the director wants to evoke strong feelings in the audience by making Barbie seem like a person they can relate to. The image of Barbie and Ken and the colour blue refers to Barbie's distinctive pink, frequently paired with blue as a complementing hue. This colour scheme can make the poster aesthetically appealing and visually harmonious while also expressing the fusion of various aspects in the story.

5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this semiotic analysis of the "Barbie" movie poster thoroughly examines the poster's communicative strength and underlying meanings. This study digs into the intricate universe of signs, symbols, and meanings inside the poster, drawing from Saussure's sign theory, Wierzbicka's colour theory, and Dyer's verbal and aspect theory. Based on the result and discussion from the Barbie movie poster, it may be said that the poster's every feature and component have a purpose and significance. The signs found are not limited to visual but also verbal aspects. Verbal signs were found more frequently than visual signs. The information of The Barbie Movie can be shown in 6 verbal signs. It reveals the collaborative building of the poster's meaning and its success in attracting the audience's attention using a qualitative content analysis approach.

The research highlights the importance of visual and verbal clues in delivering narratives and promoting audience engagement in movie marketing. The study highlights the complexities of semiotic strategies employed in movie promotion. The cheerful Barbie's gesture of her hands will make a curiosity of the audience because she made the gesture like. The gender issues will be released after the audience sees the movie poster, and they will be answered after watching movie in the cinema. According to Danger in Neman, the packaging's primary function within the overall marketing program is as a "promotional tool." As a result, the colour of the package "is important because it appeals to the emotions and not to reason" (Neman, 1988).

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