



Roland Barthes Semiotics Analysis of Human Interest Works at The Beauty Of Photography Exhibition

Herry ¹, Edward Enrieco ², Lukman ³, Yudha Febri Al Paksi ⁴

^{1,2,3,4}Program Studi Ilmu Komunikasi, Fakultas Ilmu Komunikasi dan Bahasa, Universitas BSI Jakarta, Indonesia

Article Info

Article history

Received : Oct 15, 2024

Revised : Oct 28, 2024

Accepted : Oct 30, 2024

Keywords:

*Human Interest Photography;
Photojournalism Analysis;
Roland Barthes Semiotic.*

Abstract

This research is titled Roland Barthes Semiotics Analysis of Human Interest Work at The Beauty of Photography Photo Exhibition. The purpose of this study is to determine the influence of human interest aspects on photojournalism at The Beauty of Photography photo exhibition. In selecting photo objects for the collection of respondents taken from photos by students as photo exhibition participants at the time of the photo exhibition. The theory used and considered relevant in this research is Roland Barthes Theory. The method used in this research uses a descriptive qualitative interpretive study method with a critical paradigm. This study found that the meaning of connotation is found in the photos analyzed and that the results of the photos can be understood not only by looking at the photos, but there are ways of reading certain photos so that the message received is in accordance with what the photographer wants to convey.

Corresponding Author:

Herry,
Program Studi Ilmu Komunikasi, Fakultas Ilmu Komunikasi dan Bahasa,
Universitas BSI Jakarta,
Jln Margonda Raya no 10, Depok, 16422, Indonesia.
Email : herry.hhe@bsi.ac.id.

This is an open access article under the [CC BY-NC](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) license.



1. Introduction

Photography is a branch of art that in the process of making recording images using camera media and light. Photography has experienced a very significant development and is very popular among ordinary people, journalists and academics. In its journey photography is becoming increasingly popular along with technological developments that affect the tools and quality of the photo itself.

Photography itself comes from the ancient Greek words Photo which means light and Graph which means image. The literal meaning of photography is writing or drawing with light. Photography as a medium to create and present visual images can be utilized in various purposes and functions. As a means of documentation, the presence of documentary photography, which is then referred to as journalistic photography in the current era, has gone through a long historical journey. (Durden & Tormey, 2019)

In principle, photography is divided into two types, namely commercial and non-commercial. In non-commercial photography, and commercial photography is represented in one type of photography, namely Journalism. Photojournalism has its own types in its making, the World Press Photo Foundation or the World Photojournalism Agency categorizes types of photojournalism into its

types, namely: a). Spot photo. Spot photos are photos made from unscheduled or unexpected events taken by the photographer directly at the scene. For example, photos of accidents, fires, fights and wars. Because they are made from rare events and feature conflict and tension, spot photos must be broadcast immediately. It takes luck on the part of the photographer in terms of his position and whereabouts, as well as his courage when making the photo. Showing the emotions of the subject being photographed so as to provoke the emotions of the reader as well. b). General News Photo, are photographs captured from scheduled, routine, and ordinary events. The theme can vary, namely politics, economics, and humor: For example, photos of the president awarding the Bintang Mahaputra, a minister opening an exhibition, a clown in a performance, and so on. c) People In News, what is shown is the person or figure of the person who is the news. It could be their humor, fate, and so on. For example, a photo of Ali Abbas, a child victim of an Iraq war bombing, or a photo of former US President Ronald Reagan whose head is bald after undergoing surgery on his head, a photo of Juned, a victim of a train crash in Bintaro, and so on. The figures in people in the news photos may or may not be popular figures. But then they become popular after the photo is published. d) Daily Life Photo, is a photo of human daily life seen in terms of humanity (human interest). For example, a photo of a guitar merchant. e). Portrait, is a photo that shows a person's face close up and "mejing". Shown because of the peculiarities of the face that is owned or other peculiarities. f). Sport photo, is a photo made from a sporting event. Because sports take place at a certain distance between athletes and spectators and photographers, making sports photos requires adequate equipment, such as long lenses and cameras that use motor drives. display the movements and expressions of athletes and other things related to sports. For example, a photo of female tennis player, Venus Williams, returning the ball to her sister, Serena Williams. g). Science and Technology, are photos taken of events related to science and technology. For example, photos of the discovery of new micro computer chips, photos of the process of cloning sheep, and so on. Certain shots prove special equipment, such as micro lenses or x-ray film, for example for photographing organs in the body. h) Art and Culture Photo, is a photo made from art and culture events. For example, Iwan Fals' performance on stage, artist activities backstage, and so on. i) Social and Environment. These are photographs of the social life of the community and its environment. For example, photos of residents around the Manggarai River washing dishes, photos of vehicle exhaust fumes on the road, and so on. (Basic Journalism for Beginners - Google Books, n.d.)

