

Article

A Semiotics Analysis of the Web Series 'DARK' [Season: I (2017)]

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A B S T R A C T

The visual arts speak to everyone. Throughout history, artists have used their artwork and paintings to convey stories. Some of the tales are given exactly, whereas others have been illustrated with artwork on walls, fabrics, papers. The realm of art has seen a variety of alterations and transformations during this period. The meaning of web series work in narrative is frequently enhanced by the utilisation of other creative forms. This study will look into the significance of mis en scene in the usage of visual storytelling in web series. This research of semiotic analysis uses the German web series "DARK [season-1 (2017)]- by Baran odar and Jantje Friese's" as a sample. The German web series DARK [season-1 (2017)] uses the qualitative methodology to analyse the signifier and signified representation semiotics. The science fiction elements employed in the German online series DARK (season 1, 2017) relate to occurrences in real life as well as the sociological and psychological context. The analysis's findings demonstrated that Saussure's semiotic theory could be used to interpret these signs' meanings in the Mise en scene. The results of the semiotic analysis will enable us to comprehend the importance of Mise en scene in web series and how it is utilised in visual storytelling.

Keywords: Mise-En-Scene, Signifier, Signified, Saussure, Visual Storytelling

Introduction

There is a very substantial business surrounding the use of film as a means of expressing one's feelings and talents. The most advanced and important art form in today's society is film. It has a potent composition and is created primarily for indoctrination and instruction. Citizens (Petrie & Boggs, 2012). (Petrie & Boggs, 2012). Film combines the line, mass, shape, sound, texture of the visual arts with a moving image as its medium of expression. A single episode of a web series programme might be referred to as a "episode" or "webisode," however this usage is uncommon. It is analogous to movies in a similar way, but it lasts for a different period of time.

This research article seeks to analyse or explore the role of the mis en scene in web series, with a focus on the German series "DARK" [season 1(2017)] created by Baran Bo odar and Jantje Friese. This study helps in studying misè-en-scène's efficacy and its link to psychological, social, environmental elements since it has been used as one of the most popular types of media for communication.

Review of Literature

Misè en scene is frequently utilised to portray the sentiments, emotions, stories of characters. As a result, the misè-en-scene develops into a crucial tool and vehicle for effective communication. Here are a selection of the

articles and research papers that are available to readers. They have surely inspired the researcher to carry out this investigation even if they have no appreciable impact on the study's issue. The author would like to draw attention to a few works that formed the basis for this study article.

One of humankind's oldest artistic traditions and a tried-and-true teaching method is storytelling, according to Heather Forest's 2007 book *Inside Story: An Arts-Based Exploration of the Creative Process of the Storyteller as Leader*. Stories have the power to ignite social revolution. Despite the fact that storytelling is tacitly recognised in a variety of social science domains as a communication method used to effectively communicate leadership vision and ideas, little empirical investigation has been documented regarding how a teller constructs and delivers a tale. This heuristic research uses qualitative, arts-based approaches to explore and describe the lived experience of a storyteller who crafts and performs a tale on issues of peace, justice, social change.

Apocalypse Colour' (2020) by Gillian Mciver According to the article, one illustration of the Spanish Armada's loss depicts English troops attempting to board a Spanish ship on August 8, 1588. In this chapter, he talks about how colour and painting are used to create the realistic sublime, which offers the spectator context. especially when showing movies with a scary theme. He is happy to say that he spent a lot of time studying about the meaning of colour and how we can use colour to symbolise emotion and feeling.

An illusion that feels real' by Gillian Mciver, - adapting Dutch Golden Age painting into cinema and photography, (2017). In this essay, Gillian examines the late Dutch "Golden Age" paintings that served as the inspiration for the three films *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, *Admiral*, *Night Watching*. Artwork from the Dutch Golden Age have a realistic rhetoric to their realism. Mciver is particularly interested in visual narrative in movies and how it connects to historical paintings, hence he is interested in the merging of paintings into historical films.

Emotion in Painting and Art Installations' (2016) by Vladimir J. Konecni. Paintings are static, two-dimensional images with little storytelling potential. The author comes to the unfortunate conclusion that most paintings do not properly engage the experience systems of common viewers to elicit basic psychobiological feelings like identification and compassion. This conclusion is based on a critical analysis of the pertinent neuroaesthetic, museum, laboratory scalability investigations.

Ni Luh Putu Juliantari (2016), English Department Non-Regular Program Faculty of Letters and Culture and Culture Udayana University. Semiotic analysis of the movie poster for "The Conjuring." Examining semiotic signals and the

meanings sent by verbal and nonverbal cues, notably in the "The Conjuring" movie poster, is the aim of this study. Numerous more semiotic indicators may be explored in this study, including those found in the *Conjuring* movie poster.

