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Analysis of visual elements in Barbie movie posters

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ABSTRACT

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As a means of promoting a movie, posters are usually short, clear, concise, and attention-grabbing, and visual elements such as illustrations of movie scenes are dominant. The meaning of a movie poster is formed through visual elements in such a way. The analysis conducted on this Barbie poster aims to find out the cause of the elements in this Barbie poster. This research uses qualitative research methods with descriptive analysis. In this research, most of the data collected are in the form of images, words and sentences where these data have meaning and can achieve a more real understanding than numbers or frequencies. To collect data for this research, researchers used observation and recording techniques. The typography used on the "Barbie" poster is Bartex font. The visuals on the Barbie poster are Barbie and Ken. The blue color on the poster illustrates the meaning of loyalty and trust in the characters in the Barbie movie. The use of pink in this Barbie poster is because Barbie is always synonymous with pink, the pink color also describes feminism in Barbie. The layout used in this Barbie movie poster is symmetrical, meaning that the visual weight of the design elements is spread evenly horizontally, vertically, and radially. From the explanation above we can conclude that movie posters play an important role in promoting this Barbie movie, as for the analysis carried out on this Barbie poster aims to find out what is caused by the elements in this Barbie poster.

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1. Introduction

The earliest form of advertising media was the poster, the beginning of the development of posters as a visual communication medium began in the early 19th century (Akhyani, 2020). As one of the popular media in communication media design, posters certainly have a lot of fans (Jati Kusuma, 2019). As an eye-catching medium, posters are often used in the context of sales as the most effective tool for promoting products. (Bramantha, 2017). However, the poster itself is just a medium, and what really needs to be considered is the information contained in the poster (Morgan, 2021). The elements of a movie poster include color, typography, illustration or photography, and a layout that is arranged in such a way that the poster is easy to understand. (Ramadhanti & Kusumandyoko, 2022). The information on the poster invites those who see the poster to be interested in knowing what the poster is about. One of the main factors in order to get attractiveness

in a poster is visual appeal where this attractiveness consists of visual design elements (Babalola, 2023), arranged according to design principles in order to get the purpose of communication between communicators (producers) and communicators (target audience) (Ni Luh Desi In Diana Sari, 2013).

The color on the poster has a very important role, namely to be able to represent the information on the poster and provide a visual effect that can spoil the eyes of those who see it (Chun & Choi, 2023). Among the community itself, posters as promotional media are no longer taboo, many posters are scattered in the community with certain aims and objectives, for example, regional chairman election posters (Khalid & Masood, 2023). In the modern era of rapid technological advancement, posters easily and quickly spread to all corners of the world and made them a staple of the graphic design trade in the world (Alifia & Jasjfi, 2023). Until now, posters are still one of the advertising media that is still quite popular with producers, although now the form of the poster itself has varied but the function of the poster itself is still maintained (Chun & Choi, 2023). In general, posters contain two types, namely commercial posters with the aim of obtaining financial benefits and social posters whose purpose is not to get a profit but only to share information. (Ngurah Arya Putraka, 2017). In the movie world, posters play a very important role in promoting a movie.

In an effort to get a positive response from the wider community, usually the production team of a movie that will be aired will carry out all forms of promotional activities (Burhan & Anggapuspa, 2021). You could say that movie posters are very important for the promotion of a movie, because posters also act as the logo of the movie itself and also the initial appearance of the movie (Lu, 2023). We can get various information from the visual appearance of a movie poster, not only through words but also through the illustrations displayed and photos on a poster (Ramadhanti & Kusumandyoko, 2022). As a movie promotional media, posters are usually short, concise, clear, and eye-catching, and visual elements such as illustrations of movie scenes are more dominant (Yu, 2023).

The meaning of a movie poster is shaped through visual elements in this way. Some movies clearly show what the movie is about when they make the movie poster, but there are also movies that choose to hide the meaning of the movie outside of the movie poster itself, in order to make a movie more mysterious (Muhammad & Radithya Alfadjari, 2021). Therefore, making a movie poster must be well thought out in order to convey the message effectively, present a strong personality, and be an art form (Yu, 2023). Movie posters usually have illustrations and characters to illustrate the synopsis of the movie. Movie posters also contain elements that can represent content, emotion, theme, and genre (Luthfiasari & Fadillah, 2023).

