Analysis Of Non-Verbal Communication On Application X In @arabmemesss: Roland Barthes' Semiotics Perspective

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Abstract

This research focuses on Roland Barthes semiotics which aims to analyze the denotation and connotation meanings of memes in the social media account @arabmemesss on the X app. As a form of non-verbal communication, memes not only entertain but also convey cultural and social messages. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method, with data collection methods in the form of reading and recording. Data analysis was conducted using data analysis techniques from Miles and Huberman, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results showed that each meme contains various layers of meaning, including; humor, satire, and self-reflection. The memes not only represent the expression of human emotions, but also reveal Arab culture wrapped in humor. The @arabmemesss account on the X app shows that memes reflect hidden emotions and can only be understood through in-depth analysis. In addition, the humor and satire often used in memes play an important role in conveying a deeper message. This research deepens the understanding of the application of Roland Barthes' semiotic theory in the analysis of non-verbal communication through memes.

Keywords: *Communication, Non-verbal, App X, Memes, Roland Barthes Semiotics*

Introduction

In daily activities, humans not only communicate directly, in the research of Jessika Patrisia Shirleen et al, Cibroto explained that communication can occur directly or indirectly. In other words, communication that is done directly can be in the form of face-to-face conversations with other parties. While indirect communication is usually carried out through a medium such as radio, television and others (Shirleen, Puspitasari, & Hijriah, 2023). Along with the times, communication media has also developed, one form of which is through social media such as Whatsapp, Instagram, X, Facebook, Tiktok, Telegram, and so on. With this media, communication becomes more effective to do (Sholehah, kuswoyo, Nakidhoh, & Thoriquss'uud, 2023).

Communication is not only direct there is also indirect or nonverbal, which is the communication process without using words to send messages (Kirana, 2023). Nonverbal communication consists of several types, such as body movements, facial expressions, eye movements, spatial communication, touch, paralanguage, and time communication. One of the functions of nonverbal communication is to emphasize some parts of the verbal message and also to show contradictions, contrasting verbal messages with nonverbal movements, such as nodding to show an approving expression (Sabnita, 2022).

The X application is one of Elon Musk's communication media released in 2006 and was previously known as Twitter. Elon Musk acquired Twitter in 2022 for $44 billion, on July 23, Twitter, which originally had a blue bird logo, was changed to "X", the

reason Elon Musk changed Twitter to X was to develop the social networking site into a super application that includes more than just messaging and sharing ordinary opinions. Users can send, receive and reply to tweets and can also follow other accounts to view their posts. This application is also widely used as information material, news and public opinion as well as in the form of content such as images or videos (Nurfaiza, 2024).

Some previous studies have discussed non-verbal communication, especially in X applications, such as research by (C. D. Rahmawati, Hasan Busri, & Moh. Badrih, 2024) with the title "Makna Denotasi dan Konotasi Meme Dalam Media Sosial Twitter: Kajian Semiotika Roland Barthes". The study analyzed the denotation and connotation meanings of memes in X using the Roland Barthes semiotic approach, the researcher used a qualitative descriptive research method, the results of the whole in the study explained that each meme has a layer of meaning that is more complex than it appears on the surface. The denotation meaning includes the literal meaning that can be observed directly from the image or text in the meme, while the connotation meaning provides the meaning of feelings, cultural values, associations, and idiology that arise through the interpretation and personal or cultural understanding of the meme user.

Other research belongs to (Widiastuti, Ismail, & Iswanto, 2020) with the title "analisis semiotika meme 'profesi yang tidak dapat work from home' selama pandemi covid-19" Researchers used Roland Barthes semiotic analysis and then concluded that the existence of meme classifications that describe the existence of opinions in society that see shortcomings in work from home policies related to their impact on certain circles of society. The study of nonverbal communication analysis was also carried out by (Hariani, 2023) which discusses WhatsApp stickers as nonverbal messages in student interpersonal communication using Patteson's theory, namely functional theory by placing the function of nonverbal messages into five categories, namely, information, expressing intimacy, organizing interactions, carrying out social control and helping to achieve goals. The results showed that the presence of stickers on WhatsApp was able to increase the effectiveness of interpersonal communication, because virtual communication has become part of the pattern of human life.

Referring to previous studies, researchers found similarities and differences with previous studies. The similarities are in the theory used and the differences are in the object and focus of study. Based on these similarities and differences, the position of this research is to add to the findings of Roland Barthes' semiotics and aims to enrich understanding of Roland Barthes' semiotic theory in applying meme analysis, focusing on the meaning of denotation and connotation in the arabmemesss social media account in the X application.

