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### Article Title

## An Analytical Study of Semiotic Perspectives in Simpsons' Seasons: Fiction cum Reality

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### Abstract

Language plays an indispensable role in human communication. It has many forms, and each form has specific goals. This research explores the intricate interplay of semiotic elements within the iconic animated television series, Simpsons, across multiple seasons. Language in its multiple manifestations can also play a significant role in determining the relation between fiction and reality. The researchers have opted for a qualitative approach to analyzing the data in this regard. The most relevant Seasons were targeted and specific scenes of the selected episodes from these Seasons were analyzed critically. The study focused on ten predictions that relate to real-life events. In the semiotic analysis, the researchers targeted two levels of meaning: denotative and connotative. The first referred to literal meanings whereas the second more profound and contextualized ones. The findings illustrate that semiotics, in its various dimensions, play a significant role in the predictions of subsequent realities in the Simpsons.

**Keywords:** Fiction, Reality, Semiotics, Predictions, Simpsons

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## Title

### An Analytical Study of Semiotic Perspectives in Simpsons' Seasons: Fiction cum Reality

#### Abstract

Language plays an indispensable role in human communication. It has many forms, and each form has specific goals. This research explores the intricate interplay of semiotic elements within the iconic animated television series, Simpsons, across multiple seasons. Language in its multiple manifestations can also play a significant role in determining the relation between fiction and reality. The researchers have opted for a qualitative approach to analyzing the data in this regard. The most relevant Seasons were targeted and specific scenes of the selected episodes from these Seasons were analyzed critically. The study focused on ten predictions that relate to real-life events. In the semiotic analysis, the researchers targeted two levels of meaning: denotative and connotative. The first referred to literal meanings whereas the second more profound and contextualized ones. The findings illustrate that semiotics, in its various dimensions, play a significant role in the predictions of subsequent realities in the Simpsons.

#### Keywords:

[Fiction](#), [Reality](#),  
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## Introduction

Language plays an important role in communicating or interacting with social beings, but it does not depend only on words. It has various forms, such as signs, symbols, images, and gestures, which portray the meanings. Therefore, communication does not merely depend only on words but rather on signs and symbols as well. According to Rose (2001: 69), "Semiotics provides a full box of analytical tools for breaking down an image and tracking how it functions with larger systems of meaning". Semiotics' primary objective is to clarify the

workings of signals so that their meaning is comprehensible. It makes it easier to recognize signs, especially ones with hidden meanings. Instead of defining meaning, the phrase 'signifying practices' refers to the process of producing meaning (Potts, 1996). Semiotics, also known as semiology, is the study of signs and symbols and how they are comprehended in different situations (Barthes, 1964). The purpose of semiotics is to determine the norms and codes that influence the way signs are generated and understood within the context of a specific community. It looks at how symbols convey



ideas, opinions, and ideologies, as well as how they affect our perception of the outside world.

Semiotics pioneer Ferdinand de Saussure argued that a sign is comprised of two distinct components: the signifier and the signified (Barthes, 1964). The signifier is the physical representation of the sign, such as an expression, picture, or gesture. In contrast, the signified is the notion or significance that is associated with the sign in the mind. The link between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary and culturally identified, which is why different cultures perceive the same sign differently. It examines how signs operate at varying levels of communication, including body language, visual images, gestures, color, sound, and cultural practices. It discovers how signs are developed and subsequently produce certain meanings in different cultural contexts, shedding light on meaning-making processes along with their underlying structure.

Moreover, Semiotics highlights the basic concepts of denotation and connotation in meaning-making processes (Barthes, 1964). Whereas denotation is a sign's literal, surface-level meaning, connotation is an extra layer of context-dependent and culturally created meaning. A code is a guideline that produces various interpretations of a specific culture (Barthes, 1964). These codes could be social, general, linguistic, or certain colors and symbols that may have particular meanings in a given culture, subculture, or situation.