An event that has an element of human interest is one that can cause other people who know about it to immediately pay attention. And the event becomes the center of people's attention even though it does not have actual news value, proximity, notoriety, and impact on that person. It can be said to be human interest if there is interest or concern in the lives and welfare of others and in the welfare and progress of humanity as a whole. According to MacDougall Interpreting Reporting, interest or attention to human beings, and those events concerning men and women who are in situations that could be experienced by everyone, is called human interest. It can be said to be human interest if there is interest or concern in the lives and welfare of others as well as in the welfare and progress of humanity as a whole. In this news story, a character is raised not because of wealth or a throne. But the characters in this story are those who are weak, helpless, but have something hidden that no one else has. Of the many definitions and explanations of human interest, what is certain about human interest news is that there are elements that attract sympathy, empathy or arouse the feelings of the audience who read it. (Priyo Utomo, 2021)

In their book, Hikmat Kusumaningrat and Purnama Kusumaningrat (2006) describe several elements of human interest contained in a news story that become an attraction to bind the hearts of readers. These elements are: a. Suspense, News that contains a decisive decision regarding several parties involved in the issue. For example; news about a court decision in a murder case, news about the Tiger Cup final match between the Indonesian team and Singapore, and others. b. Unusualness, Reporting on an event that occurs out of the ordinary, an unusual event or something strange, so that it has an appeal to be read. For example; a teacher strike that has never happened before, or a woman who gave birth to quintuplets. These events will have high human interest news value. c. Personal Interest,

Events regarding the existence of new discoveries that are directed at several parties who need or are interested only. For example; the existence of a massage expert who can make an overweight person slim within two weeks, or the existence of a dress that does not need to be ironed after washing, and others. d. Conflict, News about conflicting events. For example; news of war, crime, sports or competition in various fields that contain elements of conflict. e. Sympathy, Creating an atmosphere of concern, sympathy, and feeling what someone feels in the event. For example; A mother who lost three children during a landslide, a child who played next to his sleeping mother and later found out that his mother had died two days ago, and others. f. Progress, There is a change for the better. For example; the monorail train will be built in Jakarta to overcome traffic congestion, the discovery of a vaccine to prevent AIDS, and others. g. Sex, Usually reports on household problems related to husband-wife relationships. For example; a government official who divorced his wife, then remarried an actress who had also divorced her elderly husband. A shipping company conglomerate is sued by his sailor for having an affair with his wife, and so on. h. Age, The prowess shown by someone who cannot be done by others his age, or doing things that exceed the age in general. For example; a five-year-old child displays his skills playing the violin at a prestigious performance. A three-year-old child who is good at swimming in various swimming styles, etc. i. Animals, An event where an animal is the main character. For example; a dog that saves its master in a fire. News of the birth of an endangered Sumatran baby tiger attracts the attention of visitors, and so on. j. Humor, News about funny events that can cause laughter for those who know it. For example, a goalkeeper who instead of catching a ball aimed at his cage, catches a player's shoe that comes off when kicking the ball, etc. (Gunawan & Oktaviani, 2024).

