

A semiotic analysis of colors as the symbol of music genre in the movie *Trolls World Tour*

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Abstract

This research discusses the semiotics of color as a symbol of genre music on the characters of the film *Trolls World Tour*. This research has two objectives. (1) To find the colors of the six characters. (2) To analyze the semiotics of colors on the characters connected to the music genre in the film *Trolls World Tour*. This research looks for Denotative, Connotative, and Mythical meanings. This research uses a qualitative descriptive method. This is related to the description of data in the form of character images from pieces of movie scenes. The analysis in this study uses semiotic analysis from Roland Barthes. Using Karen Haller's color psychology theory and based on research entitled *Associating Colors with Musical Genres and Color, Music, and Emotion: Bach to the Blues*. The results of this study found 6 Denotative meanings, 6 Connotative meanings, and 2 Myth meanings. The research findings show that 3 out of 6 characters have colors that are connected to music genre.

Keywords: *Semiotic; Color; Music Genre; Movie; Trolls World Tour*

Introduction

Products in linguistics are not only written or spoken; In linguistics, there is a sub-discipline that discusses signs, namely semiotics. It is the study of signs and the purpose of semiotic is to know or interpret what meaning is that contained in the sign. Barthes in (Kevinia et al., 2024) explained that semiotics is a field that investigates signs, and that language is also a combination of signs that contain certain social messages. (Barthes in (Gede Jody Agastya & Wayan Suastini, 2024) states that semiotics analyzes how signs or symbols, such as words, images, sounds, movie, or colors are both verbal and non-verbal.

Color is one of the signs. In semiotics, in society, colors as signs and symbols have different impressions and identities that are adjusted to their respective social circumstances, which is why each meaning shows a certain meaning (Widiastuti, 2018). The use of color in a product, both in songs and movie, has a meaning contained therein. Color can be a communication tool to convey a message. Color as a sign and symbol has a different impression and identity. Color can have an effect on

humans physically, psychologically, physiologically, and sociologically. Color effects also influence how a person responds to the surrounding environment (Wijayanto & Senoprabowo, 2023). According to Orinbaevich et al, (2022), "In many cases, the symbolic meaning of colors is interconnected with their physiological and psychological effects." As a form of color psychology, colors also have philosophies, symbols, and emotions related to the interpretation of meaning with a particular color. Color meanings can influence behavior, mood, cognition, focus, and general associations. This development has led to the formation of various disciplines about color, including hermeneutics, philosophy, art, religion, personality, and semiotics (Paksi, 2021). Color has a theory. One of them is in the field of psychology, known as color psychology. Color psychology is a theory about various colors that have an influence on human psychology (Mulyati, 2022). The figure of color psychology is Johan Wolfgang von Goethe, he was a philosopher who mastered many fields. His color theory explains nature, function, and psychology. The modern advances in psychology are developing this theory further with Karen Haller as one of its current leaders. She is a leading international expert

in the field of color psychology. In 2019, Karen Haller published a book titled *The Little Book of Color: How to Use the Psychology of Color to Transform Your Life*.

In movies, color can move the atmosphere and strengthen the plot of the story. Along with the story plot, visual elements are an important aspect that must be considered in addition to just spoiling the eyes. The use of color in visual art can be a distinguishing identity of a theme, genre, or character. The use of certain colors can give a certain impression both to the characters in the movie and to the audience. As with the color of clothing on a character, it can be related to the emotions felt by the user and it also can cause a certain mood or feeling, even reveal the personality of the character. Not only the scenes that occur in the movie can provide interpretations, but also the colors as the places, objects, and characters in the movie. Color design in film scenes can affect the emotions of the audience; this can help the audience understand and feel the feelings of the characters in the film (Wahyuni & Heryanto, 2022).

Movie is an audio-visual communication tool used to convey messages to a group of people gathered (Asri, 2020). Movie is a combination of efforts to convey messages through moving images, camera technology, color, and sound (Kevinia et al., 2024). The movie itself has various genres, one of the movie genres is animation. An animated movie is a movie made from hand drawings that are processed into moving images which are assisted by computer technology. One example of an animated movie is titled *Trolls World Tour*.

