

A study on Semiotics: Theory of word meaning in Media Analysis of Advertisement

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Abstract— The essay aims to elucidate the primary patterns in contemporary research on the semiotics of advertising. This text emphasises the unique characteristics of semiotic models in contemporary media advertising, which serve as a kind of visualised commercial communication. It also identifies the potential for the development of advertising semiotics as an independent field within the broader subject of semiotics. Modern advertising is seen as a product of mass culture. It is a cultural artefact that embodies the unique characteristics of postmodern aesthetics, particularly in terms of its meaning and signs. The essay suggests regarding it as an independent field within the realm of semiotics as an academic discipline. The study presented is predominantly theoretical and characterised by generalisations. The writers employed the logical technique of integrative cognition to examine the various ways to interpreting semiotics in the realm of advertising. They also utilised descriptive analysis to demonstrate how the change of signals impacts the ultimate perception of advertising text. Media studies require a fresh approach, such as the semiological technique from the Barthesian perspective, to conduct qualitative analysis at a level that beyond the limitations of the text or picture, which are susceptible to countless interpretations. When utilising the semiological approach to examine media, including both verbal and non-verbal communications such as images, Roland Barthes proposes that a sign is comprised of a signifier and a signified. Barthes argues that images are connected to both aesthetic and ideological elements, which may be analysed and interpreted at a connotative level. This analysis helps to understand how meaning is constructed through intricate semiotic interactions. Therefore, semiotics in media studies employs a diverse range of texts such as photographs, advertisements, and films to equip receivers with the necessary information to analyse and create significant texts and designs in the future.

Keywords: Advertisement, Analysis, Connotation, Media, Semiology.

1. INTRODUCTION

Words never stand alone. Paralinguistic or extralinguistic qualities always exist. When listening to a speech, listeners not only absorb the vocal material but also develop judgements about the speaker based on background knowledge and extralinguistic codes. These codes are seen in both written and spoken communication. What is Semiotic?

Semiotics studies signals. It addresses our self- and other-perceptions. Human endeavour. Communicate verbally and nonverbally. They use signs, symbols, music, or paralinguistics. Meaning is created and interpreted by semiotics. Things and actions as signals in relation to other indicators produce meaning. Complex meaning interactions compose the sign system. Text production employs meronyms, co-meronyms, antonyms, and space/time superordination.

Two sources underpin semiotics ideas. The earliest is Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), whose "semiology" studied signals in social life. The second is American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914), who studied the 'formal philosophy of signs' (Chandler).

Many consider semiotics an integrative study of many forms of communication included. Chandler defined semiotics as the study of words, sounds, and body language (Bentsen and Evald). Berger notes that some semioticians call semiotics 'the queen of interpretive science' since they believe anything can be analysed semiotically (Berger, K. (2005) .First, the relationship between semiotics and linguistics is intriguing.

Kumral used a semiotic approach to explain how semiotics and language are related: Language is a virtual communication system made up of words, oral signs, and old memories (Kumral). When words are recognised as oral signs with arbitrarily assigned meanings used for any purpose of communication, semiotics becomes the main focus of the issue, encompassing semantics, pragmatics, literary studies, social and scientific studies, and more. Semiotics and language overlap in so many ways that they cannot be separated.

Alphabetic signs show the meaning of each word in the language. When used for textual analysis, semiotics is part of structural analysis. As its name implies, structural analysis examines the structural link between all functional signifying system pieces. Chandler argues structuralism focuses on the structural linkages between semiotic system units and their ties to the total (Sebeok).

1.1 Culture Content

Culture is pervasive and inevitable (DeCapua and Wintergerst). Culture is socially produced, not biological. Individuality is established within a culture through socialisation. Lifelong habits of thinking, feeling, and behaviour are in everyone. This is mostly learned in early infancy, when people are most receptive. A system of common views and values that are acquired rather than inherited is culture. It includes values, ideas, conventions, symbols, and philosophies that define a people's lifestyle. According to Hinkel and Long (1993), culture encompasses numerous regions, groups, rituals, behaviours, and lifestyles. Culture may alternatively be characterised as a 'map' inculcated by society. This 'map' defines reality, defines new behaviour, grows our system, and creates value system rules to address issues or describe unusual happenings (Hurn and Tomalin).

1.2 Semiotics and Media

Most people rely on media everyday. Scholars have used empirical, conceptual, quantitative, and qualitative methodologies to study the changing media landscape. Semiology was used in media studies to understand media phenomena. Sign system analysis showed that nonverbal communication can have connotative meanings under Barthes' new semiotics policy.

