

A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS IN MUSIC VIDEO OF *BLANK SPACE* BY TAYLOR SWIFT

¹Indriani Oktavyanthi, ²Muh Kholiq
English Department, Faculty of Letters and Culture, Universitas Gunadarma
Jl. Margonda Raya No. 100, Depok 16424, Jawa Barat
¹Indryoktav@gmail.com, ²kholiq@staff.gunadarma.ac.id

Abstract

Music video has a signs and different meaning. This research aims to know the signs used and to find out denotation and connotation meaning in the music video of Blank Space by Taylor Swift. The method used in analysis this music video is qualitative. The results obtained from this research are the semiotic signs found namely visual signs, verbal signs in song lyrics, denotation and connotation meaning.

Keywords: Connotation, Denotation, Music Video, Semiotic

INTRODUCTION

Music video is a video which describes a meaning of the song and there are also signs in the song. The sign can be called semiotics. One of the music videos as *Blank Space* by Taylor Swift has a semiotic. As we know that semiotics is a study of analysis the signs. Saussure (1916) stated semiology aims to take in any system of signs whatever their substances and limits; images, gestures, musical sounds, object and the complex associations of all these which form the content of ritual, convention or public entertainment. Barthes (1977) continues the thought by emphasizing the interaction between the text with the personal and cultural experience of its users, and the interaction between convention in the text and the conventions experienced and expected by its users. Barthes' idea is known as order of signification, including denotation (dictionary meaning) and connotation (second meaning by cultural and personal experience). Barthes

still uses the term signifier-signified and also takes another aspect of sign, myths that signed society. Scholes (1982:35) indicates that many semioticians would argue that the meaning of any sign or word is purely a function of its use in a paradigmatic system and in a syntagmatic situation. According to Sillars (1991:110), semiotics is the study of signs. He further argues that a sign is something physical, perceivable by our senses that refer to something other than itself and it depends upon recognition by a user that it is a sign.

Taylor Swift is the songwriter and the singer. She is one of the best singers with her songs that have a good meaning and her music video always have art in it. She always expresses her feelings and experiences through her songs like her love story. There many songs that she created to describe her love stories and the story of her life, which one of them is *Blank Space 2014*. The song tells about a woman who is a player because

she dates a lot and she is a passionate lover. She already has many ex-lovers but she does not worry if her new relationship does not go well and then ends up with extending her ex-lovers list.

The object of research is *Blank Space* 2014 video because this music video has a signs and different meaning from the meaning that we know as usual. For example, there is an apple playing this video, the meaning of an apple that we know is the fruit but in this music video apple has a different meaning that symbolizes a person. For that, this research aims to know the signs used and to find out denotation and connotation meaning in the music video of *Blank Space* by Taylor Swift

METHODS


This research method used a qualitative method which is used to give the explanation and description of data. This research can only be analyzed with an explanation and descriptive technique with data taken from pictures, song lyrics, statement and ideas form. The source of data is music video of *Blank Space* by Taylor Swift which released in 2014 on You tube.

The data taken in music video is a pictures and lyrics. There are some steps to find out the sings, denotation and connotation meaning in music video of *Blank Space* by Taylor Swift such as watching the music video of *Blank Space* by Taylor Swift again and repeatedly while screenshot every scene that has a signs, write down the connotations and denotations of the signs found and classify the signs, connotations and denotations meaning based on the theory of Roland Barthes. The data taken from music video of *Blank Space* by Taylor Swift observed from every scenes, type of shot and song lyrics. However, the connotations meaning cannot always be described in every scene because connotation meaning is the meaning that is not true and comes from human thought or cultural experience.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Semiotic Signs, Denotation and Connotation Meaning

Several analysis in each scenes of music video, there are signs: non-verbal and verbal including written and lyrics, type of shot, denotation meaning and connotation meaning.

Data: 1		
Non-verbal	Verbal	Type of Shot
	Nice to meet you	Medium shot


Denotation Meaning:

In this scene shows the woman sitting on the bed who just wake up. This scene uses medium shot to focus on the woman gestures. The woman holding a white cat in her right hand and her left hand stretch out to side. The woman wears black nightgown. The denotation of the word *black* is the color of the nightgown in this scene. The lyrics in this scene *nice to meet you* used for greeting someone or a new person.

Connotation Meaning:

The woman is Taylor Swifts. She wakes up after hearing the sound of the car that means she is waiting for someone. The color of the nightgown that the woman used is black. The word *black* has a negative connotation. This black is the symbol of mystery and affirms the darkness of this scene. It can also indicate robust structure. The lyrics in this scene *nice to meet you* shows Swifts is happy will meet the man and convinced that the man “the one”.

