



Semiotics in Ikea Uk Advertisement Every Home Should Be a Haven on Youtube

Chintia Handayani
Universitas Gunadarma

Corresponding Author: Chintia Handayani
chintiahandayani@staff.gunadarma.ac.id

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Semiotics, Signifier, Signified, Roland Barthes

Received : 5 March

Revised : 23 April

Accepted: 23 May

©2025 Handayani: This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Atribusi 4.0 Internasional](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



ABSTRACT

Semiotics is extensively used to study various forms of media such as advertising, film, journalism, and digital platforms. For instance, in advertising, it examines how brands utilize symbols to trigger emotional responses or convey specific associations. In cinema and television, it looks at how meaning is constructed through visual cues and storytelling techniques. This method is valuable for uncovering cultural subtleties and understanding how audiences interpret messages, making it a crucial tool in analyzing mass communication. The researcher analyzed using Roland Berthes theory applied in the advertisement IKEA UK Every Home Should be a Haven on Youtube, found the signifier and signified meanings in this research. the purpose of the research is to find out the signs used in IKEA UK Advertisements Every Home Should be a Haven on Youtube to deliver messages to the audience using Roland Barthes' theory. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative

INTRODUCTION

Language is important for our everyday life to communicate with each other and also language is a vehicle for the expression or exchange of thoughts, concepts, knowledge, and information as well as the fixing and transmission of experience and knowledge. It is based on cognitive processes, subject to societal factors and subject to historical change and development (Hadumod Bussmann (1966) in *Routledge Dictionary of Language and Linguistics*). Language as the system of human communication by means of a structured arrangement of sound (or their written representation) not form larger units, e.g., morphemes, words, sentences (Jack et al. (1985) in *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics*). Everyone has the ability to learn a language. They learn a language by absorbing the language knowledge in their environment (Kreidler, 2013; p.3).

As technology continues to evolve and grow in importance, modern businesses employ diverse marketing and advertising strategies to reach potential customers and close sales. Stretching from traditional media to digital marketing online and in social media, marketing and advertising seem to be everywhere. Part of this reality is due to the effectiveness of marketing and advertising strategies in driving success for companies of every shape and size.

While sometimes used interchangeably, there are actually many differences between marketing and advertising. In basic terms, marketing is the process of identifying customer needs and determining how best to meet those needs. In contrast, advertising is the exercise of promoting a company and its products or services through paid channels. In other words, advertising is a component of marketing. But the differences do not end there.

Marketing involves identifying and understanding customer needs, developing products and services that fulfill those needs, and effectively communicating their value to the target audience. This encompasses selecting the specific audience to target and determining the key features and messages to highlight in advertising campaigns (Selvalakshmi, 2023).

In this research, the purpose of the research is to find out the signs used in IKEA UK Advertisements *Every Home Should be a Haven* on Youtube to deliver messages to the audience using Roland Barthes' theory. IKEA is famous for affordable and stylish home furnishings, with the core concept being to provide quality home solutions for many people, not just a few. IKEA, an acronym for Ingvar Kamprad Elmtaryd Agunnaryd, is a multinational conglomerate that designs and sells ready-to-assemble furniture, kitchen appliances, and home accessories. Founded in 1943 by 17-year-old Ingvar Kamprad in Sweden, IKEA has grown into one of the world's largest furniture retailers. Initially established as a mail order sales business, IKEA started selling furniture in 1948. The first store opened in Almhult, Sweden, in 1958. IKEA's business model focuses on offering a wide range of well-designed, functional home furnishing products at affordable prices. The company designs its products and works with over 1,500 suppliers in more than 50 countries. A key aspect of IKEA's strategy is selling products in flat-pack form, which reduces transportation.

To complete the analysis, this research used semiotic theory from Roland Barthes. Barthes' semiotic analysis permits for a deeper understanding of how signs function in communication, revealing the complex interplay between literal meanings and the cultural context that shape our interpretations. This framework is largely applicable across various fields, including literature, advertising, and media studies. Barthes also mentioned that a well known figure in semiotics, evolved a framework for understanding signs and their meanings that distinguishes between denotation and connotation. His theories are based on analyzing how meaning is constructed and communicated through various forms of media.