Trolls World Tour is a sequel to the musical animated movie *Trolls* (2016). It was first released digitally through the VOD (Video on Demand) platform on April 10, 2020. This animated movie tells the story of Poppy's adventures after she is appointed queen of the Trolls. She and her friends work together to unite the six separate Troll tribes into six tribes which are based on music genres. The six tribes are Troll Techno, Troll Country, Troll Funk, Troll Classic, Troll Rock, and Queen Poppy's tribe is Troll Pop. As queen, Poppy intends to unite the six tribes of Trolls so that the Troll nation can grow bigger with different music genres. . Music genres are categories or groupings of music based

on certain characteristics, similarities and styles, such as musical techniques, melodies, rhythms, instruments, lyrics, themes, and cultural or historical influences (Chen & Pollack, 2018).

According to Giri (2018), "Music genres are labels used by humans to categorize and describe the vast world of music". Genres help classify music so that listeners can recognize and choose the type of music according to their tastes. Music genres help listeners to listen to what kind of songs they like. Poppy's journey is not an easy one. In this movie, color elements are very prominent in the characters. One of the colors in this movie is used as a symbol of the music genres played by the characters.

There are several studies related to semiotics that have been studied by previous researchers. The first research was researched by Ririn Kirana and Udayani Permaludin entitled "A Depiction of Gender Role Denotation of Color in *Trolls* Movie by Mike Mitchell" in 2020. This study focuses on the denotation of color which researchers intend to explore how much color denotation in a *Trolls* movie through characters. The analysis process uses Roland Barthes' two-stage significance. By using this theory, the denotation will reveal itself. The research method used in this study is descriptive qualitative research. The results of this study indicate that the use of color symbols has a denotation meaning of messages or ideology. An example of the results of this study is the denotation of the pink color on the main character Poppy when viewed in terms of the marker of the combination of red and white, has a cheerful, soft, caring and romantic meaning. While in terms of the pink color signifier Poppy has a cheerful, gentle and passionate character, she has positive energy in her.

The second research entitled "Analisis Penggunaan Warna Pada Trailer Movie *John Wick* Chapter-4 Dengan Semiotika Peirce" was researched by Bagas Wijayanto and Abi Senoprabowo in 2023. This study aims to determine whether the color selection in the *John Wick* Chapter 4 movie trailer is effective, in line with the theme, genre, and story of the movie. One of the things in movie trailers that can attract the attention of movie trailer viewers is the creative editing technique, by displaying scenes that are deemed

important to strengthen the implied message in the trailer, one of which is by using color. Color plays a very large role as a differentiator of identity, influences mood, and conveys messages. To find out from the implied color meaning, this research uses Peirce's semiotic approach and John Gage's color psychology. The result of the example is that the use of color in the John Wick chapter-4 movie trailer has been effective and appropriate, because it is in accordance with the theme, core story, and genre of the movie. Proven in the use of black, blue, orange, and red colors. Which means that the movie will contain death, sadness, caution, and danger. This is directly proportional to the genre of the movie, the synopsis, and the main storyline.

The third research with the title "Analisis Semiotika Charles Sanders Peirce Pada Simbol Rambu Lalu Lintas Dead End" was researched by Saleha and Mia Rahmawati Yuwita in 2023. This study aims to determine the semiotic meaning of the traffic symbol that reads Dead End or dead end based on the meaning of color, shape and also the meaning represented by the word Dead End itself using the theory of Charles Sanders Peirce. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative method because it thoroughly explains how the process of sign formation and the meaning of the sign through a semantic approach. The results of this study indicate that the color, shape and also the naming of a symbol are things that have been determined and produced from each human perspective based on reality. Based on this research, it can be concluded that every symbol formed based on color, shape and also a word has a meaning according to each person's perspective.

The fourth research entitled "Expectation and Family Hierarchy: A Semiotics Analysis of Colors in Encanto (2021)" by Ulya Raisya Puti, Triya Dessi Syarifah, and Tri Wahyu Setiawan Prasetyoningsih in 2023. The purpose of this study is to observe how colors describe expectations and pressures in a family. Encanto is an animated musical movie that depicts a hierarchy in a family that inevitably triggers a hierarchy of expectations and pressure from the oldest member of the family. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method by observing, recording, and analyzing data. Roland Barthes' theory of denotation and connotation is

used to analyze the meaning of the colors attached to each character of this movie. The color symbols used in this movie are from the clothes used by the characters. Each color symbolizes the character, hierarchy of expectations, and type of pressure in this family.

