

Semiotic Analysis of the "Sewu Dino" Film Poster: Unveiling Visual Narratives and Cultural Symbolism

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Abstract. This paper presents a comprehensive semiotics analysis of the "Sewu Dino" film poster, utilizing qualitative methodologies, color theory, and verbal and non-verbal communication theories. The primary aim is to uncover the intricate layers of meaning embedded in the poster's visual elements and to shed light on the profound impact of visual communication in conveying the essence of the film before its audience. The analysis delves into the fusion of Javanese culture and the celebration of death, highlighting the poster's role in encapsulating the richness of the tradition. The "Sewu Dino" film poster is a poignant example of how semiotics can be employed to unravel the intricate narrative threads in visual communication. In conclusion, this paper showcases how film posters encapsulate stories, emotions, and traditions, enticing audiences and inviting them to partake in a multi-layered cinematic journey.

Keywords: culture, film poster, *sewu dino*, semiotics, signs

1 Introduction

Film posters are powerful visual communication artifacts that draw people into the cinematic world and transmit deep tales and cultural symbols [1]. Its are a powerful medium through which filmmakers transmit the essence of their creations, tempting audiences with glimpses of the cinematic drama to come [2]. The poster for "Sewu Dino," a masterpiece in its own right, epitomizes the power of visual storytelling, weaving together a tapestry of symbols, imagery, and cultural references that pull spectators into the horror movie universe. This research takes a semiotic journey, going deep into the layers of the "Sewu Dino" film poster to reveal the many visual tales and cultural meanings it conceals.

Semiotics, as defined by scholars such as [1] and [2] provide a prism through which we can decode the signs and symbols hidden in visual artifacts [3]. We examine the "Sewu Dino" poster through this semiotic prism, attempting to decode the complex tapestry of meaning that lurks therein. We uncover the more profound messages intended by the poster's makers by evaluating the visual and verbal concepts by Dyer and the supported theory by Wierzbica.

Understanding how visual narratives function in film is our analysis's center. As Bordwell and Thompson point out, films are ultimately a storytelling medium, and visual aspects play an essential role in this narrative building [4]. In the instance of "*Sewu Dino*," the poster acts as the opening chapter of this story, setting the stage for the viewer's involvement with the film. We want to learn how the poster introduces essential themes, characters, and conflicts, bringing viewers into the film's world through semiotic analysis.

Furthermore, this research aims to situate the visual narratives within a broader cultural context. Film posters are more than just ads; they are cultural relics that reflect and contribute to the cultural discourse of their era [5]. We depend on the work of cultural studies researchers such as [5] and [6] in examining the cultural significance of the "*Sewu Dino*" poster. They serve as a mirror through which civilizations reflect and build their identities [6].

Great admiration for the merger of Javanese culture and the celebration of death is at the heart of our analysis—a thematic essence that the "*Sewu Dino*" poster beautifully portrays. The poster acts as a portal, welcoming spectators into a realm where the rich tapestry of Javanese traditions is intertwined with the profound exploration of mortality. Javanese culture and semiotics are reflected in film posters and many contemporary songs in Indonesia [7].

Furthermore, by including Javanese culture in our semiotic analysis, we highlight the critical interaction between visual communication and cultural narratives. The "*Sewu Dino*" poster thrives at this nexus, bridging the gap between art and tradition. This fusion heightens the poster's impact and emphasizes the intrinsic connection between visual storytelling and cultural identity [8].

As we embark on this semiotic trip via the "*Sewu Dino*" film poster, our discoveries offer a more profound knowledge of how cinema posters weave tales, emotions, and traditions into their visual fabric. In its semiotic richness, the poster invites audiences to participate in a multi-layered cinematic voyage, urging them to join in the tapestry of Javanese culture and the celebration of life and death.

Research questions:

1. What are the semiotic signs in the *Sewu Dino* film poster?
2. What implicit and explicit messages and ideologies are transmitted by verbal and visual signs in the *Sewu Dino* film poster?