Semiotics is the study of signs. The sign is a tool used in finding a way in the world, in the midst of human life, and with humans. Semiotics helps people understand what happens through a sign or code. It is also a study of how to understand things that happen in life from a human perspective (Berger, 2005). Semiotics studies objects, events and the whole culture as a sign. Umberto Eco explains that semiotic sign is defined as something that is built on the basis of social convention, can be considered to represent something else. (Afwadzi, 2015). Naisila Zulmi (2014) states that an event or event or even culture that is considered a sign can be understood through semiotics. By studying semiotics, humans will understand the meaning that occurs in life. Because every sign must have a meaning that must be understood (Diajukan et al., 2015). Basically, semiotics studies codes as signs or something that has meaning. Semiotics is used to communicate information. It also includes visual and verbal signs and all signs that can be received by all five senses. These signs will form a code system that systematically conveys a written message or information from human behavior which is then accepted so that the meaning will be easier to understand. (Sukarwo, 2019). In its development, semiotics has two central figures with different backgrounds, namely Charles Sanders Peirce and Ferdinand De Saussure. Saussure believed that semiotics is a study of signs that are part of social life. Saussure had a linguistic scientific background. Berger (2010) views a sign as something that can be interpreted by looking at the relationship between signifier and signified, which is commonly called signification. In this case, Saussure emphasizes that in interpreting a sign, there is a need for social agreement. These signs are in the form of sounds and images. The object that is interpreted as an additional element in the signaling process. For example, when people say the word "dog" in a swearing tone, it is a sign of bad luck. Saussure's signifier and signified are a unity, inseparable, like the two sides of a coin. So Saussure further developed language in his semiotic view. (Sitompul et al., 2021). Peirce, on the other hand, sees semiotics as something related to logic. Logic studies how humans reason, which according to Peirce can be done through signs. These signs allow humans to think, communicate with others and give meaning to what is displayed by human life. The signs Peirce refers to can be visual signs that are verbal or nonverbal. It can also be a symbol, for example a red light that represents a prohibition. The difference between these two figures in studying semiotics is clear in how a sign can be interpreted. Saussure studied semiotics through language spoken by humans. Meanwhile, Peirce is more about logic or the way humans think in seeing a sign that can be interpreted in everyday life (Suherdiana, 2015). There are three branches of inquiry in semiotics, namely syntax, semantics, and

pragmatics. First, syntax is a branch of inquiry that examines the formal relationship between one sign and another that controls speech and interpretation. Secondly, semantics is a branch of semiotic investigation that studies the relationship between signs and the design of the objects they refer to. According to Moris, the design in question is the meaning of signs before they are used in a certain order. Third, pragmatics is a branch of semiotic investigation that studies the relationship between signs and interpretation (Fadhillah Lotan et al., 2017). The branches proposed by Moris are related to each other, which can be interpreted as levels. The three branches also have their own work specifications and objects of study, so that when used as a method of analysis, they will produce in-depth “readings”. In addition, there are several important elements in semiotics, namely sign components, sign axes, sign levels, and relations between signs. The sign component, which is the first important component in semiotics, views social, political, economic, cultural, and artistic practices not only as language phenomena, but also as signs. Then, the next important component is the sign axis, the analysis of signs that combines the vocabulary of signs or words by selecting and combining signs based on certain rules or codes, so as to produce expressions that have meaning. Next is the level of signs. In the level of signs developed by Roland Barthes, there are two other levels, namely denotation (actual meaning) and connotation (not actual meaning). The last is the sign relation. This sign relation or relationship has two forms of interaction, namely metaphor and metonymy.

Semiotic studies according to Barthes can be divided into three parts, namely signs, codes, and culture. A sign is a code is an associative field that has structural ideas. This code is some kind of thing that has been seen, read, and done that is constitutive for the writing done in this world. culture is something that has become a habit in a group of people because it has been applied for generations. Signs have different ways of conveying meaning and can only be understood by someone who uses them. As for the study of codes, it covers how codes are developed in meeting the needs of society in exploiting available communication channels. The culture in which signs and codes work explains how the existence and form and use of these codes. (Barthes, 1994). Signs or codes can be found anywhere. For example, a “sharp bend” traffic sign on the side of the road. The sign is to notify that there is an environment that must be passed carefully. The sign is a sign or code that is placed according to its function. The world recognizes a semiotic study that according to Barthes can be divided into three parts, namely signs, codes, and culture. A sign is a code, an associative field that has structural ideas. This code is some kind of thing that has been seen, read, and done that is constitutive for the writing done in this world. Signs have different ways of conveying meaning and can only be understood by someone who uses them. As for the study of codes, it covers how codes are developed to meet the needs of society in exploiting the available channels of communication (Barthes, 1994). Roland Barthes is a figure who adheres to Saussure, but he emphasizes more on photography. Barthes explained the meaning contained in photographs through signs. In each of his essays, Barthes reveals how everyday phenomena go unnoticed. (Sobur, 2009). He elaborates and shows that the connotations contained in these mythologies are usually the result of careful construction. Barthes also added that the role of a reader is very important, because it will show whether the message conveyed through a sign is acceptable or not. Barthes explained the notion of denotation as the first level of signification, seeing that denotation has the actual meaning. The meaning is expressed by describing the sign as simply as possible. This stage of denotation meaning can be seen through the naked eye without having to make an interpretation first. The denotation meaning in photography states what is present and visible in the image, without giving subjective meaning. Even someone who does not understand photography can see the denotation meaning of an image. As for connotation, which is the original nature of the sign, it is a meaning that is not true. In this case connotation which is the second level of signification requires the role of the reader in order to function. This meaning refers to the emotions, values and associations that give rise to the reader and also makes the reader imagine the meaning. This connotation stage of meaning can also be said to be a stage where someone connects the signs in the photo with a general cultural element so as to create a new meaning. A photo has its own meaning that is conveyed to the audience or photo viewers. The meaning is in the form of denotation and connotation meaning. Every human being must have a different perspective in understanding a

