



A SEMIOTICS ANALYSIS OF SIGNS ON “IDOL” MUSIC VIDEO BY BTS

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Article History

Submitted date:

2026-04-25

Accepted date:

2026-05-13

Published date:

2026-07-25

Keywords:

Barthes' theory, BTS,
Love yourself, and
Semiotics signs

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the meaning of signs found in the music video "Idol" by BTS (2018). The research method applied in this study is a qualitative descriptive approach consistent with identifying and analyzing some observations through the music video. This study uses semiotic by Barthes's (1977) theory to discover and analyze. The result showed that from an official YouTube account, namely "HYBE Labels" This study found that 31 signs have the meaning implied by BTS to show the song lyrics and pictures that describe the denotations and connotations about Love yourself.

Abstrak

Kata Kunci:

Teori Barthes, BTS, Love
Yourself, tanda-tanda
semiotika

Analisis Semiotika terhadap Tanda-tanda dalam Video Musik “IDOL” oleh BTS

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis makna tanda-tanda yang terdapat dalam video musik Idol oleh BTS (2018). Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif yang konsisten dengan proses identifikasi dan analisis berdasarkan beberapa pengamatan melalui video musik tersebut. Kajian ini menggunakan teori semiotika Barthes (1977) untuk menemukan dan menganalisis tanda-tanda.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dari akun resmi YouTube, yaitu HYBE Labels, ditemukan 31 tanda yang mengandung makna implisit dari BTS untuk menampilkan lirik lagu dan gambar yang menggambarkan denotasi serta konotasi tentang Love Yourself.

Introduction

The music video “Idol” is one of the most famous BTS comeback music videos. The song in this music video is the mainstay of the album 'Love Yourself: Answer'. This album is a repackaged album. Music video was released on August 24, 2018 and the length of duration was 03.51 minutes On the HYBE Labels youtube channel. This music video has 1.5 billion views and has also been liked by 18 million viewers since its release 3 years ago. This song is inspired by the experiences of the seven members who were once looked down upon and deemed inappropriate as idols. Through this song, BTS wants to say they do not care about other people's judgments because they will love themselves and what they do. This music video has a signs and different meaning from the meaning that we know as usual. For example, there is a tiger running, the tiger is an animal that represents Korea. in Korea the tiger is a sacred animal that symbolizes courage and there is a giraffe playing this video, the

meaning of a Giraffe that we know is the animal but in this music video giraffe has a different meaning that symbolizes a uniqueness.

From this background, the writer decided to examine the signs in the BTS "Idol" music video. They convey their message with song lyrics, gestures, movements and props used in the music video and the writer is also fans who really enjoy their songs.

There are two statements of the problem regarding this study, (1) What are the sign elements and symbols found in the BTS "Idol" music video?, (2) what are the messages of signs and symbols implied in the BTS "Idol" music video? and (3) what are the myths contained of signs and symbol in the BTS "Idol" music video? As the result, this study is conducted (1) to identity the elements of sign and symbols displayed in the BTS "Idol" music video, (2) to analyze the messages of the signs and symbols contained in the BTS "Idol" music video, and (3) to identity the myths contained of signs and symbol in the BTS "Idol" music video.

People live in semiotics world where there are a sign and symbol that can found in everyday life and everywhere like in media or printed. Some related studiethat previously had been conducted by many undergraduates are used to show the similarities and the differences between those studies and the thesis being conducted. The five related studies that have been collected are shown as follows:

The first study entitled "Semiotics Analysis of BTS Music Video Blood, Sweat, and Tears through Morris Theory." by Prajnadi (2018) a college student from Buddhi Dharma University. She discussed the signs in the BTS music video. This study use Morris theory, the purpose of this study is to analyzed the meaning of signs in the three aspect of the signs (syntatic, semantic, and pragmatic) of Morris"s theory. In results the writer defines the sign with the micro and macro analysis, syntatic, semantic and pragmatic, and analyze the verbal and non verbal signs.