2 Objective of The Research

The study focuses on *Sewu Dino* movie posters that include pictures and text, signs such as verbal signs, nonverbal signs, and color signs. The additional research is cultural symbolism inside the poster. In this study, researchers try to reveal explicit and implicit meaning using semiotic signs, color meaning, and verbal and visual features of the film poster.



Fig.1 Framework of the Research

3 Research Method

The descriptive analysis approach will be utilized in this poster research to separate each visual that appears on this poster and then investigate the significance of each visual and the meanings and signs [9].

According to Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotics, the visual has two meanings: denotation and connotation. Both represent the link between signifier and signified, but each describes a different meaning [1]. The steps below were taken to implement the observation method and technique:

A. Data Collecting

The first stage of this research is data collection, where the data is collected from various sources related to the keywords of this research. In this research, the data collection mostly takes sources from the Internet. One of the primary data was taken from 21 Cinema's official poster at <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt23136186/>. IMDb, in complete Internet Movie Database, is a Web site that provides information about millions of films and television programs and their cast and crew. The name is an acronym for Internet Movie Database. As a wholly owned subsidiary of Amazon.com, IMDb is based in Seattle, but the office of Col Needham, the founder and CEO, remains in Bristol, England, where the Web site was founded.

B. Data Processing

After the process of collecting data is done, the data will be processed by adjusting the literary theories about semiotics. After that, the picture in the poster is divided into several verbal elements, and then the visual elements are explained in meaning.

4 Result and Discussion

The results of the analysis of Sewu Dino Poster use verbal and visual analysis using the semiotics technique in Figure 2.

4.1. Verbal Aspect

Verbal signs refer to using words in visual communication, including typography, headlines, captions, and other forms of text [10].



Fig.2 The Film Poster of *Sewu Dino*

Table 1. The Data of Verbal Aspect Analysis of the Film Poster

Data of Verbal Aspect Analysis of the Film Poster		
No	Verbal Aspect	Message
1	Sewu Dino	It is the title of the movie poster. The text is made in capital letters, bold, given red color, and is printed on the poster as the sign that this is the main title and is the focus of the film poster design. The film's title is made to stand out to catch the audience's attention and let them know what the film looks like and its title.
2	MD Pictures Presents	It informs the production house of the film. It is a production house established in Jakarta on August 1, 2002. MD became Indonesia's leading film production company, pioneering other film companies to go public.
3	KKN Desa Penari	It is one of Indonesia's most successful film horrors in 2022. It ensures the audience thinks the new film will give the same tension as the previous horror film.
4	20 April Lebaran 2023	It conveys information about the date and memorable moments to enjoy this film. Lebaran Day chose to watch this movie with a big family and best friends because it is the perfect time to gather.
5	A Film by Kimo Stamboel	He is an Indonesian film director, producer, and screenwriter. He is known for his works on the horror genre and already become one of the best in Indonesia.
6	The Most Awaited Horror Threatened by @ Simple Man	The text is made in capital letters, bold, and white color. Contrast with the other words and ensure the audiences watch the film because it is the most awaited horror threat.

Table 2. Data of Visual Aspect Analysis

Data of Visual Aspect Analysis		
No	Visual Aspect	Finding
1	Color	Black, Yellow, Red, White, Brown
2	Shape	A girl, bamboo <i>keranda</i> , dead body, Javanese coconut dipper, Javanese offering, towel, bowl, lamp, smoke, tree.
3	Background	Black

4.2 Visual Aspect Analysis

The researcher focuses on the selected film poster's color, shape, and background in this part. According to Dyer, pictures are easier to understand and have more impact than words. Visual signs are delivered with words, genuine gestures, facial expressions in a picture or image, and appearance [10].