Certain phenomena have been portrayed through a visual screen (movie, seasons, drama, etc.) representing the idea of future events that may take place in the real world. This may try to manipulate the minds of the audience and make them believe that certain agendas or acts are disclosed in the fictional world before they turn out to be realities. The animated sitcom, the Simpsons, has captured the attention of audiences worldwide for almost three decades with its humorous portrayal of American culture created by Matt Groening. The seasons expertly blend elements of fiction and reality within its colorful and hilarious universe. It has twenty-four Seasons. The seasons are based on the average middle-class family consisting of the main characters, i.e. Bart, Lisa, Maggie, Homer, and Marge. The Simpsons is a fictional depiction of Springfield, an American town that serves as an example of society. Through political satire, familial

issues, and pop culture references, the Simpsons deftly parodies real-world events, inspiring the viewers to contemplate their own lives and surroundings critically (Gray, 2006). According to Buanani (2021), the concept of prediction was examined adeptly here. He specified prediction as an act of speculating about future occurrences that are based on the current behavior of a phenomenon. Its four stages illustrate that prediction research is carried out methodically. Thus, it was believed that the Simpsons predicted numerous events in a range of fields, such as sociology, politics, and economics in a sarcastic manner.

### **Research Question**

How are the semiotic aspects incorporated in the Simpsons to augment the impact of predictions?

### **Research Objective**

The study is meant to highlight the semiotic facets of the Simpsons seasons from the perspective of their predictions.

### **Literature Review**

The relationship between prediction and reality has been established since time immemorial. However, the concept of reality may not be fixed for all. It varies from person to person, community to community, society to society, culture to culture, and religion to religion. The key concepts of the study have been elaborated comprehensively in the following:

### **Reality in General**

To explore reality, writers often employ realistic narrative representations that reflect, examine, and replicate the real world. Realist writing strives to accurately depict reality by featuring people, situations, and settings that resemble everyday life (Watt, 1959). Yet, postmodern fiction challenges conventional notions of reality by innovating with form, language, and perspective (Hutcheon, 1988). Readers' assumptions about what is real and what is portrayed are often challenged by these novels, which regularly blur the boundaries between reality and fiction.

However, the aspects that are socially produced objectively and subjectively determine that reality is a complicated and multidimensional notion, and

fiction provides important insights into how reality is understood, represented, and defined. Scholars can gain a deeper knowledge of reality and its implications for individuals and society by critically analyzing various perspectives.

### Reality in Simpsons

The Simpsons is extensively renowned for its ingenious satire and social commentary, typically imitating the features of American culture and current events (Gray, 2006). In addition, the show discovers the ups and downs of family life, patenting challenges to marital issues and economic struggles. All these aspects are portrayed in the Seasons with a mixture of sincerity and humor. The Simpsons depict American society as a fictional town. That is named Springfield. It acts as a microcosm of American society, representing cultural background and reflecting real-world dynamics such as economic crises, issues of prejudice, etc. Moreover, the Simpsons have further blurred the lines between fiction and reality by serving as an inspiration for countless parodies, memes, and cultural references (Gray, 2006). As a result, the show has affected how viewers interact with and perceive their environment.

### Prediction in General

Television shows frequently employ expectation, prediction, and foreshadowing themes to keep viewers engaged and heighten the suspense. In particular, prediction is an effective narrative technique that advances the plot and heightens the suspense. For example, by implying future events or persons, foreshadowing increases audience anticipation and excitement (Chatman, 1978). In addition, it offers a glimpse into potential future developments, encouraging viewers to speculate about what might come next (Brown, 2010).

Predictive TV shows that maintain viewers' interest also promote audience involvement. Social media tools enable fans to participate in live discussions, post predictions, and connect with authors and other viewers, facilitating interactive storytelling. As a result of this active engagement with prediction-based narratives, fan groups centered on speculation, analysis, and collective interpretation have emerged quite interestingly.

### Prediction in Simpsons

Several proposals explain the Simpsons' remarkable ability to predict what will happen in the future. One explanation holds that the show's extensive backlog of episodes and storylines raises the likelihood of unintentional guessing (Griffin, 2016). Over thirty years and hundreds of episodes, the Simpsons has tackled a wide range of topics. This increases the likelihood that part of the show's content will be true-to-life occurrences. A different theory holds that the show's authors are astute social watchers who draw inspiration from popular culture and current events. By staying up to date on current affairs, the authors can include topical themes and predictions into the show's narrative. Additionally, the Simpsons cover a wide range of subjects, including politics, celebrity culture, and technical breakthroughs.