The second study was analyzed by Juliantari (2014) a college student from Udayana University entitled "Semiotics Analysis of The Conjuring Movie Poster Advertisement" This study used some theories such as the theory of signs by Saussure (1974), and used several supporting theories such as the theory of Verbal and Visual Aspect proposed by Dyer (1986), Theory of Color The second study was analyzed by Juliantari (2014) a college student from Udayana University entitled "Semiotics Analysis of The Conjuring Movie Poster Advertisement" This study used some theories such as the theory of signs by Saussure (1974), and used several supporting theories such as the theory of Verbal and Visual Aspect proposed by Dyer (1986), Theory of Color Term by Wierzbicka (1996). The purpose of this study is to analyze the verbal and visual sign and to find out the meaning evoked by the signs in the advertisement poster. In result of the study the writer found verbal signs in posters such as the title, subtitles, font size, internet site, etc. and the visual signs were analyzed from the picture, color, position, and background of the poster.

The third study entitled "Semiotic Analysis of The Video Music: Indonesia Bangkit: Comparing Audience Interpretation." by Gilbatar (2014) a college student from President University. This study used Roland Barthes theory. The purpose of the study is to explore the myths buried in music videos, to check viewers interpretations while watching, and listen to music videos that include when they view one of the personnel wearing Nazi uniforms. In results, the writer found the myths buried and viewers interpretation in the music video.

The fourth study was analysed by Kadiman (2019) a college student from Buddhi Dharma University entitled "Semiotics Analysis of Jonas Blue's Music Video Rise through Roland Barthes theory ". This study used Roland Barthes theory. The purpose of this study

is to analyze the meaning of Jonas Blue's rise music video through the semiotic theory of Roland Barthes and to discuss and explain the connotative meaning, denotative meaning and myth that can be found in Jonas Blue's music video. This study used qualitative method. In the result of the analysis the writer shows that there are 10 data that can be found in the video, and there are 10 denotative meaning and connotative meaning in the scenes from the video.

The last study entitled "Analysis of The Symbols in Westlife's song Lyrics" by Rosita (2019) a college student from Semarang State University. This study used Charles Sander Pierce theory. This study aims to show the symbol of the song lyrics which have an influence in real life. This study used a qualitative descriptive method based on the symbols contained in the Westlife's song selected song entitled I have a dream (1999), Flying Without Wings (1999), Swear it again (1999), If I Let You Go (1999), Uptown Girl (2000), My Love (2000), and You Raised Me Up (2005). The result of this study the writer shows that on the lyrics of the song Westlife's has many meaning to express the characters feelings and their thoughts which focus on the lyrics.

The similarity from all the previous studies above is they are researching about signs that appears on everyday life, like on music video on internet, music, and advertisement. The research on this study also analyze signs that appear on the scene in music video from YouTube. Despite of the similarity, there are also the differences from the five previous studies and this research. The first previous studies used Morris theory and the third until the last previous studies used Roland Barthes theory. The second studies using some theory such as the theory of signs by Saussure (1974) and used several supporting theories such as the theory of Verbal and Visual Aspect proposed by Dyer (1986), Theory of Color Term by Wierzbicka (1996). The second studies focus on searching the meaning of visual and verbal sign in advertisement while this study focus on semiotic aspect that can be found in the music video.

The beginning of modern semiotics was by a popular figure, Ferdinand De Saussure or often called the father of modern linguistics. According to Saussure (1959, p.16) semiotics is based on the assumption that as long as human actions and behaviors carry the same meaning or function as signs, behind them there must be a system of distinctions and conventions that makes them this meaning becomes possible.

Another modern semiotics figure is Charles Sanders Peirce. According to Peirce (1940) semiotics is based on logic because logic studies how people reason through signs. These signs allow us to think, relate to others, and make sense of what the universe represents. In this case, people have a lot of signs in different aspects of life. sign language becomes one of the most important parts and the function and use of a sign is the center of attention. Signs are a very important communication tool in different conditions and can be used in different aspects of communication.