The X application (previously known as Twitter) has become one of the most popular applications from various circles. X contains a lot of content, especially content that contains funny memes such as the account "arabmemesss" which is related to Arabic culture. This account has over 656,963 followers (@arabmemesss, 2020) signaling how popular the shared content is. The name "arabmemesss" reflects the Arabic theme, such as presenting humor and memes related to Arabic culture, providing entertainment and local knowledge through their posts.

The content uploaded by the account varies, ranging from lighthearted to social commentary packaged in an entertaining format. Arabmemess often uses images and text that can quickly grab the attention of their followers for discussion, in this way arabmemess manages to attract more fans and build an active and engaged community to demonstrate the power of memes as a form of non-verbal communication. The account also utilizes memes to convey humor and local cultural knowledge, thus making

the account even more popular among followers who seek entertainment in the context of Arab culture through memes (@arabmemesss, 2020).

To record the content and understand the meaning related to the problem under study, in this study the researcher used Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. Interpreting an object is not only by carrying information but also by constituting the structure of the sign, by seeing significance as a total process with a structured arrangement. Roland Barthes' semiotics provides an understanding that in understanding a sign by prioritizing three pillars, namely, denotative meaning, connotative meaning and myth (Jessia & Pribadi, 2023).

The term "meme" was first coined by Ricahard Dawkins in 1976. Initially, memes referred to the spread of culture related to imitation, but over time, social media users found that the term was made with the aim of humor or to criticize social phenomena that were happening. Usually, memes will be shared using several media such as writing, drawing, video, or photography. Currently, memes are seen as a form of behavior, lifestyle, beliefs, models, etc., which are imitated and disseminated through social media to be shared from one individual to another (EF BLOG, 2021).

Memes of course have several types and each type has its own purpose such as; satire memes, these memes are usually used to satirize people with certain characteristics, especially among teenagers; joke memes, one of the most popular memes because it contains a collection of funny pictures, writings, and edits that keep readers entertained; political memes, these memes specifically discuss politics, and in them contain elements of comedy and sometimes satirize political issues; motivational memes, usually contain moral messages about positive things that are lived in life; romance memes, the contents describe the story or turmoil of teenagers who are in a relationship (Fatimatuzuhroh, 2022).

Semiotics comes from the Greek word semion which means sign. Semiotics is the study of signs that consider the phenomenon of social communication or society and culture. Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) was a Swiss linguist who is considered one of the founders of semiotics along with Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914). Saussure considered language as a sign system and used the term "semiology" to refer to the science of signs, while Peirce called it "semiotics". Despite having different approaches, both contributed to the development of signs, Saussure focusing on language as a sign system and Peirce focusing on signs in various aspects of sound (Asriningsari & Umaya, 2012).

Roland Barthes' semiotic theory is directly derived from the theory of language developed by de Saussure. Roland Barthes says that language is a sign system that reflects the assumptions of a particular society at a particular time (Maida & Suryaman, 2023). The term signifiant becomes expression and signifie becomes content, Roland Barthes adds that expression and content must have a certain relationship to form a sign. This relationship concept allows the creation of more than one sign with the same content (Batubara, Rukiyah, & Utami, 2024)

Method

This type of research is descriptive qualitative research. It is said to be qualitative research, because in this research there is no data in the form of numbers (Syahrizal & Jailani, 2023) This research focuses on findings that are observed in depth and detail according to the existing reality. And this research is descriptive in nature which is used to provide an overview of Roland Barthes' semiotic perspective on arab meme accounts

on the X app. This research uses two types of data sources (Ningrum, 2022) Primary data sources are from the arab meme account itself, and secondary data sources are in the form of previous research results such as journals, articles, and several relevant books related to Roland Barthes' semiotic perspective.

The data collection technique used in this research is the read and write method. The method is to observe the findings of the data to be analyzed, then record or collect data in accordance with the use of elements in Roland Barthes semiotics. This research uses data analysis techniques from Miles and Huberman with three stages in analyzing data, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). Data reduction by selecting data related to Roland Barthes semiotics. Presentation of data by collecting data that has been selected in accordance with Roland Barthes semiotics. then drawing conclusions is the final step after the data is selected and then collected systematically, so that it can be made based on the results of the analysis (Saleh, 2017).