meaning. This is where the photographer's role in taking pictures. Whether the photographer succeeds in making the audience's understanding the same so that the message received is in accordance with what was conveyed before or not at all. Photography is seen as being able to transparently present the world as it actually is. That transparency is what people generally accept as the power of photographs. It is with that transparency that photography conveys a message directly. Without the need for interpretation, we can immediately recognize that the photo taken refers to the actual reality. Photographs can communicate not only by using denotation meaning, but also using connotation or symbolic messages. Barthes also adds in "The Rhetoric of the Image" that the characteristic of a photograph is a mixture of connotation and denotation. Human interventions in photography such as layout, shooting distance, lighting, focus and so on are part of the connotation process. Several stages of reading a photograph are described by Barthes in his essay entitled *The Photography Message*. (Sunardi et al., 2002). These stages are perspective, cognitive, and ethical-ideological. Perspective is a stage that explains about someone who tries to transfer an image to a verbal category in the form of imagination. For example, there is a picture showing a man and a buffalo in the middle of a rice field. A reader of the photo will see it as a farmer plowing a field. But not all views of the photo are the same, because every human or every photo reader has a different interpretation.

Next is cognitive, which is the stage carried out for the collection and connection of historical elements of denotation meaning or actual meaning. In this stage, a photo reader will relate it to the myths that develop in society. The last stage is ethical-ideological, which is a marker that is ready to be made into a sentence.

Barthes' thinking has brought us closer to semiotic analysis of contemporary media. We therefore use signs to explain and interpret the world. It is often seen that the function of the sign is to "show" something. According to (Bignell, 2010) A meaning of a sign in life studied through semiotics makes humans understand what is happening in the world and through this can also be a lesson about life.

In Sunardi (Sunardi et al., 2002) Barthes also mentions six procedures that affect the image as an analogon or perfect representation of reality. Through these procedures, a photographer can determine various elements such as signs, relationships, and others that a person considers in reading a photo. The procedures are divided into two parts, namely the direct engineering that affects the reality itself and the engineering that belongs to the aesthetic area. In the direct engineering that affects the reality itself, there are trick effects, poses, and object selection. Trick Effect is a process of excessive photo manipulation to convey news because sometimes the pictures taken do not match the message that the photographer actually wants to convey. Pose is the style, position, expression, and attitude of the object seen in the photo. Photographers who want to take news photos about someone must pay attention to this. Next is the selection of objects made by the photographer. The object chosen plays a very important role in conveying the message through the photo and can be a point of interest (POI). In the second engineering there are also three parts, namely photogenia, aestheticism, and syntax. Photogenia is a technique practiced by photographers. These techniques consist of lighting, exposure, blurring, panning, moving, freezing, angle, and so on. Aestheticism, which is the composition of images that can cause connotation meaning. While syntax is a series of stories from the content of the photos displayed. The photo is usually accompanied by a caption or photo caption so that it can limit the connotation meaning caused.

The six methods mentioned can be used, but they are not always dominant in a news photograph. According to (Sunardi et al., 2002), photography has entered the post-photography era along with its development. Photos are no longer just a display that adorns the walls of the house but have an important role in conveying information. In this post-photography era, photos can be displayed in various places such as print media.