The movie Barbie 2023 was released in Indonesian cinemas on July 21. The effect obtained from the promotion carried out by the Barbie movie production team is quite fruitful. Public enthusiasm is very large for this Barbie movie. Directed by Greta Gerwig, this Barbie movie tells the adventures of Ken and Barbie from Barbie Land to the real world. From the explanation above, we can conclude that movie posters play an important role in promoting this Barbie movie, while the analysis carried out on this Barbie poster aims to find out what is caused by the elements in this Barbie poster.

2. Method

This research uses qualitative research methods with descriptive analysis. Qualitative research focuses on ontological activities (Prayogo et al., 2018). In this study, most of the data collected are in the form of pictures, words and sentences where these data have meaning and can achieve a more real understanding than numbers or frequencies (Barliana, 2008). The researcher emphasizes that the sentences that describe the actual situation in the notes have a detailed, complete, and in-depth description to support the presentation of the data (Khairiah, 2020). Therefore, qualitative research is often referred to as descriptive qualitative methods. Researchers try to analyze the various nuances of data based on its original form when recorded or collected. (Dr. Farida Nugrahani, 2014).

The primary data in this research is the Barbie movie poster. To collect data for this research, researchers used observation and recording techniques. The analysis of the visual elements studied are Typography, Visual Objects, Color, and Layout (Seçmen, 2023). The primary data will be described one by one based on the elements studied. Secondary data then becomes a supporting medium that strengthens the researcher's findings about the aspects contained in the Barbie poster, and secondary data can be obtained through library technology, namely journals, books and articles relevant to the subject under study, as well as literature from the Research website (Wang, 2023).

3. Theoretical Framework

In this research study, researchers used several theories that are relevant to the title being discussed. The theory used is semiotic theory and visual composition theory. The following is an explanation of these two theories: (a) Semiotic Theory: This theory helps in understanding how signs and symbols are used in posters to convey messages and meaning. You can analyze how colors, images, and text are used as signs in Barbie posters to communicate certain messages to viewers (Danesi, 2018); (b) Visual Composition Theory: This focuses on the way visual elements are placed in a poster. You can analyze the composition of a Barbie poster to understand how the layout of elements such as the Barbie character, background, and other supporting elements contribute to the poster's overall aesthetic (Peng, 2022).

Semiotic theory, also known as sign science or sign studies, is a theoretical framework used to understand how signs or symbols are used in communication to convey meaning. This theory was first developed by Ferdinand de Saussure and then expanded by many other semiotics experts, including Roland Barthes and Umberto Eco (Rorong & Suci, 2019). Semiotic theory has wide applications in various fields, including linguistics, literature, art, communication, and graphic design (Hébert, 2019). Then semiotic theory can be applied to film posters to analyze how visual elements, text and symbols are used to convey messages, create meaning and attract the attention of the audience. The following are several important concepts in applying semiotic theory to film posters:

Signs and Symbols: Movie posters are full of signs and symbols. Signs can include images, colors, text, and other visual elements. For example, images of the main actors, background images, film titles, and production studio logos are signs that create symbols (Amil, 2020). Signifier and Signified: Each element in a film poster has a relationship between signifier and signified. For example, the image of a man with a gun is the signifier, while the concept of a brave or dangerous protagonist is the signified. Relationship Between Elements: Semiotic theory examines how the elements in a poster relate to each other (Zhang & Sheng, 2017). For example, are certain colors used to reinforce a particular theme? Are certain images positioned close to each other to create contrast or relationship?.

Icons, Indexes and Symbols: Movie posters may use iconic (images of actors that indicate their appearance), indexical (for example, special effects that indicate the film's genre), and symbolic (such as visual symbols that refer to certain themes or characters) (Sakinah, Alfigri, 2020). Visual Code: Movie posters often follow certain visual codes that have become conventions within the industry. For example, placing the title of a film at the top usually indicates that it is the main title, and a large photo of the main actor indicates that he or she is the main character (Sakinah et al., 2020).

