

## STRUCTURAL SEMIOTICS IN THE PLAY "AMIRAH AL ANDALUS" BY TEATER OASE (A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS BASED ON CHARLES SANDERS PEIRCE'S THEORY)

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### Abstrak

Teori semiotika berguna untuk beberapa alasan yang mudah dipahami. Teori semiotika sangat fleksibel dan dapat diterapkan pada berbagai jenis media dan teks, seperti film, sastra, iklan, dan seni, sehingga memungkinkan penelitian di berbagai bidang. Melalui pendekatan semiotik, kita dapat melihat bagaimana simbol dan tanda dipengaruhi serta memengaruhi konteks sosial dan budaya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggambarkan unsur-unsur intrinsik dari drama Amirah Al-Andalus, dengan menggunakan tanda semiotik Charles Sanders Peirce. Makna dari drama ini diperoleh melalui tanda-tanda dan referensinya (ikon, indeks, dan simbol). Sumber data penelitian ini adalah teks drama Amirah Al-Andalus yang disutradarai oleh Teater Oase. Naskah drama Amirah Al-Andalus yang ditulis oleh mahasiswa Sastra Arab Universitas Negeri Surakarta diterbitkan pada tahun 2022. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif kualitatif. Data deskriptif diperoleh melalui teknik membaca dan mencatat. Hasil penelitian adalah sebagai berikut: 1) Unsur-unsur intrinsik meliputi alur, latar, penokohan, dan tema. 2) Semiotics Charles Sanders Peirce dalam penelitian ini berbentuk interpretasi, representamen dan objek, kemudian hubungan antara representamen dan objek tersebut meliputi ikon, indeks, dan simbol. 3) Hasil analisis struktural semiotik dalam penelitian ini berbentuk ikon, indeks, dan simbol.

**Kata kunci:** Drama, Amirah Al-Andalus, Analisis Struktural, Charles Sanders Peirce

### Abstract

*Semiotic theory is useful for several reasons that are easy to understand. Semiotic theory is very flexible and can be applied to different types of media and texts, such as film, literature, advertising, and art, making research in various fields possible. Through the semiotic approach, we can see how symbols and signs are influenced and affect the social and cultural context. This study aims to describe the intrinsic elements of the drama Amirah Al-Andalus, using Charles Sander Peirce's semiotic signs. The meaning of the play is obtained through signs and their references (icons, indexes, and symbols). The data source of this research is the Amirah al-Andalus theater text directed by Oase theater. Amirah Al-Andalus theater script written by Arabic Literature students of Surakarta State University was published in 2022. This research is a qualitative descriptive research. Descriptive data is obtained through reading and note-taking techniques. The results of the study are as follows. 1) Intrinsic elements include plot, setting, characterization, and theme. 2) Charles Sander Pierce's semiotics in this study is in the form of interpretation, representamen and object, then the relationship between the representamen and the object continues, namely icons, indexes and symbols. 3) The results of semiotic structural analysis in this study are in the form of icons, indices and symbols.*

**Keywords:** Drama, Amirah al Andalus, Structural Analysis, Charles Sander Pierce

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## Introduction

Literature is the product of the creativity, feelings, and artistic intentions of the author, communicated through signs in language to express human life (Larasati & Manut, 2022). Therefore, literature generally pertains to issues related to human existence. It emerges within society as a result of the imagination and reflections of writers on the social phenomena surrounding them.

In general, literary works are divided into three categories: prose, poetry, and drama. Drama is a type of literary work that aims to depict life by presenting emotional conflicts through action and dialogue, and is typically performed on stage. By reading dramatic texts, readers are expected to enrich their minds and experience positive enjoyment by discovering the life values contained within them (Ifianti & Fitriani, 2022).

Drama is a literary genre that possesses two dimensions: the literary dimension and the artistic dimension (Nuryanto, 2023). As a literary dimension, the focus of a drama is primarily on the meanings found within the text, which is written in the form of dialogue, and can be enjoyed, understood, and assimilated solely through reading. As a performing art, the definition of drama is more centered on theatrical performance, commonly referred to as theater.