Myth in (Sukarwo, 2019) is a communication system. It is called a communication system, because Barthes sees that myths are messages that are passed down from generation to generation. Myths cannot be seen through the object of the message, but from the way the message is conveyed. For example, if a girl sits in front of the door, a mate for that girl will not come. That is a myth that has

been around for a long time. Barthes sees this as a myth not from the way of sitting or where the girl sits, but from the way of conveying the myth that has occurred since generations. Myths can develop into connotations and ideologies because myths can be interpreted as hidden meanings that are consciously agreed upon by a group. This also makes myth at the first level.

Myth has four characteristics, namely distortion, intensional, offact statement, and motivational. Barthes (2007) states distortion, which is the relationship between FORM and CONCEPT. CONCEPT distorts FORM so that the meaning in the first level system is no longer a meaning that points to the actual facts. The second characteristic is Intensional, which is the sense in which myths are deliberately created not just existing in the culture of society. The third characteristic is a statement of fact, which is a myth that naturalizes the message so that we accept it as a truth that does not need to be debated anymore. The last characteristic is motivational, which according to Barthes is contained by myths. Myths are created through the selection of various possible concepts to be used based on the first level semiotic system.

A photo can not only be seen from its denotation meaning because photos also contain other meanings in it, namely connotations and myths. Photos are also at the level of communication that has other elements such as written text, captions, titles, and articles that support the photo. Therefore, this research question is how is the element of human interest in the photojournalism exhibition *The Beauty of Photography* using Barthes' semiotic analysis?

2. Research Methodology

Research Design

The method used in the preparation of this research article is descriptive qualitative interpretive research method with a critical paradigm. This research method aims to describe, interpret, and narrate data related to journalistic photography works through literature studies, both from books, journals, and other references that support the research which are then analyzed more deeply.

Data Analysis Method

Every research must at least refer to a guideline or method in order to obtain structured results and understand the purpose and objectives of the research itself. There are two types of methods commonly used for research, namely qualitative methods and quantitative methods.

The striking difference between the two, if in quantitative methods, the data analysis techniques commonly used are questionnaires and surveys which will be presented in the form of numbers, tables, and other statistical data. In contrast to qualitative methods which emphasize analysis techniques in the form of descriptive or empirical and non-rigid descriptions.

Qualitative research methods are research methods based on the foundation of postpositivism, used to research on natural object conditions, (as opposed to experiments) where triangulation (combined), data analysis is inductive / qualitative, and qualitative research results emphasize meaning rather than generalization. (Noor, 2011). Then Emzir in Ardianto (2014) reveals the opinion of Lodico et al which states that, "Qualitative research focuses on social phenomena and on giving voice to the feelings and perceptions of research participants". (Ardianto, 2004)

In addition to having its own meaning of both qualitative and descriptive, Ardianto concluded that the descriptive-qualitative method is research that focuses on observation and natural settings. Researchers go directly to the field, act as observers, make categories of actors, observe symptoms, and record them in an observation book. Research using methods like this does not use variables so it is not trying to manipulate variables or research results. (Ardianto, 2014).

From several explanations related to the meaning of research methods, qualitative research, and descriptive-qualitative research above, in this study, the type of method applied is descriptive-qualitative method. Where in the descriptive-qualitative method, the researcher acts as a key instrument that plays a major role in collecting data and collecting data. informasi serta data obtained refers to pure data with the development of descriptions from the author.

3. Results and Discussion

A. Photo Analysis 1



Two traveling fruit vendors were seen sitting on the side of the road selling their merchandise, looking like the streets were still quiet from passing road users in the Depok area.

This photo has a strong element of human interest, which is an element of sympathy, empathy or arousing the feelings of the audience who see it.

A. Denotation Stage

In the denotation stage, two people who work as itinerant fruit traders are seen sitting on the side of a quiet road. They seem to be resting while smoking and waiting for buyers.

The denotation of this image is that the photographer took a picture of two traveling fruit vendors resting against the background of shops that seem to be closed with the atmosphere of the streets that look quiet.

B. Connotation Stage

According to Barthes' theory, the way to see this photo uses six stages to read it, namely; Trick Effect, Pose, Object, Photogenia, Aestheticism, and Syntax.