Cultural Context: The meaning of film posters is also greatly influenced by cultural context. For example, certain symbols or iconography can have different meanings in different cultures. Layered Analysis: Movie posters often have multiple levels of analysis (Braslauskas, 2020). This means that different elements, such as images, text, and symbols, can contain different meanings that work together to convey a deeper message about the film. Influence On Viewers: Movie posters are designed to influence the audience. Semiotic theory can be used to analyze how the poster tries to trigger feelings, interest, or expectations in potential viewers. By applying semiotic theory to film posters, this research can dig deeper into the meaning and message conveyed by the poster. This helps in understanding how the film industry uses visual language and symbolism to promote films and influence the audience's perception of them.

Visual composition theory is a framework used in visual arts and design to understand how visual elements are placed and arranged in a work to create an effective, interesting, and meaningful appearance. Visual composition is an important part of art and design, and understanding its principles can help artists, photographers, and designers create powerful work. The following is a further explanation of visual composition theory: Visual Elements: Visual composition involves the arrangement of visual elements such as line, shape, color, texture, and space in a work. This includes how the elements interact with each other in the visual space. Design Principles: Visual composition theory refers to a number of design principles that help organize visual elements (Linando et al., 2022). These principles include, Balance: Balance includes the way visual elements are distributed in the work. Balance can be symmetrical (same on both sides) or asymmetrical (different but still balanced). Proportion: Proportion refers to the relationship between the size, shape, and position of visual elements in a work. Good proportions can create visual harmony (Locher et al., 1999).

Contrast: Contrast involves sharp differences between visual elements, such as differences in color, value (brightness or darkness), or texture. Contrast can attract attention and add drama to the work. Rhythm: Rhythm is a pattern produced by the repetition of visual elements. This can create a visual flow and lead the viewer's eye through the work (Yu, 2023). Movement: Composition theory also considers the way visual elements direct the viewer's eye within a work. Motion can be described through lines, direction, or the direction of view of elements (Sahoo, 2021).

Main Focus: Visual composition also involves determining the main focal point in the work. This focus is the point to which the viewer's eye is naturally drawn and is usually an important part of the message or meaning being conveyed. Context and Meaning: Visual composition also depends on the context and meaning of the work. Visual elements must be placed in such a way that they support the message or narrative that the artist or designer wants to convey. Culture and Style: The principles of visual composition may vary based on different cultures and artistic styles. Understandings of what is considered interesting or effective in a visual composition can vary across cultural contexts and eras (Alesina & Giuliano, 2016).

So, visual composition theory provides a framework that helps artists and designers make the right decisions in arranging the visual elements in their work. It is an essential tool for creating works of art and design that have a strong visual and communication impact. This theory can also be used to analyze the elements in a poster.

4. Result and Discussion

Barbie is a live-action romantic comedy film directed by Greta Gerwig and co-written by Gerwig and Noah Baumbach, based on the Barbie doll created by Ruth Handler of Mattel. It is the first live-action Barbie movie after the previous computer-animated movie (*Barbie (2023) Font General*,

2023). This Barbie movie tells the story of Barbie's perfect life living in Barbie Land until one day Barbie experiences strange things that make her have to leave Barbie Land and decide to enter the human world. But when Barbie left Barbie Land it turned out that Ken followed her too. From here, Barbie and Ken's adventure begins.



Fig. 1. Barbie Official Poster. Source: (Ekeleme, 2023)

The image above is the official poster image for the Barbie film which has been broadcast and has so many fans at all ages. This image has something unique and interesting in terms of writing, color, and the arrangement of the elements in it. This official Barbie film poster contains visual elements. Some of the visual elements that researchers found through the poster are: (a) typography; (b) Visual Objects; (c) Color; (d) Layout.