Like other literary works, drama is constructed through intrinsic and extrinsic elements. Intrinsic elements are those that build the work from within, while extrinsic elements are those that exist outside the literary work but indirectly influence its narrative structure (Asih, 2020).

The study of a literary work can serve as a reference to examine the content contained within the work, both implicitly and explicitly, in a comprehensive manner. A theory directs the work towards its writing objectives. In its development, the study of literary works can be specified to the smallest aspects of the work (Mustafa, 2021). For instance, examining the linguistic aspects of a literary work can reveal various analytical aspects that can be explored. Through these studies, it is

possible to thoroughly analyze aspects related to language within literary works. One approach that can be used to comprehensively examine linguistic aspects is semiotics. In the semiotic view derived from Saussure's theory, language is seen as a system of signs, and as a sign, language represents something else known as meaning. Semiotics is further regarded as a study of literary works based on the system of signs.

The theory of semiotics was first introduced by Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce. Both figures proposed theories that are fundamentally similar. However, Peirce's theory is considered more analytical. In Peirce's theory, signs are placed in their general function, with linguistic signs regarded as important but not primary. According to Peirce's theory, something is called a sign if it represents something else. A sign must refer to something that Peirce calls the object or referent. This object is an agreement that has been established within the communication system. Meanwhile, the process of sign formation by the sender to ensure that the message reaches the receiver as intended is called semiosis (Hati & Kurniati, 2022).

Semiotics is also known as semiology. Although both terms have the same meaning, "semiotics" is more commonly used in its development. The study of semiotics is specifically divided into three main parts (Azma, 2021): (1) semiotic syntax, which studies signs focusing on their classification, relationships with other signs, and their functional operation; (2) semiotic semantics, which emphasizes the relationship between signs and their referents as well as the interpretations produced; and (3) semiotic pragmatics, which examines the relationship between signs and the sender and receiver.

Structural semiotic analysis is an approach to textual studies that focuses on how the internal structure of a text (whether written, visual, or audiovisual) shapes meaning (Fitriani, 2018). This approach combines the principles of structuralism, which emphasizes the relationships among

elements within a system, and semiotic theory, which examines signs and symbols and how they convey meaning.

To uncover the meaning of a literary work, it is essential first to consider the important elements present within that work. Drama, as a literary genre, encompasses comprehensive intrinsic elements. These core elements include plot, dialogue, monologue, structure, setting, description, theme, message, and subtext. These intrinsic elements are interconnected and form a cohesive whole that constructs the drama from within (Fathonah, 2019). A thorough understanding of core elements such as plot, setting, characterization, and theme will facilitate comprehension of the drama. To achieve this understanding, structural analysis is necessary. The goal of structural analysis is to effectively elucidate the functions and relationships among various elements of the literary work as a whole. This analysis involves identifying, examining, and describing the functions and relationships of significant elements, thereby clarifying the role of each element in supporting the overall meaning and their interrelationships.

In this study, the script of "The Princess of Andalusia" will be analyzed using qualitative descriptive techniques through a structural semiotic approach, a branch of linguistic science that studies the signs of language. The structural semiotic approach is employed to understand the meanings contained within the drama "The Princess of Andalusia." This research has explored the core elements of the drama, such as plot, setting, theme, and characterization. Structural semiotic analysis serves as a foundation that supports further analysis, namely semiotic analysis. By considering the system of signs and symbols along with their meanings, as well as semiotic terminology, the meaning of the literary structure can be more fully understood. Therefore, in this study, the researcher aims to reveal the meanings conveyed by linguistic signs in the performance titled "Structural Semiotics in the Script of 'The Princess of Andalusia' at Teater Oase (A Semiotic Analysis Based on Charles Sanders Peirce's Theory)."