1. Trick Effect

This shooting did not use any trick effects. Everything is done the way it is. The photos taken are in accordance with the message to be conveyed, namely waiting for buyers.

2. Pose

The pose seen in the subject is appropriate to show two itinerant fruit vendors waiting for buyers and can be seen from the body language by sitting on the street while smoking as if they are patiently waiting for buyers to come.

3. Object Selection

Object selection where two traveling fruit vendors wearing hats are seen waiting for buyers on a deserted street. This becomes the point of interest (POI) in the photo.

4. Photogenia (Photo Technique)

The photo was taken using the selective focus technique so as to form a depth of field in the background so that the eye is more focused on the subject.

5. Aestheticism

The correct composition of the image creates a dynamic image. Placing the subject in a horizontal rule of third composition right at the bottom with a deserted shop closed as the background.

6. Syntax

The caption on the photo is enough to help readers understand the connotation of this picture. Even if there is no caption, this photo can already tell a story about the hope of someone waiting for buyers when the atmosphere is still quiet.

C. Myth

There is no myth in this photo, although there is a myth that patience will produce good results, but in this picture there is no such myth.

B. Photo Analysis 2



On the sidelines of the busy loading and unloading of goods at the Tanjung Priok dock in North Jakarta, children's joy is a common and entertaining sight as they play and jump from a docked ship.

The elements of Human Interest in this photo include sympathy, personal interest and age. By looking at this picture, readers will be amazed at the children who bravely play and swim in the sea.

A. Denotation Stage

In the denotation stage, several children are seen playing on the edge of a docked ship. A child is raising his hand preparing to jump into the sea from the edge of the ship. In the background, a pile of containers and a transport crane loom high, showing the loading and unloading activities at the dock. However, the children seem undisturbed and seem happy despite the busy activities around them.

The denotation meaning of this photo is that the photographer captured a group of children playing and jumping into the sea from a ship leaning on the dock. In the background are stacks of containers and several towering cranes.

B. Stage of connotation

According to Barthes' theory, viewing this photo uses six stages to read it, namely: Trick Effect, Pose, Object, Photogenia, Aestheticism, and Syntax.

1. Trick Effect

There is no trick effect in this shooting. Everything is taken as it is. The picture taken is in accordance with the message to be conveyed, namely the joy of children who are playing in the sea by jumping from the ship that is leaning.

2. Pose

The poses on the children's faces are clearly visible, some have laughing expressions on their faces and from their body movements or styles show that they are happy because they can jump from a high boat into the sea.

3. Object Selection

The photographer has chosen the right object, which shows the joy and courage of children who are playing around in the afternoon so that it makes admiration for readers who see this picture. Because they dare to free fall from the height of the ship into the sea. This becomes the point of interest (POI) in the image.

4. Photogenia (Photo Technique)

The photo was taken with the right lighting so that the faces of the children jumping off the boat can be seen clearly, while the sun's rays are visible in the afternoon. But as for the angel, this photo is so interestingly precise that it clearly shows how those playing on the docked boat are about to jump into the sea. The child appears to be getting ready to jump. The selective

focus technique was used in this shot, where it gives the effect of the subject being in focus and the background being blurred, then the freezing element will also be obtained as the three children perform movements.

5. Aesthetics

The composition of the picture taken according to the author is quite appropriate. Namely, it can show the surroundings of the main object image. And the child who will jump is positioned in the rule of third composition, so that it becomes the center of attention for the reader who sees it.

6. Syntax

The caption is enough to help readers understand the connotation of this photo. So that it facilitates the reader's understanding. In the photo, the position of the sea or beach is not visible, but with the caption or photo caption, the reader knows that this location is in the city of Jakarta, precisely in Tanjung Priok.

The meaning of this connotation is children's play at sea by boarding a ship that is leaning due to loading and unloading. Then the children jumped into the sea in turn. They seem to be having fun.

C. Myth

There is no mythical meaning in this photo. Only the appearance of the old ship makes the picture quite spooky. There are several myths associated with playing or swimming in the sea in the afternoon. The first states that it is dangerous to swim in the afternoon in the sea. Perhaps this myth is due to the rise of sea water towards evening, making it quite dangerous for children. The second myth is that you will get various diseases if you swim in the afternoon before night. This is because sea water is easily contaminated by various wastes around the sea, including from ships. However, these myths were debunked by seeing the courage of the children to jump in and play in the sea even in the evening.