Objectives

- To identify the Signifier in the German Web series 'DARK' [Season:1 (2017)]
- To analyse the signifier to interpret the signified German Web series 'DARK' [Season:1 (2017)]

Methodology

To comprehend how an individual subjectively perceives and lends meaning to their social situation, the qualitative research approach is applied. Semiotic analysis of Saussure's which is signifier and signified employed in the German Web series 'DARK' [Season:1 (2017)] shot by shot, will be performed to gather the data for this study. The researcher in this study has only studied the first season of the online series *Dark* to understand and analyse the *misè-en-scene*. Qualitative research is used to study the semiotics of signifier and signified via the collection and analysis of data. This data is a combination of 70 screenshots from Season 1 of the online series 'DARK' [Season:1 (2017)]. The use of *misè-en-scene* in visual tale telling was discovered through semiotics-assisted analysis of samples with distinctive compositions, repeating colour tones, precise lighting methods, scientific features.

Theoretical Framework

The researcher anticipates making a theoretical and practical addition to semiotic analysis, particularly through utilising Peirce's semiotics theory to comprehend how art is utilised to communicate a tale.

Semiotic Theory

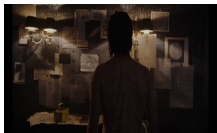
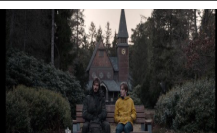
The study of signals, or more precisely, how humans perceive our surroundings, is known as semiotics. Any thing may be a sign, whether it's a symbol, colour, camera angle, or piece of artwork. Ideology, context, culture are all influenced by this indicator. All around us, there are a variety of various indicators. There are several indications everywhere around us, each one of them tells us the story in a different way. In media studies, any semiotic analysis begins with the sign. understanding the significance of the symbols in the works of art and appreciating why the filmmaker used them in that shot, frame, or scene.

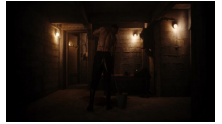
Data Collection

In this study, the researcher divided season one into three acts and used 70 examples of screen shots from season one of the German web series "DARK" season 1 in 2017 to analyse semiotics and the function of visual storytelling using *mise en scene*.

Table I

S.No	Figure/ Running Time	Mise-En-Scene					
		Composition	Lighting	Colour	Production Design	Property	Costumer
1	 Ep:1, Scene no:1, 00:01:19	Long shot has been used in this frame. A slight bit of push out camera movement has been used in this shot to create a seriousness of the story	One point lighting technique has been used in this frame. It creates a serious of attention to the frame	Warm colour tone has been used in this shot. The brown colour indicates the root which has been interconnected with the photos in the frame	Warm colour tone has been used in this shot. The brown colour indicates the root which has been interconnected with the photos in the frame	Strings wall connect pictures of individuals at various ages on a wall in a cellar that houses guns, hand grenades, a gas mask	—
2	 Ep:1, Scene no:12, 00:23:38	Long shot has been used in this frame. It is an establishment shot of time machine chair of testing on juvenile	The practical lighting has been used in this frame. There was no other light source from the exterior. They have also given flat light in this frame	Green colour tone has been used in this frame. This resembles the sickness of the room	It is a bunker set used in the frame. The room was liked kids' room for experimenting	Electric chair with shackles and eye covers, sleeping coat kids' toys, kids chair, tv, lamp light, tools box	Erik was wearing purple colour jacket
3	 Ep:1, Scene no:15, 00:38:24	It was a wide shot. It was a frame within frame composition. It is also a silhouette shot were presented in the frame	It was made to look like natural lighting which seem to be like a night effect. The torch lights were used as an fill light in the frame	The colour tone is blue used in this frame	The set was outside the winden cave of winden forest	Flash light was used in the frame. Which indicates the search of light from the dark	Everyone in the frame wearing full pant and jacket and Mikkel was wearing the skeleton hoodie