Writers commonly use satire to mock and exaggerate real-life occurrences with shocking realism (Gray, 2006). This implies that TV shows like The Simpsons have a significant impact on disclosing current events through their prophecies. These shows use their characters to hint at hidden meanings and convince viewers that they are realistic. As a result, viewers begin thoroughly studying the projections to determine whether they are true or simply accidental.

### What is Semiotics?

The word semiotics comes from the Greek word "semeion" which signifies "sign". It is viewed as the technique of analyzing or interpreting the meaning of the context by analyzing the signs, gestures, images, words, and symbols (Williamson, 1978). Generally, semiotics is defined as the study of signs and signifiers. The sign is an entity (image, symbol, words, etc.) whereas the signifier refers to how meaning is developed rather than what it is. The methodological framework of sign analysis is widely recognized for its systematic approach to evaluating meanings by analyzing many modalities of communication, such as verbal expressions, visual representations, symbolic representations, and other forms of signals to construct narratives and engage the audience.

In the words of Rose (2001), "Semiotics demonstrates a wide range of analytical instruments for evaluating a visual and figuring out how it performs with larger meaning frameworks".

Semiotics' main advantage lies in its analytically multidimensional method of comprehending how signs function in reality. Moreover, media studies frequently utilize semiotics as a tool. It makes it easier for researchers to interpret meanings. According to Saussure's model (1983), *signified* is a concept in the mind based on the mental concept or image. At the same time, a *signifier* is a sound pattern like something physical that can be touched, heard, smelled, or tasted. Pierce and Saussure were two of the predecessors to modern semiotics, a discipline that investigates how indicator systems are used in social interactions. Saussure focused more on social phenomena, whereas Pierce emphasized logic and meaning immensely. Semiotics, not the idea of generic indicators, first arose in studies on language theory. One of the categories that Pierce recommends is the trinity of icons, the index, and the symbol. An icon is an illustration of its referenced things in visual form. As required by the real relationship it has with its object, an index is a representation based on it. According to Bayav (2006), it is a consensus indication with symbolic meaning. Kress and Leeuwen (2006) believe that semiotic language serves three functions representation, interpersonal, and organization. All these functions used to portray an experience or version of reality are relevant.

According to Rose (2001), there exist procedures for analyzing an image's indications. To begin with, one must "identify the signs in the image". The next step is to "ascertain what these signs are in themselves." "To find out how the signs relate to each other and the relations to broader meaning systems" is necessary. The Saussurian and Peircean models in semiotics are basic representations of the fundamental aspects of a symbol's meaning (Zoonen, 1994; Chandler, 2001). A sign is created from a signifier and signified, as previously mentioned through the Saussurian model; the signification is the link between them. Moreover, the signifier is something 'where the sign takes place', and signified is reflected as the notion it represents (Chandler, 2001).

Besides this, there are numerous clues than images of people or objects. Indexical symbols are employed to develop the deceptive meaning. An analogy or causation establishes a connection between the sign and its meaning. Consequently, the signifier/signified link is not arbitrary. An example of an indexical symbol is a postcard with

the Eiffel Tower that evokes memories of Paris (Dyer, 2008; Rose, 2001). However, for those who follow the Saussurian model, on the other hand, the signifier is considered to be the material manifestation of the signs which can be perceived through taste, smell, touch, visual, or sound. However, the signified still can be acknowledged as an abstract concept even though it may also refer to real, physical things in the real world.

## A Semiotics-Related Notion

Terms like sign, signifier, and signified have generated important debate in semiotics. The word "sign" is derived from the Latin word which means "signum" or "mark". It represents or refers to something meaningful (Wales, 2014). De Saussure (1916) claims that language is a deposit of signs which refers to the phenomenon of acoustic image. Whereas a signifier refers to some form of meaning. However, the signified is produced by the signifier. The relationship between the two combines to create the physical presence of 'signification'. Pierre (1991) considered a sign as 'something that, in some way or another, represents something to someone represents something in one way or'. Conferring to Eco (1976) 'The primary focus of semiotics is on signs as social forces. Pragma-semiotics primarily emphasizes that "the sign depends for its meaning on the context in which it is communicated in the first place" (Watson & Hill, 1993).