C. Photo Analysis 3



An elderly man working as a porters was seen carrying two large plastic bags of vegetables at a market in Depok city.

This photo has human interest insurances, namely sympathy and age. So that it can create a sense of empathy for the old man in the photo.

A. Denotation Stage

In the denotation stage, we can see in this photo an old man who works as a market porters is carrying 2 large plastic bags that look very heavy on his shoulders in the middle of a busy market.

The man's body looks very thin and also very old.

The denotation meaning of this photo is that an old man working as a market porter is clearly seen carrying goods in the middle of a busy market.

B. Stage of connotation

According to Barthes' theory, the way to see this photo uses six stages to read it, namely: Trick Effect, Pose, Object, Photogena, Aestheticism, and Syntax.

1. Trick Effect

There is no trick effect in this shooting, the picture is taken according to the actual situation. The picture is taken in accordance with the message that the photographer wants to convey, namely the heavy work of a market porters.

2. Pose

The pose of the old man is clearly visible as an expression of fatigue, this shows the weight of the goods carried on his shoulders while walking through the busy market.

3. Object Selection

The object selection of a porters with large goods on his shoulders is very appropriate for this photo. With the background of the busy market routine, the background of the photo makes it the point of interest (POI) in this photo.

4. Photogena (Photo Technique)

The photo technique used in taking this picture uses selective focus technique which produces photos with depth of field so that objects outside the focal point area, namely the background, become blurred.

5. Aesthesisim

The right image composition creates a dynamic image result. Putting the subject in the right composition by displaying the busy market as the background of this photo.

6. Syntax

The caption on the photo is enough to help readers understand the connotation of this picture. Even if there is no caption, this photo can already tell a story about the heavy struggle of the porters.

The connotation meaning of this photo is that even though the work of a porters who is also old, carrying large goods and walking through the busy market must still be done to get a good income and fortune.

C. Myth

There are no myths in this photo although there is a belief that heavy work will definitely yield big results.

D. Analysis of Photo 4



An elderly man was seen sleeping on the sidewalk of a shop in one corner of Depok.

The photo on display has the human interest elements of sympathy and age, giving a sense of empathy for the old man in the photo.

A. Denotation Stage

In the denotation stage, an old man wearing a black shirt and black trousers is seen sleeping using a large sack as his headboard. There is an outdoor atmosphere, namely a sidewalk shop with dim incandescent lights indicating the atmosphere at night in one corner of the city of Depok.

The denotation meaning of this photo is that the photographer took a picture of an old man sleeping on the sidewalk of a shop without a mat and resting on a sack without a blanket in the middle of the cold night atmosphere.

B. Stage of connotation

According to Barthes' theory, the way to see this photo uses six stages to read it, namely: Trick Effect, Pose, Object, Photogena, Aestheticism, and Syntax.

1. Trick Effect

There is no trick effect in this photo. This photo was taken according to the original situation, there was no setting in taking the picture. This photo is in accordance with what the photographer wants to convey, namely an old man sleeping on the sidewalk of the shop.

2. Pose

The pose in this photo shows the body language of the sleeping old man who looks like a cold person and shows an expression of fatigue on the old man's face.

3. Object Selection

The photographer chose the old man sleeping on the sidewalk of the shop to be the main object by showing the quiet atmosphere of the night, wearing only a t-shirt and trousers without a blanket and mat, only using a sack as a pillow.

4. Photogena (Photo Technique)

The photo technique used in this shooting uses selective focus technique that produces photos with depth of field so that objects outside the focal point area are the background of the building wall.

5. Aesthetics

The composition of the picture taken according to the author is quite appropriate. The object of the photo, namely the old man, is right in the center position, so that the left and right sides look balanced.

6. Syntax

The caption is enough to help readers understand the connotation meaning in this photo. Even if there is no caption, this photo already tells and describes the suffering experienced by an old man who lives alone and has no place to live and must feel the bitterness of life in old age.

The connotation meaning in this photo is that people who are this old should get a decent life, be guaranteed their lives and rest at home when they are getting old, instead of having to work in their old age.

C. Myth

There are no myths in this photo, although there is a belief in eastern culture that it is not good for old people to work on the streets and that old people should rest at home and earn a decent living.