To progress beyond word or picture, which might have limitless interpretations, media studies need a fresh spirit like Barthesian semiological qualitative analysis. Roland Barthes suggests utilising semiology to examine media signals like pictures as signifiers and signifieds. Similar to semiotic modes, connotation conveys and evokes ideas, therefore it does not always provide meaning. Barthes' semiotics notion showed media signals analysis how nonverbal exchanges have connotations.

Barthes connects the visual to aesthetic and ideological elements to explain how complex semiotics produce meaning. Media studies semiotics uses images, commercials, and films to educate participants how to interpret and construct meaningful messages and designs. Barthes proposes the author/creator die to see the recipient's birth, allowing him to interpret, decipher, and create endless meanings. To expose semiological researchers to the complexity of semiotic

interpretation and innovative ways of employing signs in social and cultural contexts, semiotic creation observes and analyses media messages and discourses.

Advertising, films, films, video clips, and caricature are widely studied using Roland Barthes' semiological method. Recent semiotists in communication and information sciences have been inspired by Barthes' works to study media images to investigate the symbolic interaction of verbal and nonverbal signs using semiology as a qualitative method to view these signs as a text communicates significant meanings by rereading, giving media signs broader interpretations and connotations through frequent Textual image analysis to extract connotations and mediated significance based on culture and ideology's functional order was Barthes' significant contribution.

1.3 Picture rhetoric—the picture as a visual indication

Barthes' myths are intellectually and emotionally driven by appearance. Social and mythological factors influence images' nonverbal communication with viewers. Barthes observed, "Photography has a power to convert which must be analysed" (1972). Proposals featuring pictures help candidates connect with voters, suggesting climate and linguistic ellipses.

Barthes thought the image's structural independence from aesthetic and ideological aspects allowed the recipient's cultural and symbolic background to interpret it. Barthes established a new denotative and connotative picture analysis method by interpreting social worlds—things, language, ads—in photographic signs. Photography is a mythical semiological system that blends the signifier with the signified, creating a nonverbal language with many meanings. Mechanical photography catches the landscape, while connotation includes man's interventions (frame, distance, lighting, focus, speed).

The sign system significance of visual signs/images is read, explained, analysed, and interpreted semiologically. Here, denotative and connotative meanings are symbolic. Barthes claims that photographs have denoted and connoted meanings.

1.4 Barthes' signifying levels

Denotation

First, denotation specifies a sign's literal or evident meaning (*dictionnaire de la langue Francaise* 1993). Everyone sees the visual image's denotation, independent of culture, philosophy, or society. Roland Barthes compared the defined message to signified connotation. At this level of signification, we focus on the sign's meaning without context or subjective interpretations. Sunrise may symbolise the beginning of the day, the end of the night, hope, brightness, and more.

Connotation and meaning multiplicity

We should first define connotation as "an idea suggested by a word in addition to its main meaning" (*Oxford advanced learner's lexicon* 2000) before addressing it from the Barthesian perspective. Words, sentiments, and pictures can have personal or global connotations (Emir).

Roland Barthes defined connotation as "the interaction that occurs when the sign meets the feelings or emotions of the users and the values of their culture" (Fiske). Subjective elements that open up text interpretations impact it. Roland Barthes (1968) said that "connotation being itself a system comprises signifiers, signifieds, and the process which unites the former to the latter (signification)". The Barthesian method does not recognise the oneness of meanings since extensive reading is needed to blast numerous meanings into an unlimited number of connotations, making the text a significant linguistic body. Because connotation relies on denotation, it always acts in the borrowed domain of the denoted, according to Barthes (Jamieson). Denotation underpins connotation.

1.5 Advertising and semiotics

The study of advertising semiotics enhances knowledge of how advertising messages act as signs, economic, political, and communicative phenomena (Kourdis; Husain et al.). The ad copy is symbolic. Explain the importance of semantic concepts like "text", "sign", "interpretation", and "symbol" in creating successful advertising messages. Signs simplify semiotics, or semiology. Encyclopaedia Britannica defines sign-using. Semiotics' "father" F. A. linguist, de Saussure saw semiotics as "the life of signs in society" (Britannica, 2020). Pierce made semiotics transdisciplinary, enabling sign system research. To determine its suggestive effect, advertising semiotics evaluates message structure and semantics. Key advertising semiotics research advancements are explained in the article.