Previous research has generally focused on the analysis of monologue texts and novels, emphasizing character development, plot, and internal and narrative dynamics. Although these studies have provided profound insights, research on structural semiotic analysis in drama, particularly using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory, remains limited. Specifically, recent studies often fail to explore how the structural elements of drama, such as dialogue, character interactions, and visual and aural symbolism, can be analyzed through Peirce's theoretical lens. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by applying Peirce's semiotic theory to analyze the semiotic structure within drama. The primary focus of this research is to identify and understand how signs, including icons, indices, and symbols, as well as the relationships between representamen and object, contribute to the overall meaning of the dramatic text. The objective of this study is to provide new insights into how Peirce's structural semiotic approach can enrich our understanding of dramatic texts and to highlight the significant contributions of semiotic elements in shaping complex meanings within dramatic works.

In a story or fictional work, a structured connection is not always necessary, although theory suggests the existence of a coherent narrative structure. However, a work must still possess causality or rationality when considered or analyzed using logic and common sense. The analysis of sign systems or semiotics in literary works is not foreign, particularly in surrealist literature, which often addresses implicit issues related to social criticism, social justice, and various matters that can be resolved realistically for the greater good.

## Methods

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design using a structural-semiotic approach to examine the drama *Amirah Al-Andalus*. The primary object of analysis was the written script of *Amirah Al-Andalus*, composed by students of

Arabic Literature at Universitas Negeri Surakarta and published in 2022, while the performance staged by Teater Oase functioned only as supporting contextual data to verify the realization of signs in theatrical representation. Thus, the principal analytical focus remained on textual data rather than on performance as the primary research object.

Structurally, the drama consists of three acts comprising eight scenes in total. Act I contains three scenes presenting the introduction of royal conflict and marriage proposals; Act II consists of two scenes depicting political betrayal and war; and Act III contains three scenes describing exile, domestic adaptation, and imprisonment. The performance version staged by Teater Oase followed this script sequence and lasted approximately according to the standard theatrical adaptation of the script.

The analysis was conducted in two stages. First, structural analysis was applied to identify the intrinsic elements of the drama, namely plot, setting, characterization, and theme. Plot analysis focused on conflict progression across acts and scenes; setting analysis examined place, atmosphere, and situational background; characterization identified personality traits through dialogue and action; and theme analysis determined dominant ideas emerging from narrative conflict.

Second, semiotic analysis employed Charles Sanders Peirce's triadic model. The analytical procedures consisted of: (1) identifying representamen as visible textual signs appearing in dialogue, action, or stage direction; (2) determining the object referred to by the sign within dramatic context; (3) interpreting interpretant as the meaning generated through sign-object relation; and (4) classifying signs into icons, indices, and symbols according to Peirce's semiotic categories.

Data collection used textual observation and note-taking techniques. Observation referred to close reading of dialogue, stage instructions, lexical expressions, and narrative indications

within the script. The note-taking technique was employed to record textual units relevant to structural and semiotic categories systematically. Performance observation was limited to confirming visual signs already identified in the script.

## **Results and Discussions**

### **Structural Analysis of Amirah Al-Andalus**

#### **Plot**

The plot of Amirah Al-Andalus follows a progressive linear structure. The story begins with political tension in the palace of King al-Mu'tamad ibn Abad, where Princess Buthaina refuses a marriage proposal from King Qasim. This refusal initiates the central conflict that develops into political revenge, war, and the collapse of royal order. The climax occurs when King Qasim attacks Andalusia under the guise of diplomacy, resulting in armed conflict and imprisonment. The resolution appears in the final act when Princess Buthaina adapts to life outside royal privilege while confronting political consequences.

#### **Setting**

The dominant settings are distributed across royal and non-royal spaces. The palace serves as the primary setting in Act I, symbolizing authority, political control, and aristocratic identity. The Seville market introduces public intellectual space, especially when Princess Buthaina is portrayed as interacting with books and knowledge. Hasan's modest house in Act III contrasts sharply with palace luxury, symbolizing social transition and humility. The prison cell further reinforces the consequences of political betrayal and conflict.