The significance of symbols, images, colors, and pictures cannot be ignored in semiotics. A symbol is considered a sign, creating a relation between the items, and symbolizing the social context (Abrams, 1998). According to Culler (1981), symbols are used to convey complex ideas and emotions. Whereas the image is considered a visual representation. As described by Danesi (2016) image is interpreted to identify the meaning or convey the message to the audience or can relate the situation to a real social context. Barthes (1977) stated that images are potent semiotic instruments that can be used in everyday life, art, or the media. These are pictures that, by using composition, color, and symbols, can express intricate meanings in digital media portraying new semiotic meanings (Shifman, 2014). Moreover, color makes the image clearer and more visual, which makes it more exciting. A picture is known as a portrait, sketch, cartoon, or photograph. According to Williamson (1978), the picture is essential to the communication process since specific colors chosen

for an advertisement may evoke certain connections or feelings. It is used for an indication, depiction, or interpretation; all three aspects may also be reflected through it collectively, making it iconic (Watson & Hill, 1993). Three essential philosophies are often useful when observing a semiotic system, such as semantics or imageries philosophies, which are critical for talented speakers: 1) Semioticians state that the world is observed through signs (Chandler, 2001). 2) Gestural meanings are produced by people, and are unique to them and their sociocultural contexts (Schriver, 1997). 3) People may have access to a variety of tools for connotation formation through semiotic systems (Lemke, 1990)

According to Barthes (2005), semiotics may be used to analyze a variety of signs and items that have significance even in the absence of a communication goal, such as furniture, dishes, and clothes. In the view of Barthes (1990), nothing can be meaningless. According to Argyle and Cook (1994), Signs are not static but vary across different cultural and situational settings. The color of a phone, for instance, might have multiple meanings. For instance, pink phones are connected to femininity or womanhood, whereas white phones are connected to luxury. Anything, including food, wine, and beverages, is perceived as a part of a certain discourse based on its connotation (Barthes, 1968).

### Denotation

As described by Barthes (1968) the literal and direct relationship between a sign and its reference is known as denotation. This kind of connection between the signifier and the signified happens and reveals the explicit meaning of the sign. A sign's denotative meaning is the interpretation widely accepted and understood in society. According to Sobur (2009), the definitional, or literal, common sense meaning of a sign is generally referred to as the denotative meaning, which involves referential meaning. Whereas Panofsky (1970) argues that a clear sign has an obvious image and is understood by the members of a community or culture in terms of denotative meaning. "It represents the concepts of an object or term as found in a dictionary" (Panofsky, 1970).

### Connotation

Connotation is seen as the second level of interpretation, which includes signifiers and signified (Barthes, 1968). A sign that is effectively

inferred from the signifier of a denotative sign is referred to as connotative. Several kinds of connotative meanings are linked with the denotation. According to Fiske (2010), a sign's connotative meaning relates to its "cultural meaning". When a term is attached, it describes the interaction that takes place when the reader's emotions and cultural values are met by the sign. Signs perform within the limitations of the cultural norms that govern their use and can represent objects, behavior, and notions (McNeil, 1992). Istiynato et.al (2024) stated that connotations are used to express the emotional and cultural meaning of society. Barthes (1968) argued that we must read and pay close attention to a sign to uncover its infinite variety of meanings, rejecting the notion that a sign has a single level of meaning.

### Methodology

This section discusses the semiotic approach to find out the relationship between fiction and reality throughout the seasons. The main agenda of this study was to identify the semiotic aspects to find out the similarities between fiction and reality.

### Theoretical Underpinnings

Language plays a vital role when it comes to communication. It may not only lead to words, but it can also produce actions through gestures, signs, or symbols. When it comes to analyzing the semiotic perspective, Barthes's Theory of Semiotics may be considered a reliable source. Barthes introduced a theory of semiotics (1968) where he analyzed sign systems. Semiotics can be applied in order to analyze many types of signs or items and symbols that lack communication function. This study views the semiotic aspects of the Simpsons' seasons to identify the similarities between fiction and reality. When it comes to the layers of meaning concealed within cultural goods, Barthes' semiotics theory delves deep into the symbolic and ideological aspects of signs.

### Data Collection

Based on how significant each episode was to the concept of fiction versus reality, data was taken from several Simpsons Seasons (3, 4, 5, 9, 11, 16, 20, 21, 23, and 28). The gestures, signs, and symbols were also visible in the visual data, and those images, signs, and symbols were captured for a more thorough examination.