4.2.1 Color of the Selected Film Poster

The color used in the selected film poster is examined in this stage. Color is a type of communication that conveys pre-defined meanings. The poster has an Earth-tone dominant color, such as browns, muted reds, and oranges. Besides Earth tone, traditional colors such as white and black are the poster's background. The hidden messages and ideologies are transmitted through colors. The sensory and social color of the selected film poster is analyzed in this stage.

Earth tones include a variety of hues influenced by nature, such as browns, greens, and muted reds and oranges. In film, earth tones have the following meanings:

- a. Nature Connection: Earth tones frequently represent a connection to the natural world. Scenes with these colors may express a sense of harmony with nature or a return to nature [11].
- b. Rustic or rural settings: Earth tones are frequently employed in films set in rural or rustic settings, emphasizing the simplicity and authenticity of country life [11].

It is crucial to remember that color interpretation in movies can be subjective and context-dependent. Filmmakers carefully use color palettes to underline the themes and emotions of their stories, and the meanings of colors vary from film to film depending on the narrative and visual choices made by the director and production crew.

4.2.2 Shape of the Selected Film Poster

In this section, the shape of the selected film poster is examined. It can be noted here that *Sewu Dino* has disturbing content. It includes A big bamboo *keranda* as the main part object.

The girl who stands and the dead body inside the bamboo *keranda* becomes a center visual. The genre of this film is Horror. Typically, "*keranda*" refers to a traditional Indonesian or Javanese funeral bier or coffin. It is a structure or platform used during funeral processions and rituals to transport the deceased. *Kerandas* vary in shape and decoration, and they are frequently associated with cultural and religious significance in Indonesia, particularly on the island of Java.

Bamboo Kerandas are a significant aspect of burial rites in Indonesia, and they help to respect the deceased while also easing the transition from the world of the living to the world of the dead. *Kerandas* are used in traditional Indonesian funerals and are closely associated with local customs and religious beliefs.

The two lamps on the right and left of the wood wall show the character of the Javanese house, Javanese coconut dipper (*siwur bathok kelopo*), and Javanese offering (*sesajen*).

4.2.3 Background of Selected Film Poster

In this stage, the background of the selected film poster is analyzed. The black color was chosen as the background of the film poster. In film and visual storytelling, using color, primarily black, can express many symbolic and thematic meanings to improve the narrative and elicit distinct emotions in the audience. Here is an outline of the connotations linked with black color in film:

- a. Black is frequently utilized in film to create an atmosphere of mystery and suspense. It can reflect the story's unknown or hidden parts. For example, a dark, black room could indicate secrets or danger [12].
- b. Death and grieving: In many cultures, Black is a traditional hue linked with death and grieving. It may be used in film to represent loss and sorrow in scenes about funerals or grieving [12].
- c. Power and Authority: Black can represent power, authority, and control. Characters in positions of authority or villainy may dress in black to indicate power [12].

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper sheds light on the intricate world of semiotics and visual communication within the context of the "*Sewu Dino*" film poster. By examining the semiotic elements, color choices, and verbal and non-verbal cues, we understand how this poster bridges Javanese culture and cinematic storytelling, inviting viewers to embark on a journey of cultural exploration and cinematic immersion. The highlight in this poster is the title, which has a big size and light color. This poster wants to remind the audiences that all the elements that made this film are professionals who were successful in previous horror films, the name of producer, director, and previous successful Indonesian horror films. These static graphics, embellished with vibrant colors, carefully picked visuals and fascinating typography, are portals to the stories that audiences will encounter in the gloomy halls of the *Sewu Dino* movie. However, behind the surface is a sophisticated semiotic tapestry rich in symbols, codes, and signifiers that communicate far more than plain marketing. They capture the film's spirit, underlying themes, and cultural nuances that frame the story. It is dark and creepy, with a big *keranda* and a dead girl's body inside. Dark and creepy, with a large coffin and a girl's

corpse inside is the main point that will make the audience curious before watching this Horror Movie in its entirety.

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