Barthes is known as a structuralist thinker interested in the practice of Saussure models of language and semiotics. He was a French intellectual and literary critic who applied structuralism and semiotics to the study of literature. Barthes developed semiotics dealing with the meaning of signs using two stages of meaning, denotative (real meaning) and connotation (figurative meaning). According to Barthes, semiotics is the science of form. This study considers meaning as distinct from content. Semiotics considers not only signifier and signifies, but also the relationship that binds them (sign).

Denotation

Denotation is sometimes called a conceptual meaning or cognitive meaning. According to Sobur (2015 p.69) denotation is called cognitive meaning because related to a knowledge, stimulus (from the sender of message) and response (from the recipient of the message) concern with the things that can be take in the senses and human rations. And denotation

meaning also can be called as a propositional meaning because it is related. In simply, denotation meaning is the meaning which exist in each lexeme or word or meaning from real word with real life like the word we use in every daily life.

According to Barthes (1957) denotation is the most tangible meaning in signs. In other words, denotation is what the sign describes on an object. The denotation meaning is the most basic meaning in a word. if we say a certain thing then it means the word indicates, suggests, and refers to the thing itself. denotation meaning involves objective information and is often referred to as the real meaning. an example of a denotative meaning such as the word "giraffe" a giraffe is an animal that has a long neck that is longer than the average animal's neck.

Connotation

Connotation is the word use to describes an interaction when the feeling with the emotion of the user's value connects with the sign in the culture. In simply, Connotation is the word use to imply an association the other than a literal meaning. Connotation meaning is a type of meaning whose stimulus (from the sender of the message) and response (from the recipient of the message) contain emotional values. According to Djajasudarma (2009, p.13) connotation meaning arises from the association of our feelings with the words we speak or hear. Connotation meaning tends to lead to positive and negative things.

Therefore, in the connotative meaning there is an element of taste and opinion from someone about a sign. the speaker wants to cause feelings of agree- disagree, happy- disliked, and the part of the recipient of the message.

The connotative meaning is influenced by the cultural environment. Fiske (2012, p.198) adds that connotation is the cultural meaning inherent in a term. the connotation describes the interactions that occur when the sign meets the reader's emotions and cultural values. For example, the word "lotus" which for Indonesian people expresses the connotative meaning of beauty, but in a country like India it has a connotative meaning related to Hinduism and is a symbol of religion.

Myth

The word "myth" comes from the Greek which means speech words. Myth is how culture explains or understands some aspects of reality or natural phenomena. Myths serve as genuine "narrative theories" about the world. Myth is a product of social class that already has one dominance. Fiske (cited in Sobur, 2015, p.128) divided the myth in two that is primitive myths is about life and death, humans and gods, superstition, and contemporary myths, for example about femininity, masculinity, science, politics, social, etc.

According to Barthes (1994) myth is the development of a long-established connotation in society. Myth in this case means things that have been entrenched and believed by a society. Myth in Barthes's view is a semiological system, which is a sign system that is interpreted by society. In Barthes view, myth is not an assumption about things that are superstitious or unreasonable, but myth according to Barthes is referred to as a person's type of speech in society.

Myth is a communication system because it conveys messages. Myth is not an object or a concept or an idea. Myth is a way of representing a form. Myth is also not determined by the object or material of the message conveyed, but by the way the myth is conveyed. Myths are not only in the form of messages conveyed by verbal messages, but also in other forms or combinations of verbal and non- verbal forms. Myths can be conveyed in the form of films, paintings, photography, advertisements, and comics as a media for conveying messages.

Sign

Sign is something that represents something other than the things itself, like a metaphor. Something that can be an idea, experience, and feelings. According to Pierce (1980) a sign

is something in a physical form that can be seen by the five human senses, and which represents something other than the sign itself. From these perspectives, the type of a sign based on the cognitive framework on sign language with the three central ideas: customs, beliefs, and portrayals. According to Pateda (cited in Sobur 2016, p.15) based on their nature, signs caused by humans are divided into verbal signs and nonverbal signs.