## Semiotic Analysis

In order to answer the research question (How are the semiotic aspects incorporated to augment the impact of predictions in the Simpsons?) the researchers took guidance from Barthes's Theory of Semiotics (BTS). It helped the process of identifying the symbolic meaning of signs, gestures, and images shown in the seasons. Barthes (1968) claims that signs have two levels of interpretation: denotation, which is observed as the fundamental level, and connotation, which is regarded as the secondary level. The researchers captured the images from the

seasons and critically analyzed the images denotatively (literal meaning) and connotatively (cultural meaning).

## Data Analysis

This section examines the data thoroughly. The researchers analyzed Simpsons episodes taken from different Seasons from the perspective of BTS and identified two levels of meaning portrayed in the Seasons through gestures, settings, symbols, and signs.

### Season 3, Episode 24 (Brothers, can you spare two dimes?)

Figure 1

*Baby Translator Machine.*



## Semiotic Analysis

The picture is taken from season three. The picture is analyzed on denotative and connotative meanings. At the denotative level, the picture reflects that this is a baby translator machine, a device that is used to detect the babies' cries, whereas, at the connotative level, it represents the upcoming advancement of future technologies as

this idea was shown in a Season in 1992. It is shown as the symbol of the modern era where parents can rely on such type of machine to seek help. The device interprets the baby's cries decodes them and answers in plain English whether the baby is hungry or in a sleepy mood. After 20 years, the Swiss Health Tech company first invented a baby translator in 2019. The episode predicted the reality regarding modern future technologies.

### Season 4, Episode 21 (Marge in Chains)

Figure 2

*Osaka Flu.*



### Semiotic Analysis

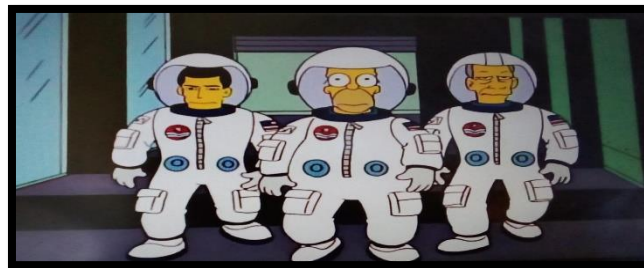
This picture employs two levels of meaning. The first level is based on denotative, which indicates that the picture simply tells about the two working employees trying to put flu germs into the box. The second level is based on connotative which portrays that two working employees belong to a Japanese country as can be seen through the facial features. Moreover, the infected person is packing the flu germs (virus) in order to spread worldwide. Symbolically it represents the idea of a future virus that may take place, a hint for the audience. The

picture is taken from the episode (margin in Chains) where employees from Osaka, Japan try to spread the virus through the delivery boxes. From another perspective, it also demonstrates that the virus is being created on its own to infect the people, the picture shows a working employee packing the germs into a box. By looking into the reality, it appears the same virus (COVID-19), that came from China and spread throughout the world. Lastly, most of the opinions regarding the covid-19 also suggest that it was a preplanned agenda or a fabricated virus. All the predictions in the episode appear to be true in reality.

### Season 5, Episode 15 (Deep Space Homer)

Figure 3

Space Travelers



### Semiotic Analysis

The picture also shows two semiotic perspectives. The denotative conveys the idea of a group of people having dressed themselves in space suits in a space-themed setting. Whereas, the connotative look into the deeper symbolic meanings. Characters in the space suits portray themes like new discovery, adventure, exploration, and teamwork. This also symbolizes the new advancement as the middle character Humor in the Simpsons acts a role as an

average American and he is getting a chance to travel the space. This act indicates a human desire to push boundaries and explore beyond limits. The episode aired in 1994 at that time going to space was not a common concept. It was an unrealistic approach. Whereas in the current scenarios, it has become a common concept to travel to space. NASA offers certain opportunities for tourists and private citizens to experience the International Space Station. Hence the prediction is found to be accurate in reality.