Data: 2

Non-verbal	Verbal	Type of Shot
	I could show you incredible things	Wide shot

Denotation Meaning:


This scene indicates a spacious and luxurious bedroom with the woman on the bed. This scene uses full shot to shows her environment. Viewers can see in this scene there are two small white cupboard and two white horses on the right and left side of the bed. The denotation of the *horse* is a large animal with four legs. The background is white. The denotation of the word *white* is the color of the background in this scene. The

lyrics in this scene *I could show you incredible things* match with this scene.

Connotation Meaning:

The connotation of the *horse* is a universal symbol of freedom without restraint. That means Swift wants to have free life and do whatever she wants. *White* has a positive connotation that means the color of perfection. This *white* is the symbol of the cleanliness, calmness and luxury in this scene.

Data: 3

Non-verbal	Verbal	Type of Shot
	Oh my God	Medium shot

Denotation Meaning:

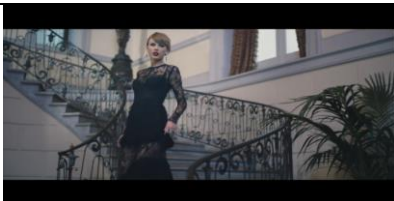
This scene represents the woman with black dress came out of the room. The denotation of the word *black* is the color of the black dress in this scene. This scene uses medium shot to focus on the woman expression who is shock after seeing his face. It is also supported by the lyrics *oh my God*

that means an expression of shock or surprise.

Connotation Meaning:

The color of the dress that the woman used is black. The word *black* has a negative connotation. This black is the symbol of mystery and affirms the darkness and sadness of this scene.

Data: 4

Non-verbal	Verbal	Type of Shot
	You look like my next mistake	Medium shot

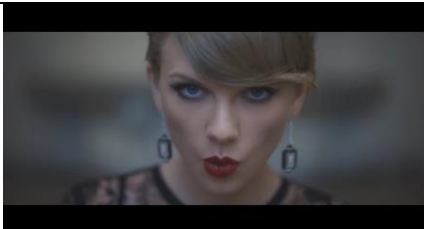
Denotation Meaning:

In this scene, the woman walk down the stairs gracefully to meet the man. In this scene uses medium shot to show her movement. The woman wears black dress. The denotation of the word *black* is the color of the nightgown in this scene. The lyrics *You look like my next mistake*. The denotation of the word *mistake* is an action, decision, or judgment that produces an unwanted or unintentional result.

Connotation Meaning:

The color of the dress that the woman used is black. The denotation of the word *black* sets about the personality of the woman. This black is the symbol of mystery and affirms the darkness and sadness of this scene. The lyrics *You look like my next mistake*. She wants to be him but it would be a mistake. *Mistake* means that something bad will happen.

Data: 5

Non-verbal	Verbal	Type of Shot
	Love's a game	Close-up shot

Denotation Meaning:

In the sixth picture uses close up shot to focuses shows the woman expression. The


lyrics of the scene *Love's a game*. Denotation of *love* is a strong feeling of deep affection for someone or something. Denotation of

game is an activity that one engages in for amusement or fun.

Connotation Meaning:

The word *game* in this scene that means romance.

Data: 6

Non-verbal	Verbal	Type of Shot
	New money, suit and tie I can read you like a magazine	Medium shot


Denotation Meaning:

In this scene shows in the dining table the woman wears blue dress and holding a glass in her hand. This scene uses medium shot to show her environment. The denotation of the *blue* is the color of the dress in this scene.

Connotation Meaning:

The color of the dress that the woman used is *blue* describing the classic, strong, confident and calm. This blue is the symbol of the happiness and confidence of the woman in this scene.

Data: 7

Visual	Verbal	Type of Shot
	So hey, let's be friends I'm dying to see how this one ends	Long shot

Denotation Meaning:

This scene shows they are dancing. This scene uses medium full shot to focuses on the movement. The lyrics *So hey, let's be friends. I'm dying to see how this one ends* is an invitation and curiosity.

Connotation Meaning:

The lyrics *So hey, let's be friends. I'm dying to see how this one ends* means that Swift wants to invite the man to establish a relationship or date. Swifts wants to see how the end of the relationship is serious or not.

Data: 8

Visual	Verbal	Type of Shot
	So it's gonna be forever or it's gonna go down in flames	Long shot

Denotation Meaning:


In this scene indicate the beginning of woman's journey love stories with her boyfriend. the woman wears black dress and the man wears suit with holding three black dogs are walking outside with the background of the mansion. Their expression so happy. This scene uses medium full shot to show

their movement and location. The denotation of *black dog* is a way referring to feelings of depression. Then the denotation of *mansion* is a very large and usually expensive house.