Westerners lead advertising semiotics research. Ukrainian scientists have studied semiotics. Science has a general understanding of advertising semiotics and how to understand a product's semiotic core. According to Akayomova (2011), psychophysiological semiotics has concentrated on advertising texts and buyer-market pair-clearing communication since the late 20th century.

In 2014, Slovak researcher Solfk discovered that advertising mainly relies on signs and sign systems for profitability. Semiotic evaluation includes interpretation, formalisation, and linguistic analysis. Advertising, like all creative goods, may be semantic. Semiotic and semantic interpretation is needed to understand this heterogeneous phenomenon. Readers' personalities affect text interpretation.

(Kourdis)emphasises the semiotics of Greek subtitles and comments in French personal care TV advertising. Both interlingual and intersemiotic levels are studied. The author found that the subtitling preserves the source language's semantic isotopies and that French or Greek subtitling and picture content undergo intersemiotic translation. (Dwita) examines how English language in advertising enhances the perception of smart and international products. The paper's study affects Indonesian middle-class advertising. English, a prominent language associated with high status, modernism, and sophistication, might influence customers' opinions of promoted items. The examination of visualised advertising extends beyond vocal content in a commercial or banner. Advertising product levels should only be assessed collectively, say the authors. The study will analyse media and text advertising and discover their synergy. The research must analyse syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic semiotics.

2. METHODOLOGY

To achieve the goal, the researcher used integrative cognition to analyse advertising sign and symbol interpretation. The researcher was able to extensively explore the semiotics of commercials utilising particular cases using this method, improving our comprehension of the subject matter. Sign alteration affects advertising text perception, as

shown by descriptive analysis. The approaches used illustrate that advertising's main goal is to influence the final customer's choice of product or service. Coca-Cola promotional goods is studied. Since visual advertising activates many perceptual centres, it had a greater impact than sound or text. This advertisement has the most impact on customers when it combines visual, auditory, and print semiotic cues. Integrating semiotics with cultural ideas is also important. Coca-Cola's Diwali adverts were more popular than usual.

3. DISCUSSION

The advertisement material should include the recipient's perception model. Due to its focus on language pragmatics rather than sign systems, semiotics is problematic. Linguistic pragmatics emphasises the subjective human aspect in all levels of language, especially human communication. Pragmatist philosophy views advertising text as very targeted. Due of the shortness of the advertising material, all its aspects will prioritise content and interpret verbal and nonverbal indications to achieve the purpose.



Figure 1

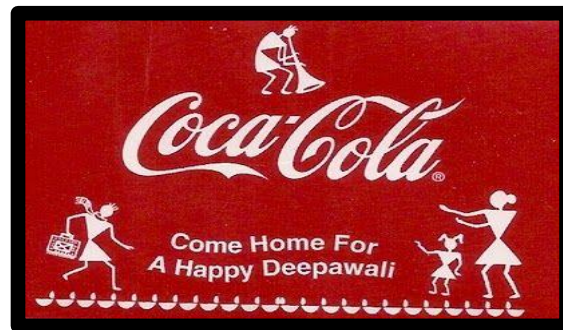


Figure 2

Advertising with a communicative goal should deliver a clear, succinct message. Advertising cannot succeed in an environment where connotative meanings can be interpreted freely. Advertising follows "semantic conservatism," which involves influencing client behaviour or brand perceptions. Ideally, producers (marketers) should predetermine this. Our claim on advertising semiosis' typical trait requires "semantic conservatism". We will demonstrate this by analysing Coca-Cola ads in fig 1,2,3 and 4.