The fifth research with the title "The Meaning of The Misteria Album Cover of Goodnight Electric Music Grub (Roland Barthes semiotic analysis)" was researched by Alfathan Putut Panggiring and Oktaviana Purnamasari in 2023. This research aims to find out the meaning of denotation, connotation, and myth on the cover of Misteria Album. The theory used is Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. The method used is qualitative. the object of research is the cover of the album "misteria" Goodnight Electric music group. While the subject of this research is the Goodnight Electric music group and indie music observers. In this study using data collection techniques documentation studies and in-depth interviews, because it is considered to be able to reveal the meaning behind the album cover "Misteria" Goodnight Electric music group. The results obtained, for example, in the 5th research object of blue wave lines, provide an understanding of the flow of music presented in the Misteria Album has a new concept. Blue is the natural color of the sky and water, dark blue is the color of coastal and central sea water which indicates depth. The color blue means calmness, stability and broad insight. This explains that the blue waves of sea water can describe the color of the music that Goodnight Electric is currently playing. By combining the flow of pop electronic music with psychedelic flow in the Misteria Album.

Based on the five studies above, the writer found similarities and differences between the five studies that have been reviewed. The similarities of this research are that they both examine semiotics, color analysis, and some studies use Roland Barthes semiotics theory. While, the differences taken from those studies are from the use of Peirce's semiotic theory, the discussion of the denotation meaning and the use of interview techniques to gain the result.

In this study, the writer uses the *Trolls World Tour* movie as the object, and it is aimed to investigate the connection of color and music genre

using the theory of semiotic. The writer wants to know whether the colors found in the characters in the *Trolls World Tour* Movie have meaning as a symbol of the music genre that is their identity. Based on what has been described, the writer intends to conduct a study entitled A Semiotics Analysis of Colors as the Symbol of Music Genre in the Characters of the Movie *Trolls World Tour*.

Methods

In this research, the writer used a qualitative descriptive method. According to Sugiyono in (Khoiriah, 2022), descriptive qualitative research uses the philosophy of postpositivism to analyze natural object conditions where research is an important tool. Data from qualitative is data collected in the form of words or images. Data in research is divided into two, namely primary data and secondary data (Maryam et al., 2022). In this research, the writer used primary data and secondary data. The method in this study was taken because the writer wanted to describe characters in the *Trolls World Tour* movie that was studied using semiotics. Data analysis is carried out by organizing data, dividing it into small parts, identifying its meaning then studying, and making conclusions. Data analysis techniques aim to make data easier to read and interpret (Pipit Muliyah et al, 2020). The writer uses the semiotic theory of Roland Barthes to analyze which has three approaches, namely connotation, denotation, and myth. The semiotic signs or symbols in the movie *Trolls World Tour* can be seen from the colors in the movie's characters. Their colors are displayed through the body, hair, and string that represent or are connected to certain musical genres.

The research limitations focus on the semiotic analysis of the colors found in the six characters based on their body, hair, strings that represent music genres namely pop, techno, country, funk, classic, rock. Only analyzing in the *Trolls World Tour* movie released in 2020. It has nothing to do with other *Trolls* movies.

Data collection techniques in this research are through observation and documentation. Through observation, the writer observed the scenes in *Trolls World Tour* movie. The writer focused on observing

the colors found in the characters in the movie. This observation is done by watching movies available on internet movie sites. Furthermore, through documentation.

Documentation is an effort made by the writer to obtain information. The documentation of this research is in the form of photos (screenshot) obtained from observations. The results of the documentation will help and facilitate the writer to complete this research. This research will be more credible if supported by documentation.

Findings and Discussion



From the observation and documentation results, six characters, six colors, and six different music genres were found.

Table of Characters, Color, and Music Genre

Character's Names	Color	Music Genre
Poppy	Pink	Pop
Barb	Red	Rock
Quincy	Purple	Funk
Delta Dawn	Orange	Country
Trollex	Blue	Techno
Trollzart	Yellow	Classical

Data 1

Poppy is the main protagonist in this movie. She is the queen of the Pop Trolls. Poppy often sings pop music genre songs with her tribe friends. There are many songs she sings in the movie. One of the songs she sings is called *Trolls Wanna Have Good Times*. Poppy has a pink body, hair, house,

strings, hot air balloon, pinky promise. When Poppy does the pinky promise with her friends, a pink effect appears. She is energetic, cheerful, caring, brave, always positive, and responsible. Her caring nature sometimes makes her the victim of antagonists. At certain moments, Poppy and her friends have cuddle time

Pop is the most popular music genre in the world, pop is a music genre that often has catchy melodies and memorable lyrics. It is designed to appeal to a wide audience and the genre incorporates elements from different types of music such as rock, dance, hip-hop, R&B, and electronic

Denotation : As a Pink colored character. Poppy also has strings, a house, a flower plant, a hot air balloon, pinky promise finger, and her father's pink hair.