Fig. 2. Typography in Barbie posters . Source: (Ekeleme, 2023)

In the world of design, fonts and typography are part of message delivery. In order to communicate a message efficiently and optimally, the type of message must be appropriate. (Ramadhanti & Kusumandyoko, 2022). The typeface or font used in this "Barbie" poster is the Bartex typeface. This font has a thick handwriting-like style and has a cheerful, elegant and classic impression. The font selection is very much in line with the characteristics of Barbie, who is portrayed in the movie as a cheerful adult woman with an elegant and classic aura displayed from the clothes and accessories she wears.



Fig. 3. Visual Objects in the Barbie poster. Source: (Ekeleme, 2023)

Visual objects are considered representations of messages that can be seen, felt or interpreted (as part of communication) (Jati, 2019). Denotatively, the visual objects contained in the "Barbie" poster are Barbie and Ken, where Barbie is driving a pink car in the front seat and Ken is sitting in the rear passenger seat while looking at Barbie. In this poster, Barbie as the main character has long blode-colored hair, with glasses on her head, wearing earrings and bracelets and wearing pink clothes. Ken in this poster is shown with white hair and wearing a shirt with the buttons open and showing his muscles. From Barbie's visual object displayed by the poster we can see a picture of the excitement that Barbie will experience in her adventure in the human world. Then for Ken's illustration we can see the dreamy gaze that Ken gives to Barbie, Ken who sits in the back seat illustrates that Ken will always be with Barbie. In addition, the visual appearance of the two main characters in the poster further emphasizes the characteristics possessed by the two characters.

Color is a design variable that blends with all the objects and shapes around us. In human life, color plays an important role. Color can also convey psychological effects to humans, as it can evoke a sense of spontaneity in a person. Color is not just a decoration in design, but also an emotional and symbolic language. Color is not only an addition to the design, but must also be adjusted to the overall meaning of the design. The field of visual design is a field that pays great attention to color as an important factor in making an impression of the product. Color is the language of visual design (Zharandont, 2015).



Fig. 4. Colors used in Barbie posters. Source (Ekeleme, 2023)

Blue and pink colors dominate the Barbie movie poster. Blue is associated with the sea and the sky. Its positive sides are knowledge, calmness, peace, masculinity, contemplation, loyalty, justice, intelligence. Blue basically symbolizes loyalty and trust. As we know, in the Barbie animation, Barbie is portrayed as a character who is very loyal to the people she trusts. Similarly, the character of Ken is characterized by his loyalty and love for Barbie, and Ken will always be there for Barbie, therefore when Barbie leaves Barbieland, Ken will follow her. The blue color on the poster depicts the meaning of loyalty and trust in the characters in the Barbie movie.

The color pink here has a pleasant connotation and is associated with feelings of joy and happiness. The emotions visualized from this pink color are creative, feminine, childlike and refreshing. The use of pink in this Barbie poster is because Barbie is always synonymous with pink, the pink color also depicts feminism in Barbie.

The layout used on this Barbie movie poster uses a symmetrical layout, meaning that the visual weight of the design elements is evenly distributed both horizontally, vertically, and radially. The symmetrical layout style has the advantage of balancing the shape of two similar elements on both sides that are opposite to each other. This symmetrical balance is a common style that is often used in design to achieve balance. (Vasthi & Setiadi, 2019). The meaning of using this symmetrical layout is to highlight the two main characters in this Barbie movie.

5. Conclusion

Movie posters are very important for movie promotion because the poster here also acts as a logo of the movie itself. Directed by Greta Gerwig, this Barbie movie tells the adventures of Ken and Barbie from Barbie Land to the real world. From the explanation above, we can conclude that movie posters play an important role in promoting this Barbie movie, while the analysis carried out on this Barbie poster aims to find out what is caused by the elements in this Barbie poster. Analysis of the visual elements in this Barbie poster is expected to help poster designers. From the analysis above, the results obtained are the typography used is Bartex, the visual objects are Barbie and Ken as the main characters in the Barbie movie, the dominant colors used in the poster are blue and pink and the layout used is a symmetrical layout.

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