4	 Ep:2,Scene no:7, 00:17:12	It was a mid-shot used in a frame. The unknown character was placed in a rule of third composition	Two-point lighting technique has been used in this frame. Background lighting was specifying the papers which was stuck on the all of the room	Brown colour tone was placed in the frame as it represents the root of the story	The shot was in the Wald hotel of Winden	Geiger counter, Labyrinth, Galaxy picture, Blackhole picture, Brahevm celestial map, Triquetra of timeline	--
5	 Ep:3, Scene no:17, 00:33:51	It is a wide shot used in this frame. It's used for the second person entry to the frame	The practical lighting has been used in this frame. The light from the roof of the bis stop was the source light in the frame	The colour tone was greenish black	Hannah's cycle, Ulrich's motor bike	Black leather jacket, blue jeans, yellow coat, red skirt	Black leather jacket and blue jean
6	 Ep:5,Scene no:6, 00:07:13	It was a long mid shot used in this frame .	Natural and practical lighting has been used in this frame	Warm and cyan colour tone is used in the frame .	The shot was in the Wald hotel of Winden	Geiger counter, Labyrinth, Galaxy picture, Blackhole picture, Brahevm celestial map, Triquetra of timeline	Black colour jacket and joggers
7	 Ep:5,Scene no:19, 00:23:11	It was a full shot used in this frame. One point perspective	The natural lighting has been used in this frame	The colour tone was green used in this frame	Winden St. Christopher's church where the conversation take place	Mysterious device suitcase, the strangers shoulder bag	Black untidy rain jacket, yellow rain jacket, Blue jean and black jean

8	 Ep:7, Scene no:7, 00:08:05	It was a long mid shot used in this frame	Natural and practical lighting has been used in this frame. Sun light passes through the window and lamp light has been used to differentiate the background	The colour tone was gray used in the frame.	Ulrich's house was the set used in this frame	Documents of missing cases from 1986 and 2019	Gray colour t-shirt and black jean
9	 Ep:7, Scene no:28, 00:23:11	It was a long shot used in this frame. Low angle have been used in this frame	Practical lighting has been used in this frame	The colour tone was brown used in this frame	Doppler's bunker	Emerald tablet tattoo	Black pant with suspender
10	 Ep:10, Scene no:20, 00:34:02	It was a long mid shot used in this frame	Practical lighting has been used in this frame. Rembrandt lighting technique has been used in this frame	The color tone was black used in the frame .there was a lowkey lighting used to show more space of shadow	Winden hospital	—	Black cassock, black coat, black hat

Data Interpretation of Semiotics – Signifier and Signified

Objective 1 (Signifier)

- It is long of Jonas house. There were many broken and unused chairs and tables for long time. There were cycles which has been rusted. The house with an purple and blue paint
- The question is not how, the question is when,” in response to Ulrich’s inquiry on how he achieved it
- The unknown person entering from the cave which is connected to the power plant
- A chair of some sort with a device on top is in the middle of the space. Later, the cloaked person ties Erik with leather straps to the chair
- The suicide letter of Michael was the sign in this shot
- A roar from the depths and lights that began to flicker appeared out of nowhere, scaring the group away
- The aerial shot of this frame replicates the whole view forest and the power plant which is located in the middle of the forest. The crows were flying in the frame
- The set design defines the character of the Aleksandar. There is the conversation between the Aleksandar and his worker, their costume differs by the class
- The images on the wall were Geiger counter, Labyrinth, Galaxy picture, Blackhole picture, Brahevm celestial map, Triquetra of timeline
- H.G. Tannhaus videos from the 1980s are playing on an ancient TV in a room designed like a nursery with vivid cartoon wallpaper and cuddly animals

Objective 2 (Signified)

- The threads from a family’s past two generations are intertwined. Each image represents a different period in their lives. The brown colour tone indicates the root which denotes the photos have been attached on the string wall. The story’s dark side is revealed by the one-point lighting, which displays the dramatic low-key illumination. The scale of the photographs varies depending on the role they were given in the narrative. The use of weaponry in the scene conveys the chaotic nature of the events that took place within these families. This has taken place in episode 1 of Shot on 01-00:01:19
- The room’s colour, which was green, indicated the character’s illness. The properties were crammed with toys, a television, a study table, children’s shoes, defining it as a torture chamber for children. The child’s purple jacket foreshadows his impending death in the following scene. The chair from the time machine was positioned in the centre of the space to mimic the torture chamber. The steel door reveals that the room is a torture chamber for the child. The wallpaper’s fox image reflects the character’s cunning and deceit.