Connotation : Pop music is categorized in pink (Holm et al., 2009). It is also often presented with Poppy singing pop songs in a cheerful and energetic manner. According to Haller (2019:154) Pink is the color for a caring expression of love. It also has a correlation with Poppy's caring character.

Myth : There has been a shift in the meaning of pink as a result of feminism (Fuady, 2017). Poppy, who became a queen to lead her tribe, has shown the element of feminism in this character. According to Dameria in (Ni Ketut Pande Sarjani, 2015) Pink is synonymous with women or feminine characters. This is presented with Poppy's character who is a feminine girl.

Data 2

She is the main antagonist in the movie. Barb is the queen of Troll Rock. Barb is brave, rebellious, cruel, selfish, and arrogant. The character of Barb is voiced by Rachel Bloom, who gives the character an expressive, powerful and emotional voice. Her natures make her a truly antagonistic character. Rock trolls live in the city of Volcano Rock. Barb is a character who has hair color, strings are red. Her territory is red lava. She dresses like a rocker and often carries her guitar.

Rock which has music that is often characterized by dominant and powerful instrumental sounds. This genre has various subgenres, such as hard rock, punk rock, and

alternative rock. It generally features freedom of expression and an emotional touch

Denotation : Barb has red hair, strings, backgrounds, maps, and lava regions.

Connotation : Barb often sings rock songs while playing her guitar loud and fast. She also dresses like a rocker. Barb's character is a representation of the rock music genre which has loud and strong characteristics. Rock is categorized by the color red (Holm et al., 2009). The meaning of the color red is aggressive, challenging or brave, energy, strength, and rebellious (Haller: 2019:154). This has a correlation with Barb's character who is brave, rebellious, cruel, self-centered, and arrogant.

Myth : Barb's character who is concerned with herself and her group shows Individualism. Barb is brave, selfish, and rebellious towards other Trolls in order to join into one Trolls, namely Troll Rock. According to Sihalohe (2024), Individualism is a form of egoism.

Data 3

Quincy or King Quincy is another supporting character in the movie. King Quincy is the king of the Funk Trolls, husband and patriarch of the funky family. He has a wife that has a status as a queen and a son. The funk troll or funk kingdom lives in the city inside the airplane. Quincy has a body, some hair, a floor, and purple strings. Quincy is a good king, fun-loving, brave, and a wise leader to his people. Despite knowing the faults of the ancient Pop Trolls, he bears no grudge against Poppy. Through King Quincy and Queen Essence, the movie conveys the message that musical diversity is power, and that difference is not a threat but something to be celebrated.

Funk is a type of music that emerged between the mid and late 1960s in America. The genre has its origins in soul, jazz, and rhythm and blues (R&B) music with an emphasis on grooves, irregular rhythms, and clear bass playing

Denotation : Quincy has a body, some hair, a floor, and purple strings.

Connotation : The meaning of the color purple is spiritual, wisdom, and also conveys a message of luxury (Haller:2019:156). This has correlation with Quincy's character as a wise and

luxurious king. The color purple can be associated with the funk music genre, the reasons being spirituality, luxury, and religion (Holm et al., 2009). Funk music, which has characteristics often associated with flamboyant and stylish styles, has a correlation with the luxurious purple color and also with Quincy's character when singing.

Data 4

Delta Dawn is a supporting character in this movie. She is a sheriff of Lonesome Flats and leader of the Country Trolls. When she is singing, Delta is very skilled at playing her 5-string banjo. Famous singer Kelly Clarkson voices Delta Dawn in this movie. Delta Dawn has an orange body color and strings. As the fearless, decisive, and no-nonsense leader of the Country Trolls, Delta Dawn is tasked with keeping the peace, and no one in Lonesome Flats is allowed to violate that peace. She initially arrests Poppy and her friends for crimes against music. Finally, she accepts various genres of music.

Country is a type of music that originated in America, particularly the South and West in the early 20th century. The genre is reminiscent of elements of American folk music, blues, gospel, and cowboy western themes. Country music use of traditional instruments such as acoustic guitar, banjo, and fiddle.