Result

To be able to understand the memes on the arabmemesss account in the X application, an analysis is needed, namely by using Roland Barthes semiotic analysis such as analyzing denotation meaning and connotation meaning. Denotation meaning is the true meaning or meaning that is clearly visible and can be described directly from a sign without having to think long (Wati, Ikmaliani, & Mustolehudin, 2022) while connotation meaning is a broader meaning and there are other meanings added to the denotative meaning that relate to the value of taste either positive or negative (Damayanti, Bahrudin, Badrih, & Fatimah, 2024).

No	Meme	Denotation Meaning	Conotation Meaning
1.		The meme in the picture shows a man as if he is talking with a serious facial expression that reads " و لأنك كثير الضحك ",then in the picture below it is also the same but the difference is that there are tears flowing under his eyes and it says " لا أحد يصدق حزنك اصلا"	The meme contains the meaning that someone who looks happy, happy or laughing every day, but the people around him will not believe when you feel sadness or difficulty, even though he has explained it, the people around him still consider it normal. The meme can be used as a satire about people's perceptions, because they actually don't realize that they are hiding their sadness behind their laughter.

2.		The meme shows a man sitting raising his hands in prayer and a text that reads: "لما اصلي وادعي لنفسي ويأنبني ضميري وادخل امي وابوي واخواني وبعدين خالاتي والجيران واهل المنطقة وراعي البقالة"	The connotation meaning contained in the meme illustrates humor when a person prays for himself he feels something is missing finally adding for his mother, father, siblings, then his aunt, neighbors to the surrounding people. This meme can also be used as a motivation to be a responsible person or care about people around and not just be selfish.
3.		A man stands with his arms spread while showing a happy facial expression and says " أنا بقيت أصلي ومنتظم "	This meme shows that when people can still carry out their obligations such as praying and doing activities well, then their life feels good and there are no problems.
4.		The meme shows a small child lying on the carpet/floor showing a resigned expression of "let it go" and reads " الحياة صعبة وأنا دلوعة "	The meme shows the feelings of a person who feels that his life is hard and difficult, but he is also not ready to face the reality that exists, it could be because of the spoiled factor or not used to dealing with more difficult situations so that he becomes overwhelmed by the responsibilities and challenges that come. This meme humorously expresses the feeling of frustration in the face of adversity and realizes that it is the lack of experience or spoiling that makes the challenges feel heavier.
5.		A man in a sleeping position with money on his forehead, showing a calm expression and saying " علاج الصداع والأرق والتوتر "	The meme gives a connotation meaning when someone is sick the cure is money, because according to some people money is a source of happiness so money can be symbolized as a cure for all kinds of

diseases. The humor in the meme is that the cure for all kinds of diseases such as headaches, insomnia, and tension can be cured when you have a lot of money.

6.

The meme shows a man standing in a crowd as if talking to people and reads "إلى من ينتظر سقوطي" then on the same bottom meme but while dancing looks happy and reads " أنا لم أقف بعد "

The meme besides showing a happy attitude or expression when he tells people who are trying to bring him down, but he himself has not done anything, gives the meaning of "why are you waiting for me to fall, while I haven't done anything yet". The humor in the meme can be used for satire to people who try to make us fail in doing something, but we ourselves do not care about what people say and are more focused on developing ourselves.

7.

The meme on the side shows a person standing on the corner of the roof of a building and around him is covered with thick snow. The place where he is standing reads "اللي قدرت أعبرة لك " and the center of the snow reads " مشاعري لك"

Connotatively, the picture beside explains how a person expresses what he feels but is unable to express all his feelings. So the effort he puts in looks small and insignificant when compared to his true feelings. Everything he looks and does does not match the emotions and feelings he feels. The image of the vast snow depicts his big feelings and emotions while the small tracks made by the person depicts how difficult it is to express something.

8.

The meme shows a man sitting and shows two different scenes, the first picture reads " زمان كنت بقول مين المجنون إلي يلبس ويخرج وينزل يقعد لوحدة" and the second picture reads " كبرت وفهمت أنه مكنش مجنون"

The person in the meme besides being seen doing self-reflection, gives connotations such as discussing changes in one's views as they get older, in the first text gives the meaning that "I used to say crazy to people who often

dress up, play outside, and who sit alone" and the second text "when I grew up I realized that they were not crazy". This meme shows a change in people's perspective on things that were previously considered strange or unusual, and then over time can be understood plus also because of life experience factors. This meme can be a mirror of loneliness for people who choose time for themselves.