This scene has taken place in episode 1 of Shot 05 on 00:23:38

- The composition demonstrates how the view from the hell hole indicates their target status. The torch lights throughout the series signify the search for light within the shadows. The roaring noise is a representation of the particularly like hell or cult’s pre-sacrifice drumming. The Jonas standing in the middle of the cave, which is connected to all of the tree lines, represents that he is the initial target. The colour scheme mimics the effect of night. This scene has taken place in episode 1 of Shot on 07 00:38:24
- The stranger’s back bore a large scar that likewise represented the triquetra of time. The Geiger monitor was set up on the table to represent a radioactive energy leak in the wind. The colour tone resembles the root that has been linked to the wall-pinned picture. There were the 29 plates of the Brahevm celestial map. The sun and planets’ motions are presented in the first 21 plates, which examine ancient cosmological views. The final eight plates feature celestial hemispheres and planispheres with constellations. The Minotaur, a creature that was eventually killed by the fabled hero Theseus, was the reason for the Labyrinth’s creation. It demonstrates that he is a hero just like Theseus. He travels through time, the image of the galaxy and the black background mirrors this. This scene has taken place in episode 2 of Shot 03 on 00:17:12
- The light in the winden cave was flickering, indicating that someone was using the wormhole to go across time. The bus stop is a typical location where the characters can be found in both chronology eras. The colour of Ulrich’s younger outfit indicates that he was relaxing by himself. Younger Hannah rides her bicycle to the bus stop; the red light behind it, which resembles an arrow, indicates that Ulrich will be in danger from her for the rest of his life. The colour of younger Hannah’s outfit resembles evil which indicates a threat to Ulrich’s life. This scene has taken place in episode 3 of Shot 05 on 00:33:51
- The Geiger detector was set up on the table to represent a radioactive energy leak in the wind. Greek mythology relates the story of Theseus and the Minotaur. The story was the subject of a play performed at the Winden School with Martha Nielsen playing Ariadne in the lead role. The story makes numerous allusions to and connections with the story. This scene has taken place in episode 5 of Shot 02 on 00:07:13
- The stranger’s face and Jonas’s were identical, they both had the same kind of hair. The stranger’s filthy black attire is a sign that the times in which he originates are not good. The shoulder bag symbolizes the burden he has been bearing for several days.

Stranger's statements appeared to be guidance, as if he fully saw Jonas' future. This scene has taken place in episode in 5 of Shot 05 in 00:23:11

- The whole scope of the evidence he has gathered is illustrated by top angel. He formed a circle using the evidence that suggests he will be the next victim. The grey colour in this frame represents Ulrich's mood of perplexity. The two timelines were depicted in the two-colour sketches. The 1986 is shown on the timeline by the colour blue. The 1953 timeline is indicated by the colour yellow. This scene has taken place in episode of Shot 02 in 00:08:05
- The emerald tablet tattoo on Noah's back indicates that he is a guy who has been in charge of the entire chronology with the aid of the leader of his cult. By removing blood, he gives the impression that he is a skilled hitman in addition to being a man of manipulation. The colour brown represents the consistency of his choices. The mark on the wall designates the person he will sacrifice in five days as his next target. His might is implied by the low angle. This scene has taken place in episode 7 of Shot 07 in 00:47:19
- The dominance of Noah is replicated by the Rembrandt light method, which is most heavily shadowed. His evil nature is reflected in the black outfit. Nobody is higher than me, he is the main force, according to the gesture he uses to stifle me. This scene has taken place in episode 10 of Shot 04 in 00:34:02

Short summaries of the data gathering described above are possible. The researcher has selected 10 images from the total of 70 images that were gathered and analysed. The approach of mise en scene is utilised for two purposes when analysing the semiotics of signifier and signified. One element is to arouse interest and tension about the protagonist's mystery-solving narrative and its originality. The second element is the concept of various three timelines.

Findings

A German online series called DARK is now in its first season and is directed by Baran odar and Jante Friese. The show has a special element to keep things interesting amongst viewers. To draw in the audience, the filmmaker combined the sci-fi and family drama genres. The show was about time travel that connected three different time periods 1919, 1986, 1953. Theseus and the Minotaur, foxes, historical repetition, Christianity are just a few of the subjects that this series has connections to. Greek mythology has a theory concerning Theseus and the Minotaur. Dark has many comparisons to and allusions from the tale, which was performed at the Winden School with Martha Nielsen portraying Ariadne in the main role. These clues were linked

in the hotel room of the elder Jonas. Historically recurring. Historic recurrence is the continuation of comparable historical occurrences. In Dark, there are several instances where things seem to be repeating themselves between the decades of a time loop.

The season 1 online series employed 3929 shots in total to interpret scenarios, it is known that this web series adhered to a few themes. As the data from the photos is analysed, it is found that Season 1 is expertly crafted to combine all of these different characters while also fusing conflict themes and other political themes to create a logical theory that cannot be verified scientifically. Seventy different shots that are significant to the main storyline are also noted in order to define the function of mise-en-scène in storytelling. The scenes' signifiers are then decoded semiotically.

Conclusion

This essay will address the value of meaning creation and narrative in web series through the usage of mise-en-scene and look at how semiotic analysis is used in film. In particular, a semiotic study of the first season of 2017's "DARK." Given the artwork, the background and set design may serve to communicate or support the message or narrative. The semiotic approach is concerned with how the representation and its object interact, leading to the production of the interpretant. The use of art to convey the story has been significant in film from its inception. Even now, the mise-en-scene is crucial to conveying the plot in online series.

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