Verbal is a sign that are used as communication tools produced by speech and use language media as the sender. Direct verbal for example, talking on the phone, presenting in class, and talking to other people and Indirect verbal signs for example correspondence activities, reading newspapers, watching television, listening to the radio. nonverbal signs mean language minus signs or word minus signs or in other words all signs that are not words. like making a sound, whistling, or telling others to be quiet by sounding "ssstt ..."

Symbol

The symbol comes from the word *symbolos* (Greek) means a sign that describes something to someone. A symbol is a sign that represents something based on agreements (conventions) either intentionally or unintentionally, for example, Gedung Sate represents Bandung.

The symbols stand for different interpretations and different meanings in which can get different meaning. Meaning in a symbol based on an agreement or convention in society. Fadaee (2011, p.20) symbolism is represented by human belief and imagination which considered to something else. A symbol is a sign that represented an idea, meaning is have a significance meaning behind it. A sign and symbol are related because have the same meaning that is constitute something.

Method

Approach of the Study

Approach of the study is an important aspect in a study where the study is a way to get data with a specific purpose. Based on the type of the data, this study used a qualitative approach. According to Sugiono (2011, p.145) the qualitative approach is an approach that is carried out in full on the research subject where there is still an incident where the researcher is the key instrument in the research, then the output of the approach is described in the form of written terms, the reality data that has been obtained and this approach also emphasizes rather than generalization. Therefore, qualitative approach can reveal phenomena in a subject that analyzed in depth.

Data Source

Data source in this study is primary data on of what became the material to be analyzed in this study is BTS's "Idol" music video. It is a video taken from YouTube and the secondary or additional data obtained from written sources such as books, articles, journals, or from the internet.

Data Collection

For collecting the data, the writer took several steps. First, the writer download and watched the entire music video carefully and repeatedly to find out the signs and symbol in the music video. Second, the writer screen captured every scene and group them based on context and story line. Third, the writer made a list of the scene that have screen captured in Microsoft word. Fourth, the writer also took lyrics of each scene. The last, the writer analyzed the signs and symbol that have found used Roland Barthes (1983) theory.

Data Analysis

For the data analyze used a qualitative descriptive method because the writer considers explanations and descriptions when analyzing the data. According to Moleong (2006, p.6) Qualitative data analysis is tried to employ with the data, organize data, sorting to possible units, synthesizing and looking and finding out what the important and what the learned and decided what have to do, and can be share to others.

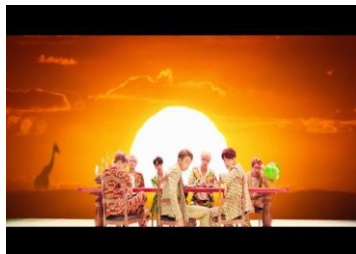
From the description above, it is related to the problem of the study, the writer wants to describe the message contained in the BTS "Idol" music video and used Rolland Barthes semiotic theory which has three meaning systems denotation, connotation, and myth.

Findings And Discussions

This chapter contains the data found in BTS Idol music video and how the writer categorized and analysed these data. There are thirty-one data found in this music video. The data were analysed using Rolland Barthes theory to explain the meaning behind the sign and symbol.

Datum 1

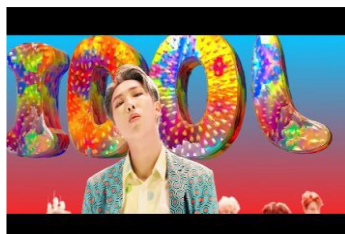
(00:11)



BTS members sitting with a sunset background and the shadow of a giraffe and a globe.
[beat music]

Datum 2

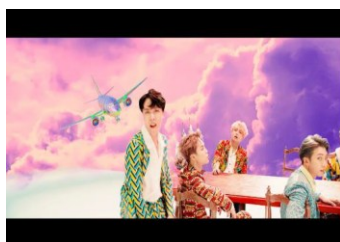
(00:26)