Denotation : Delta Dawn has an orange body and string color.

Connotation : According to Holm et al (2009), orange is the color for the reggae music genre. It has no correlation with Delta Dawn's music genre, which is country music in the Trolls World Tour Movie. The meaning of the orange color is warmth (Haller: 2019:155). This has no correlation with Delta Dawn singing Country songs with full of sad feeling.

Data 5

Trollex is a supporting character who first appeared in this film. He is a king who leads the Techno Trolls. These trolls live in the under the sea and called Vibe city. Their bodies are shaped like fish with tails. Trollex has neon green hair and a blue body. Likewise, the color of the strings is blue.

He has a brave and passionate nature. Trollex is always excited when playing his music. When singing along with his tribe, he uses a DJ stand. Trollex with his courage fought Barb who wanted to take their strings even though he finally lost. This incident triggers the main conflict in the movie and leads Poppy to embark on a journey across musical genres.

Techno, this genre of electronic music that emphasizes rhythmic patterns and artificial sounds. The genre emerged in Detroit, USA, in the late 1980s as a hybrid of European electronic music with elements of funk, house and industrial music. The use of electronic instruments such as drum machines is its hallmark

Denotation : Trollex has neon green hair and a blue body. Likewise, the color of his strings is blue. Trollex and his tribe live in the sea.

Connotation : The color blue is categorized as the Blues music genre (Holm et al., 2009). This has no correlation with the music genre of the Trollex character in the Trolls World Tour Movie. The Trollex character himself is the leader of the Techno Trolls. The meaning of the color blue itself is calmness (Haller:2019:167). This also has no correlation with Trollex's character who is always excited when singing.

Data 6

Trollzart is a supporting character in this movie. He has a yellow body, strings, instruments, and tunes. His body is covered in glitter and he wears a black coat. The Classical Trolls have large heads and small bodies in proportion to the other Tribes. They have wings and large bushy hair with flecks of glitter in them. Trollzart is a conductor and the leader of the classical Trolls. Throughout the movie, this character speaks very little. He has a brave nature, this is proven when he and his classic trolls tried to fight Barb even though they lost. Trollzart is also insulted by Barb's comment that classical music is boring. However, they have the power that classical music has over the Trolls is its ability to make things sound more dramatic, and it is very good at influencing the mood of the other Trolls.

Classical is music consisting of complex and formal compositions, often played by an orchestra. Classical music includes works from composers such as Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart.

Denotation : It has a yellow body, instrument, and strings The yellow color on its body is mixed with glitter that adds a bright impression.

Connotation : According to Palmer in (Holm et al., 2009) in the case of yellow colour, reggae rose slightly above. This has no correlation with the color and genre of music in Trollzart's character. Yellow has the meaning of happiness (Haller:2019:167). This has a correlation with Trollzart's character who is happy when playing classical music.

Data obtained from the Trolls World Tour movie shows that color and music genre have a correlation even though only a few characters. The colors of the characters also correlate with their natures or attitudes.

Conclusion

The writer gets data in the form of six denotation and connotation data, as well as two mythical data. The six characters that have denotation meanings include Poppy, Barb, Quincy, Trollzart, Trollex, and Delta Dawn. The connotation meaning is also found in the same six characters. As for the mythical meaning, the writer only found two characters, namely Poppy and Barb. Based on the findings obtained. The writer finds three out of six characters who have a correlation between the colors they have and the music genre. Some colors that have a correlation with music genres are: pink is pop, red is rock, purple is funk. This is based on research conducted in 2009 by Jukka Holm, Antti Aaltonen, and Harri Siirtola entitled Associating Colors with Musical Genres. With the findings of this research, it can be seen that certain colors have a connection with certain music genres as well. The benefits of this research include supporting art workers or creative industries to build their creativity, vibes, and enthusiasm to continue working, for example in the field of film and music platforms. The presence of color in the music genre can evoke emotions, because the tone and color in a scene can create a certain atmosphere. The

implementation of color in music therapy rooms for cancer patients in children can function to channel their hobbies, a place for healing, and therapy for children with cancer during the healing process (Arisma & Irmansyah, 2023). Semiotics helps to understand how to give meaning and make sense of it through complex sign systems that govern many aspects of communication and non-communication (Ibrahim & Sulaiman, 2020). It is hoped that future researchers can add many more relevant and up-to-date references to support this research.

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