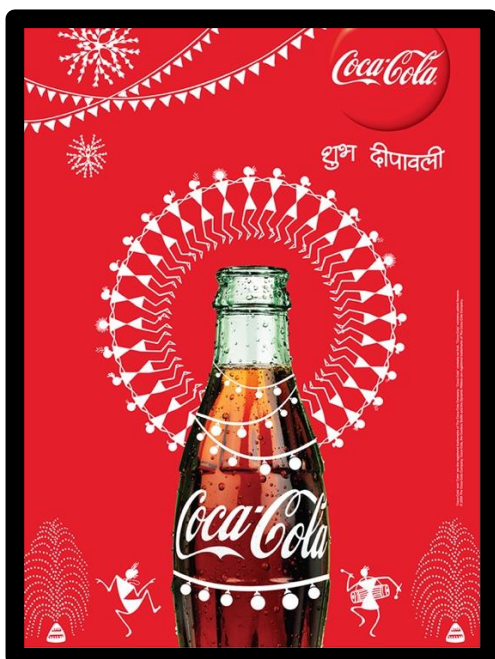


Figure 3

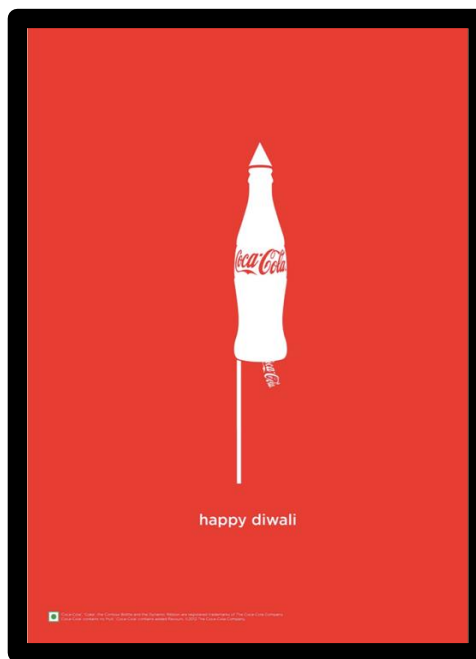


Figure 4

Even if their goals are different, the advertising creator and its recipient—as wide and collective as possible—may have a lot in common. Semiotics shows that marketers want to encode product ads quickly and potential buyers want to understand them while decoding them. Semiotics analyses textual and visual communication to assist marketers produce effective ads and understand social dynamics. Advertising challenges societal viewpoint. In diachrony, advertising and society developed parallelly, showing the instantaneous link between the tiniest alteration in society's viewpoint and advertising's shape and function. Semiotics studies how signals support meaning, emphasising that their interpretations depend on the structural collection of signs that evolves throughout defining processes. Advertising tries to sell goods and services. Advertising should build brands, boost conversions, and keep businesses visible. Thus, advertising should include internationally recognisable identifiers like slogans, trademarks, and semantic emphasis. Advertising uses evaluation, influence, and incentives to persuade consumers to buy a product or service. Verbal and non-verbal factors affect advertising's persuasiveness. The advertising product has textual and non-textual components. Music, sound effects, pictures, and videos are nonverbal.

Images (banners, films) may convey more than words and noises. They are the focus of media advertising semiotic study. Customers perceive, analyse, and recall images faster than words. Visuals also set mood. It affects the recipient's emotions holistically. We examined video ads for colour, shape, characteristics, advertising heroes, and emotional context. Video ads often lack text or voice. Most Coca-Cola ads target young, working consumers. The major draw is fun-loving, accomplished, and enthusiastic young people. Diwali and other festivals change this promotional product's semiotics. However, the core represents family, unity, and joy regardless of age, gender, or ethnicity.

Advertising shapes and is moulded by society, therefore various socioeconomic strata and cultures may interpret semiotic symbols differently. Due of cultural impact, publicly visible symbols aren't always reliable. Some nations demand distinct holiday advertising with various dialects and ethnic or national dominants. In advertising, music is the most common acoustic element. Semiotics are present also. Connection to auditory

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symbols. Language is not needed to understand music. Semiotic elements include musical instrument sounds. The chords' sequence, pitch, tempo, repetitions, performance, etc. are symbolic. Tonal patterns can generate feelings of joy, grief, nostalgia, and more. Advertising aims to connect a listener's preferred song with a physical thing to induce a conditioned reaction of pleasure even without music.

4. CONCLUSION

Scientific advancements in understanding the collective subconscious and advertising archetypes should be considered when assessing advertising. These aspects create an ideological illusion that persuades people to buy items or services, which is brand advertising's goal. Archetypes in advertising reflect the idea that advertising's purpose is to use pre-existing signs and symbols to appeal to potential consumers in a mutually beneficial way.

Advertising depicts a reality that is instantly recognisable and emotionally enticing to potential customers. The average recipient is subconsciously influenced by modern media advertising. The paper's main point is that advertising semiotics are an effective communication tool. Semiotics in advertising identifies universal indicators, analyses recipient responses, and incorporates them into text and multimedia. Mascots have particular cultural value due to their semantics and semiotics. It appeals to a wide audience by using symbols in advertising materials to evoke the urge to buy the goods. Semiology covers all signals, linguistic or non-linguistic, with the signifier and signified. These indications appear in films, photos, fashion, advertising, and more. Media analysis uses Barthes' semiotic approach as a qualitative tool for media texts. It highlights how readers/receivers generate and interpret meanings depending on their experiences and sociocultural background.

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