A member with an optimistic expression on a colourful background with the text "Idol" and the lyric: *"You can call me idol"*

Datum 3

(00:34)



The members with airplane in the purple sky background. The lyrics in this scene: *"I'm free"*

Datum 4

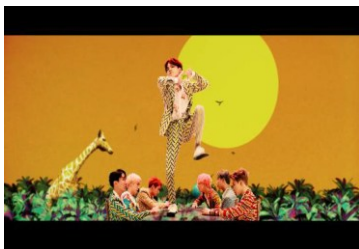
(00:39)



Suga is standing on the table and the other members are sitting with their heads down and behind them is a giraffe. The lyrics: *"they point finger at me, but I don't care at all"*

Datum 5

(00:43)



The members sat and looked at Suga who was standing on the table with his feet raised like he wanted to step on the members with a yellow giraffe and sun background. The lyrics: *"whatever the reason for your criticism is"*

Datum 6

(00:48)



RM using cute effect like a cat or rabbit effect with cute expression. The lyrics: *"I know what I am"*

Datum 7

(00:52)



There are two mannequins with curly and colourful hair followed by Rm's annoyed expression and pointing to the camera. The lyrics: *"I never gone trade"*

Datum 8

(00:54)



There is a picture of a big monster giving off fire and BTS members pointing at the monster. The lyrics: *“trade-off”*

Datum 9

(00:57)



There is a picture of creatures like bats or dragons that emit fire. The lyrics: *“keep on chit-chatting, saying this and that”*

Datum 10

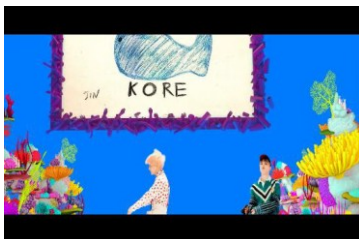
(00:59)



There is a cartoon with the name Suga and there are numbers height: 18cm and width 13m. The lyrics: *“Talkin, talkin, talkin”*

Datum 11

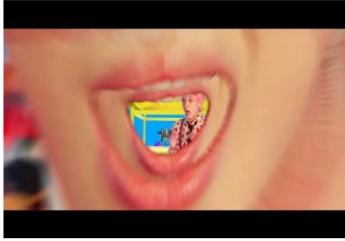
(01:01)



A picture of a fish with the words "KORE" and the name of Jin. The lyrics: *“I do what I do, and so you do you”*

Datum 12

(01:09)



Many open mouths and Taehyung's frightened face looks. The lyrics: " *you can't stop me, loving myself*"

Datum 13

(01:13)



A traditional Korean building with BTS members wearing traditional Korean clothes called "yangban". The lyrics: " *Ursoo, it's awesome*"

Datum 14

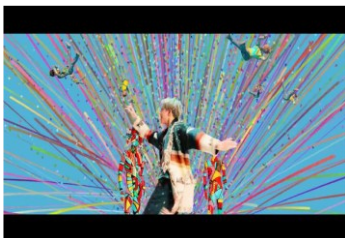
(01:16)



There are so many faces of BTS members around Jimin. The lyrics: " *You can't stop me, loving myself*"

Datum 15

(01:22)



RM waved his hand and the BTS members seemed to be flying. The lyrics: " *Hooray, it's awesome*"

Datum 16

(01:31)



The members sit in a colourful room with happy faces. The lyrics: “*dunkiduk kungduruhruh.*”

Datum 17

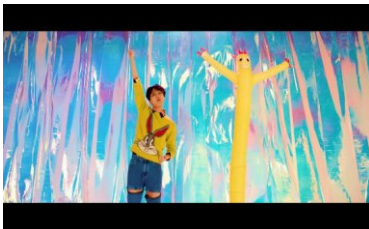
(01:38)



There are two unicorns with different colours on Taehyung's side. [beat music]

Datum 18

(01:48)



J-Hope's shirt has a picture of the Looney Tunes character "Bugs Bunny" and beside J-Hope is a doll. The lyrics: “*I am your Anpanman*”