### Season 9, Episode 1 (The City of New York Vs. Homer Simpsons)

Figure 4

New York City



## Semiotic Analysis

The picture is taken from the Episode (the city of New York vs. Homer Simpsons). From the semiotic perspective, the image has two levels of meaning. At the denotative level, it shows a New York magazine trip and money associated with the trip. Whereas at the connotative level, it is interpreted differently. The number nine on the magazine represents the month of September, while the two buildings on the

magazine portray the number eleven and the World Trade Center. The word 'New York' clearly mentioned on the top of the magazine shows the targeted place where the incident will take place in the future. Lastly, the sign of the dollar and a character holding cash indicate that it was a preplanned agenda (inside job), not an incident. The episode was released in 1997 and reality appeared in 2001. Hence it is clearly shown that the prediction of 9/11 made by the Simpsons appears in reality.

## Season 11, Episode 17 (Bart to future)

### Figure 5

*American Crises*



## Semiotic Analysis

The picture portrays two levels of interpretation. The denotative level conveys the idea of a group of people getting together, from their dresses it seems a meeting is going on between the boss and employees. While at the connotative level, the background of the picture is portrayed as a parliament house. The flag of America is shown in

the background and the female character sitting in the middle represents the president of America. The rest of the characters represent the members of the parliament. However, this picture also conveys the idea that the characters might be discussing some serious issues, it also presents a symbol of responsibilities towards their citizens and fulfilling their rights, promises, and needs. It indicates the teamwork effort for the better future of America.

## Season 16, Episode 15 (Future Drama-Hover Car)

### Figure 6

*Hover Car*



### Semiotic Analysis

The denotative meanings convey simply the idea of a car or a luxury car that can fly. Whereas the connotation meaning indicates the symbols of new

inventions and new future projects. It also reflects modernization and how the world will be changed in terms of technology. All these aspects relate to current advancements.

### Season 16, Episode 15 (Future Drama-Clones)

Figure 7

Clones.



### Semiotic Analysis

The picture is also taken from episode 15 to analyze the semiotic perspective. The denotative level shows two identical persons who might be twin brothers. But at the connotative level, the picture is described as a symbol of biological power and how geneticists can develop an identical human species from a single gene. The characters in the picture are portrayed as Moe and the second is Moe clones the duplicate. The clone is a man-made invention that

resonates with the original person. The picture shows both characters having the same skin color, eye color, hair color, and body posture. On the other side, it also shows as a symbol of destruction as well, this may affect society, considering yourself as real as you may not be. A person can create a baby according to his needs like changing skin color, eye color, and gender but it is unethical in some countries to do so, however, cloning of animals and plants is considered more common. All these predictions can be seen in the current era.

### Season 16, Episode 15 (Future Drama-Plastic Surgery Center)

Figure 8

Plastic Surgery Center.



### Semiotic Analysis

The picture is also taken from episode 15 of the future drama. From the semiotic aspect, the denotative level of meaning illustrates the surgical center for the specific body parts. Whereas at

connotative level it reflects a symbol of beauty, where women can enhance their beauty according to their needs. Secondly, the words on the building itself portray a symbol of new advancements where you can enhance beauty by not only doing a

makeover but also through a surgical process that may last forever. Such as fillers, face-lifts, botox injections, and facial fillers for wrinkles are part of plastic surgeries, and women can maintain their beauty through these procedures. All these aspects

can be seen in the current era. Plastic surgeries are considered to be common nowadays. By analyzing from the semiotic view, it has clearly shown that predictions made in this episode regarding future advancement were proven in today's world.

## Season 20, Episode 4 (Tree House of Horror XIX)

### Figure 9

*Faulty Error Machine.*



### Semiotic Analysis

Looking from the Semiotic viewpoint, the denotative meaning simply conveys the impression of a character or an average citizen who is giving his vote in a polling station. Whereas the connotative meaning serves as the symbol of citizens' rights, indicating the responsibility to vote. It also shows

that everyone has one's own choice to choose the president for the better future of the country. The picture shows that Homer Simpson tries to give a vote to Obama but the polling machine causes an error and votes for Mitt Romney. This incident creates Homer's panic. Additionally, this prediction proves itself real in Pennsylvania in the year 2012.

## Season 21, Episode 19 (The Greatest Story of Ever D'ohed)

### Figure 10

*The Greatest Story of Ever D'ohed*



### Semiotic Analysis

The picture denotatively portrays that America is supporting or helping Israel consistently. Meanwhile, connotative meaning portrays how America is using Israel just to take control of the world, the sentence 'your American tax dollars at work' illustrates that America is providing the

weapons to Israel for the destruction, as Jews want to kill Palestinians to occupy the place completely. Secondly, it also portrays that America is playing a hidden role, usually not coming to the front line and not revealing itself but rather using other hands. All these aspects can be seen in the current era, how Palestinians are being targeted by Israel with American support.