Connotation Meaning

The connotation of the word 'mansion' is a large dwelling and richly, inhabited by people of wealth in a high social class.

Data: 9

Visual	Verbal	Type of Shot
	Got a long list of ex-lovers	Wide shot


Denotation Meaning:

In this shows they are riding white horses. This scene uses full shot to focus on the environment. Viewers can see in this scene shows on the right and left side of the road filled with lots of evergreen trees. The denotation of *horse* is a large animal with four legs. The word *riding horse* is the sport or activity of riding horse, especially for enjoyment. Then the denotation of the *evergreen tree* is an evergreen plant, bush, or tree has leaves for the whole year.

Connotation Meaning:

The connotation of the *horse* is a universal symbol of freedom without restraint. Which means Swift wants to have free life and do whatever she wants, like in this scene she and the man are enjoys riding a horses. The word *fir trees* has a negative connotation, the writer interprets that the evergreen trees in this scene are Swift's ex-boyfriends with supported by the lyrics *Got a long list of ex-lovers* that means refers to evergreen trees.

Data: 10

Visual	Verbal	Type of Shot
	We'll take this way too far	Long shot

Denotation Meaning:


In the scene shows they are running and they are look so happy. This scene uses medium shot to shows the movement. The lyrics *We'll take this way too far* is match with

this scene.

Connotation Meaning:

The lyrics *We'll take this way too far* means that their relationship is serious and Swifts looks confident with their relationship.

Data: 11

Visual	Verbal	Type of Shot
	Got a long list of ex-lovers	Medium shot


Denotation Meaning:

In this scene refers the woman is putting a picture frame. This scene uses medium full shot to focus on the environment and the objects. As you can see in this scene along the corridor are filled with photo frames.

Connotation Meaning:

The word *photo frame* has a negative connotation, the writer interprets that the photo frame in this scene are Swift's ex-boyfriends with supported by the lyrics *Got a long list of ex-lovers* that means refers to photo frame.

Data: 12

Visual	Verbal	Type of Shot
	-	Medium shot

Denotation Meaning:

In the scene shows the woman's handwriting in the tree. The handwriting is written *sean+taylor* with a heart symbol. The denotation is heart.

Connotation Meaning:

The connotation in this scene is *heart* that means love, romance. In this scene shows Swifts writes as a form of their love.

Data: 13

Visual	Verbal	Type of Shot
	Cherry lips, crystal skies	Medium shot

Denotation Meaning:


In the scene shows the woman lie down on the man thigh. They are on a picnic. The woman wears red lipstick, yellow outfit and pink glasses. This scene uses medium shot to focus on the environment. Viewers can see there are beer, cake, and sweet snacks.

The denotation of the *yellow* is the color of the outfit in this scene. The lyrics *Cherry lips, crystal skies* match with this scene.

Connotation Meaning:

The color of the outfit that Swifts used is *yellow* describing fun, carefree and happy in this scene

Data: 14

Visual	Verbal	Type of Shot
	Stolen kisses, pretty lies	Close-up shot

Denotation Meaning:


In the scene shows the woman who want to eat heart shaped candy. This scene uses full close up and focus on a candy as a main object in this scene. There are two denotation in this scene. First, denotation in this scene is heart. Second, denotation of the word candy

is a sweet food made from sugar.

Connotation Meaning

First, The connotation in this scene is *heart* that means love, romance. Second, the denotation of the word *candy* has a negative connotation that means a lies and it is supported by the lyrics *Stolen kisses, pretty lies*.

Data: 15

Visual	Verbal	Type of Shot
	Wait, the worst is yet to come, oh no	Close-up shot

Denotation Meaning:

In the scene shows the woman's angry with the man. The man holding smile while holding the handphone. The scene uses close up shot to focus on their expression. The lyrics *Wait, the worst is yet to come, oh no* match with this scene.

Connotation Meaning:

The lyrics *Wait, the worst is yet to come, oh no* means that bad things happened in their relationship. Swifts have a bad feeling. In this scene clearly shows when the man smiling at his phone and Swift is ignored.

CONCLUSION

This conclusion of research is:1). The semiotic signs found in this music video are visual signs, verbal signs (song lyrics) also denotation and connotation meaning. 2). The meaning of semiotic signs found in this research are denotations and connotations meaning. The denotations meaning in the music video of *Taylor Swift's Blank Space* about the woman and man who meet then fall in love with each other and shows their love journey and the connotation meaning in the music video of *Taylor Swift's Blank Space* about the woman and a man relationship.

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