4. Conclusion

This study highlights the significant role of human interest elements—such as Personal Interest, Sympathy, Progress, and Age—in shaping audience engagement with photojournalistic works

exhibited at The Beauty of Photography. The analysis, based on Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, reveals that beyond their visual composition, photographs carry layered connotative meanings that influence viewers' emotional and cognitive responses. These findings underscore the importance of methodical photo reading techniques to ensure that the intended messages align with audience interpretations. However, this study is limited by its focus on only four photographs, which may not fully represent the broader spectrum of journalistic photography. Future research should expand the dataset and employ interdisciplinary approaches, integrating audience reception studies and advanced image analysis techniques, to deepen the understanding of how visual narratives shape public perception in photojournalism.

References

- Afwadzi, B. (2015). The Hadith "man baddala dīnahū faqtulūhu": A semiotic analysis of hadith communication. <http://ejournal.uin-suka.ac.id/index.php/esensia/article/view/992/918>
- Ardianto, E. (2004). Theory and Research Methodology of "Public Relations." *Mediator: Journal of Communication*, Vol. 5 (No. 2), 231-241.
- Barthes, R. (1994). *The challenge of semiotics*. 293. Berger, A. A. (2005). *Signs in contemporary culture: an introduction to semiotics*.
- Basic Journalism for Beginners - Google Books. (n.d.). Retrieved February 1, 2025, from https://www.google.co.id/books/edition/Jurnalistik_Dasar_untuk_Pemula/75oCEAAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=foto+journalism+alwi&pg=PA61&printsec=frontcover
- Bignell, J. (2010). Television and the Popular. Looking from a British Perspective. *Journal of Literary Theory*, 4(2), 181-198. <https://doi.org/10.1515/JLT.2010.012>
- Durden, M., & Tormey, J. (2019). *The Routledge companion to photographic theory*. In *The Routledge Companion to Photography Theory* (2013 Edition). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315727998>
- Fadhillah Lotan, F., Rusli, E., Adya Arsita, and, & Semiotics of Photo Aesthetic Usage, A. (2017). SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF THE AESTHETIC USE OF PORTRAIT PHOTOS IN DIGIE SIGIT'S STENCIL ARTWORKS. *Specta*, 1(1), 31-49. <https://doi.org/10.24821/SPECTA.V1I1.1896>
- Gunawan, C., & Oktaviani, T. (2024). Implementation of Newsworthy Elements in the Regional Subchannel of rri.co.id Jakarta Network. *Journalism and Media*, 2(2), 92-104. <https://doi.org/10.32722/JJM.V2I2.7398>
- Noor, J. (2011). *Research Methodology*. Jakarta: Kencana. 1-23.
- Priyo Utomo, I. (2021). ANALYSIS OF THE PHOTOJOURNALISM VALUE OF CITIZEN JOURNALISM CONTENT ON THE PO942 FACEBOOK ACCOUNT IN THE APRIL - MAY 2020 EDITION.
- Sitompul, A. L., Patriansyah, M., & Pangestu, R. (2021). LATHI MUSIC VIDEO POSTER ANALYSIS: A SEMIOTIC STUDY OF FERDINAND DE SAUSSURE. *Besaung: Journal of Art Design and Culture*, 6(1). <https://doi.org/10.36982/JSDB.V6I1.1830>
- Submitted, S., Requirements, M., Gelar, M., Islam, S. K., & Zulmi, I. N. (2015). The Meaning of Disaster in Photojournalism (Photo Semiotics Analysis of Kemal Jufri's Work in the Aftermath Exhibition: Indonesia In Midst Of Catastrophes in 2012). <https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/handle/123456789/27331>
- Suherdiana, D. (2015). Basic Concepts of Semiotics in Mass Communication according to Charles Sanders Peirce. *Journal of Da'wah Science*, 4(12), 371. <https://doi.org/10.15575/jid.v4i12.399>
- Sukarwo, W. (2019). VISUAL SEMIOTICS: CONCEPT EXPLORATION AND OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS. *Design Journal*, 1(01), 69-77. <https://doi.org/10.30998/JURNALDESAIN.V1I01.686>
- Sunardi, S., Djatmiko, S., & Minarni, A. (2002). *Semiotics negativa*. 392.