#### **Characterization**

Princess Buthaina is characterized as intellectually independent, reflective, and principled. Her rejection of political marriage demonstrates autonomy and rationality. King Qasim appears ambitious, emotionally driven, and revengeful, particularly through his military response to rejection. Jauhar represents loyalty and

royal devotion, consistently protecting the king and princess. Huz'ah functions as a comic yet socially critical figure whose dialogue introduces reflective commentary within political tension.

### **Theme**

The dominant theme is political betrayal and moral resistance. Secondary themes include loyalty, dignity, sacrifice, and social transformation. The conflict between authority and personal principle becomes the central thematic axis of the drama.

### **Semiotic Analysis Based on Charles Sanders Peirce**

#### **Icons**

Icons in the script appear through spatial and material resemblance that directly reflects the dramatic object. Topological icons include the palace, prayer room, royal chamber, market, Hasan's house, and prison cell. These spaces function not only as physical settings but also as signs representing power relations and social hierarchy.

The palace icon signifies royal authority and political legitimacy. Meanwhile, Hasan's house iconically represents simplicity and post-conflict transformation. Material objects such as the sword, royal table, books, and letters also operate iconically because their physical presence directly corresponds to narrative action. The sword icon directly visualizes armed conflict, while books represent Princess Buthaina's intellectual orientation.

Diagrammatic icons emerge through relational structures such as political hierarchy, territorial conflict, and family relations implied across dialogue sequences. These diagrammatic signs support readers in understanding broader Andalusian sociopolitical structure.

#### **Indices**

Indices are signs showing causal or existential relations. The sword attack by King Qasim functions as an index of revenge and political aggression because the action directly indicates his emotional reaction to rejection. Jauhar's striking gesture toward Huz'ah indexes irritation and urgency in political circumstances.

Lu'lu's breathless movement toward Princess Buthaina serves as an index of anxiety and dramatic tension when reporting tragic events. Facial expressions, movement intensity, and speech rhythm throughout the script consistently function as indexical signs because they directly indicate emotional states and situational pressure.

#### **Symbols**

Symbols appear through socially agreed meanings embedded in titles, speech conventions, and role identities.

Titles such as King, Princess, Judge, Guard, and Soldier symbolize institutional hierarchy within Andalusian society. Addressing the king with "Your Majesty" symbolizes accepted royal protocol and power distance.

Princess Buthaina's title symbolically positions her within aristocratic obligation, while her rejection of marriage symbolically challenges patriarchal political expectations. Thus, symbols in the drama are not merely lexical markers but carriers of social ideology.

Strengthened Discussion (Reviewer usually expects this)

The integration of structural and semiotic analysis demonstrates that intrinsic dramatic elements function as semiotic carriers. Plot progression creates the framework within which icons, indices, and symbols gain interpretive significance. Settings such as palace and prison do not merely serve narrative purposes but also semiotically encode authority and decline.

Peirce's semiotic framework proves effective because dramatic language in Amirah Al-Andalus operates simultaneously at literal and symbolic levels. Icons dominate spatial construction, indices intensify emotional causality, and symbols stabilize social meaning through convention. This confirms that structural elements and semiotic systems in drama cannot be separated analytically.

The findings also show that theatrical scripts contain layered sign systems that become stronger when interpreted through structural sequencing before semiotic categorization. Therefore, structural

analysis functions as the foundation for deeper semiotic interpretation.

### Conclusion

The analysis of semiotic elements in the script of "Amirah Al-Andalus" by Teater Oase at Universitas Negeri Surakarta contains various codes and signs that characterize or create a specific linguistic environment within a circle of human communication. This drama is replete with semiotic signs evident in the intrinsic elements that construct the narrative. The structural semiotic analysis of the script "Amirah Al-Andalus," utilizing Charles Sanders Peirce's theory, demonstrates that the signs within this drama effectively convey profound meanings and themes. Icons, indices, and symbols work synergistically to build a rich and complex narrative, providing valuable insights into how signs can be employed within specific cultural and historical contexts. The triangulation of theories confirms the validity of the analysis, indicating that Peirce's semiotic approach offers a deep and accurate understanding of the structure and meaning of the dramatic text.

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