Conotatively, the first text means "I forgot how to spend my time off" and the text below it "because I'm used to being busy" the meme gives the feeling of someone who is used to being busy or stressed in everyday life so that when free time or vacation, he feels confused. The spiderman costume usually symbolizes a hero who is busy helping people or saving the world with full responsibility and pressure, and when there is time to relax it will make him feel lost. This meme reflects someone who is used to being busy and when it comes time to rest, they don't know how to enjoy it.

9.

The meme on the side shows a person wearing a spiderman costume sitting on a chair with a downward position and both hands covering his face, looking like a frustrated person, and the top reads " كيف نسيت الاجازة اقضي " and underneath it says " تعودت على الضغوطات "

10.

The meme on the side shows a small child drinking in a unique way, his feet climbing on a chair, half lying down or hanging. Above his head it says "انا " and on his drinking glass it says " قلق غير مبرر"

This meme depicts the feelings of someone who feels worried or anxious so that he does something unusual, such as the meme image beside a child who is drinking water in an unusual way. Text "انا " which means "I" describes his personal experience, then the text " قلق غير مبرر " which means "problems that never end".

This meme can be used as a satire to those who have a habit of worrying about things in life.

Discussion

The ten memes illustrate various human expressions in dealing with life, ranging from happiness, sadness, to self-introspection. Each meme has denotation and connotation meanings that reflect different meanings or messages. Some of the themes raised include; the theme of sadness in memes (1) and (7), both memes relate to feelings that are not seen by others but can only be felt by themselves or are difficult to express; then in memes (4) and (5) show the same theme about the difficulties of life, but overcome them by being spoiled, through the humor of money as a cure for all problems. Besides being used as humor, memes are also commonly used as a tool to spread hate speech (Polli & Sindoni, 2024).

In meme (2) shows the theme of responsible care for others, meme (3) illustrates the theme of happiness in carrying out obligations such as worship, meme (6) is a response to criticism and self-belief, the meme satirizes people who expect failure to themselves, meme (8) shows the theme of self-reflection and changes in views on things that were once considered strange, but over time he understood it, meme (9) raises the theme of people who are accustomed to pressure so they forget how to enjoy leisure time, and meme (10) shows the theme of anxiety, which makes him do unnatural things in his life. Facial expressions are also a form of nonverbal symbols (D. I. Rahmawati & Sari, 2023).

This research discusses how memes become a form of non-verbal communication, especially on the @arabmemesss account in the X app. Through Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis of denotation meaning and connotation meaning, the memes are not only entertaining, but also provide social commentary related to Arab culture. Each meme has a hidden message that can only be understood through in-depth analysis using semiotic theory, which can help reveal more complex emotional and cultural aspects. Memes are a means of expressing complex emotions, messages and ideas in the age of social media (C. D. Rahmawati et al., 2024).

In addition to emphasizing the communication aspect of memes, this research also highlights the importance of humor and satire as a means of conveying cultural messages. Memes become a tool to express and reflect various human feelings, ranging from feelings of sadness, happiness, to introspection. Each meme in the analysis not only contains humor, but also contains messages about daily life, criticism, responsibility, and deep self-reflection. Thus, this research can enrich the understanding of Roland Barthes' semiotic theory in the context of using memes as a more effective means of communication. Memes are influential especially in the dissemination of information and are also utilized as a humorous entertainment medium (Tinambunan & Prasetio, 2020).

Conclusion

Communication is not only through expressions and gestures, but communication can also be in the form of writing such as the example in the meme. Through the writing on memes, people who read and understand the contents will

indirectly feel the message to be conveyed, so that communication remains effective in conveying the meaning or message contained in it. Memes not only function as a means of entertainment, but also as a form of non-verbal communication that conveys complex messages related to culture, emotions, and social criticism.

Through Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, memes contain denotation and connotation meanings that reflect various human expressions in life, ranging from anger, joy, sadness, to self-introspection. The @arabmemesss account on the X app shows that memes reflect hidden emotions and can only be understood through in-depth analysis. In addition, the humor and satire often used in memes play an important role in conveying a deeper message. Each meme studied has its own themes such as responsibility, criticism, reflection, and life pressure, which are packaged in a humorous yet meaningful way.

This research shows that memes are an effective means of communication to express various aspects of human life, and also deepens the understanding of Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. This research can be used as a reference for future researchers regarding the meaning of denotation and connotation, it is hoped that future research will expand the study of the use of more diverse memes, as well as the psychological and social impacts produced by memes.

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