## Season 21, Episode 19 (The Greatest Story of Ever d'ohed-Worship Tomb)

**Figure 11**

*Worship Tomb.*



### **Semiotic Analysis**

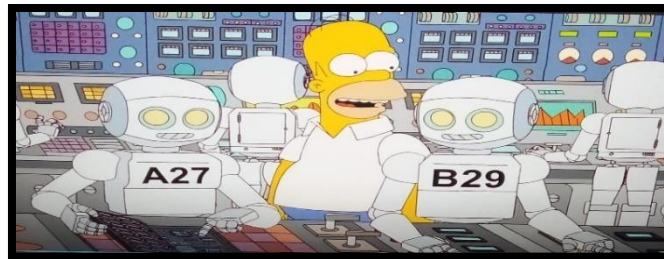
The picture is also taken from season 21. From a semiotic point of view, denotatively this picture represents a tomb or a worship place, whereas looking connotatively it represents the symbol of strength, unity, power, and faith. Moreover, looking

deeper into it shows the belief or faith of the Palestinian people in its possession. The tomb shown in the Season represents the dome of the rock portraying the safest place for the Palestinian people. On the other hand, it represents a threat or destruction for the Israelites.

## Season 23, Episode 17 (Them, Robot)

**Figure 12**

*Robots.*



### **Semiotic Analysis**

Analyzing through the semiotic lens, the picture describes two levels of meaning. The first is the denotative level describing the image as a working robot machine that helps humans and reduces the workload, whereas the second level of meaning is connotation portraying the image as a symbol of AI

advancements, unemployment for humans, and destruction for humans as it will replace them. Also portrayed as a symbol of new advancements for the future. Hence, it has been proven that many countries worldwide are seeking help from robots, countries such as Japan, China, and many more have started relying on Artificial Intelligence.

Season 28, Episode 2 (Friends and Family)

Figure 13  
Virtual Glass.



Semiotic Analysis

From the semiotic lens, the denotation level conveys the idea of virtual glass, which we can see and feel through. The connotative meaning represents the symbol of escaping reality and trying to fit into the world of fantasy or living in a fake world. Moreover, this virtual glass fulfills the needs or desires of the human in the current era. It also represents the

symbol of new advancement in future technologies. Hence, all these aspects can be seen in reality, the virtual glasses were predicted in 2016 and reality appeared in 2024, named Apple Vision Pro.

Findings

The two different levels of signs and their relevant frequencies are appended below:

Table 10

Semiotic level

Level of Signs	Frequency
Denotation	13
Connotation	13

The above table discusses the semiotic meaning based on two levels: Denotative and Connotative. The BTS was a great help to identify the resemblance between fiction and reality. The total number of frequencies found on both levels of meanings is astonishingly similar. Different pictures taken from the selected seasons portray different meanings that resonate with reality. Moreover, the denotative level relies on the context's literal and surface meanings. While the connotative meanings rely on the deeper meaning of the context i.e. analysis of the picture from its various perspectives. It is clearly proven that the Simpsons' seasons provide meaningful predictions through the context/settings constituting deeper meanings.

Conclusion

The ability to comprehend the hidden message of utterance is highly important. The study aimed to investigate the semiotic aspects of the Simpsons'

seasons to discover the real-life events shown in the seasons. For this purpose, Barthes' theory was used as required. Basically, it represents two levels of meanings: denotative and connotative. Denotative refers to surface meaning, whereas connotative refers to deeper meaning. In other words, the speaker intends and has a particular function in mind when employing certain symbols or signs in the process of communication. The denotative aspect of semiotics is used to represent the literal meanings of words signs, or symbols clearly. The majority of the audience or viewers can easily understand the denotative level of meaning because those signs, symbols, or images do not demand more linguistic acquaintance and semiotic understanding. However, the connotative level is used to signify the deeper meaning, which requires deeper comprehension of the viewers or audience to interpret the signs or images. The study significantly highlights that both connotative and denotative

levels should be applied since the audience needs both to comprehend the message behind those signs, symbols, or images to access the intended

message. It may help the audience to know the basic purpose or agenda behind the scenes.

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