Datum 19

(01:50)



The shirt that Suga uses has a snow-white character and beside Suga there is a person wearing a unique costume. The lyrics: “*24 hours aren't enough, can't afford to be confused*”

Datum 20

(01:56)



Jungkook who is between two mirrors. The lyrics: *“there are hundreds of me inside of me”*

Datum 21

(02:13)



There is a yellow moon where there is a rabbit of the same colour. The lyrics: *“keep on chit-chatting, saying this and that”*

Datum 22

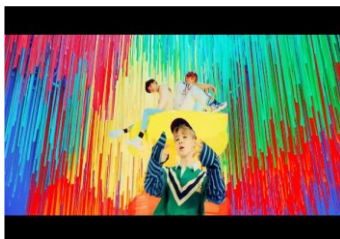
(02:23)



Taehyung's expression is frightened by the people around him. The lyrics: *“I am facing a new me again today”*

Datum 23

(02:23)



Suga and Jungkook looking at Jimin with colourful tassels in the background. The lyrics: *“You can't stop me, loving myself”*

Datum 24

(02:27)



A shark that wants to pounce on the BTS members who are in a box like an aquarium. The lyrics: ““*Ursoo, it’s awesome*”

Datum 25

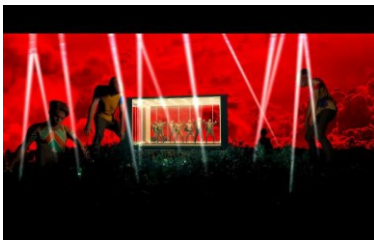
(02:37)



BTS members sitting on a giant flower. The lyrics: “ohohohoh”

Datum 26

(02:45)



BTS members who are in a glass box and the members become giants. [Beat Music]

Datum 27

(02:50)



The clothes that Taehyung is wearing with a red love pattern. [beat music]

Datum 28

(02:55)



Jungkook who looks coughing with a background that says "*Saranghae*"

Datum 29

(02:58)



Jimin uses a traditional Korean fan, and the members sit behind him. The lyrics: "*I am so fine wherever I go, even if it takes a while sometimes*"

Datum 30

(03:37)



There is a tiger crossing in front of the camera. The lyrics: "*it's okay, I'm happy in this moment*"

Datum 31

(03:47)



In this scene all the members are sitting in the same pose, but RM is different, his pose that hints at silence. [beat music]

Based on the datum on the table, the writer found 31 data with the verbal and non-verbal and the data analyzed by Barthes (1983) theory.

Conclusions

Based on the analysis in the previous chapters, sign and symbol in the “Idol” by BTS music video were found by the writer related to the theory of Barthes (1977). The data was founded in this study are 31 signs. The “Idol” music video talks about the experiences of the seven BTS members who were underestimated and deemed inappropriate to be an idol. Through this music video they say that they don’t care what other people think of them because they will love themselves and what they do. Each scene in this music video shows the members’ resistance to the haters, which is depicted to denotation meaning through Suga standing on the table, then denotation meaning followed by’ conflict with self but building of identity, which is depicted to denotation meaning by Jimin’s roar and followed by Taehyung’s frightened expression. Then they also show the form of loving themselves with growth, success and modesty which is depicted to denotation meaning through the lotus flower sign and the avatar of the members.

In addition, the video also shows several scenes of traditional South Korean art and music such as traditional clothes, traditional houses, tiger mask performances and then there are animals such as rabbits, sharks, and tigers that show the members’ strength to always love themselves. The message that BTS wants to convey through this “idol” music video is to eliminate the sense of insecurity in humans. Every human being has different potential and uniqueness, for that we must accept and love ourselves. When we love ourselves, happiness will come by itself.

Based on the analysis in the previous chapters, the writer suggests for the students of English Department who are interested in semiotics study can be more read many theory books by an expert such Ferdinand de Saussure, Roland Barthes, Charles Sander pierce and journal about semiotics. Furthermore, it would be better to analyze deeply and more detail in another object of semiotics.

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