Semiotics in media involves analyzing the use of signs and symbols and how they convey meaning within media content and communication. It explores the processes through which media messages are produced, delivered, interpreted, and comprehended by audiences. Semiotics, also known as semiology, is the study of signs and symbols. It is used to examine how media messages—often referred to as 'texts'—communicate meaning through various types of signs, such as images, sounds, and language. Media texts are naturally open to multiple meanings, which can vary based on cultural background and context. Semiotics in media focuses on uncovering the denotative (literal) and connotative (implied or associated) meanings of signs. This dual-layered approach enables a deeper understanding of how media messages are constructed to influence or resonate with audiences. Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce are key pioneers in the field of semiotics. Saussure developed the idea of the 'sign,' made up of a signifier (the form) and a signified (the concept it represents). Peirce built on this by proposing a three-part model consisting of the representamen (the form), the object (what it refers to), and the interpretant (the meaning interpreted by the viewer).

Semiotics is extensively used to study various forms of media such as advertising, film, journalism, and digital platforms. For instance, in advertising, it examines how brands utilize symbols to trigger emotional responses or convey specific associations. In cinema and television, it looks at how meaning is constructed through visual cues and storytelling techniques. This method is valuable for uncovering cultural subtleties and understanding how audiences interpret messages, making it a crucial tool in analyzing mass communication.

Audiences engage with media messages by interpreting them through the lens of their own cultural backgrounds and individual experiences. This ongoing exchange between the message creator and the viewer emphasizes the influence of semiotics in producing varied interpretations of identical media content. Here are some significance of semiotics in media: first, it strengthens media literacy by helping audiences critically examine the deeper meanings embedded in media texts. Second, it supports content creators in developing impactful communication by recognizing how different signs connect with their intended audiences. And last, it offers valuable perspectives on how media portrays culture, shapes identity, and conveys ideological narratives.

This research specifically examines signs and emphasizes how they are interpreted by various cultures or communities in the IKEA UK advertisement

Every Home Should be a Haven. Based on Barthes' theory, a sign consists of the signifier, which is its physical form as sensed, and the signified, which is the meaning derived from it.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Roland Barthes, one of the key figures in semiotics, expanded on Ferdinand de Saussure's foundational theory of signs by introducing deeper layers of meaning in the study of texts and cultural products. According to Barthes, a sign is composed of two elements: the signifier (the form which the sign takes) and the signified (the concept it represents). However, unlike Saussure who limited this system to linguistic signs, Barthes extended the concept into the realm of cultural phenomena, including media, advertisements, and everyday objects (Barthes, 1972). He emphasized that signs do not merely reflect reality but rather construct it through connotative meanings and myths that reflect dominant ideologies. Barthes' theory reveals how signs operate on multiple levels—denotative, which represents the literal meaning, and connotative, which relates to cultural or emotional associations. This approach allows researchers to decode how meaning is constructed and reinforced in cultural texts, especially in areas such as music lyrics, fashion, and film. Through this lens, semiotic analysis becomes a powerful tool to uncover the ideological messages embedded in everyday language and imagery. Therefore, in this research the researcher only discusses and focuses the signifier and signified using theory from Barthes.

METHODOLOGY

The method that is used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The source of the data is from IKEA UK Advertisement Every Home Should be a Haven with duration 1 minute. This research collects the data by word and images. This research used the theory of Semiotic Analysis from Roland Berthes, and in this research, the researcher used descriptive qualitative methods. Some steps in the descriptive qualitative method used in this research are watching the video in Youtube and capturing the images from the video. The results of the analysis showed the images from IKEA Advertisement which the researcher analysed.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data Findings

This research is developed using semiotics based on Roland Barthes' theory. From the analysis of IKEA UK Advertisement Every Home Should be a Haven, the researcher found data that contains semiotics, that is signifier and signified.

Based on the data, after identifying and analysing the data. The type of semiotics which the researcher found include signifier and signified.

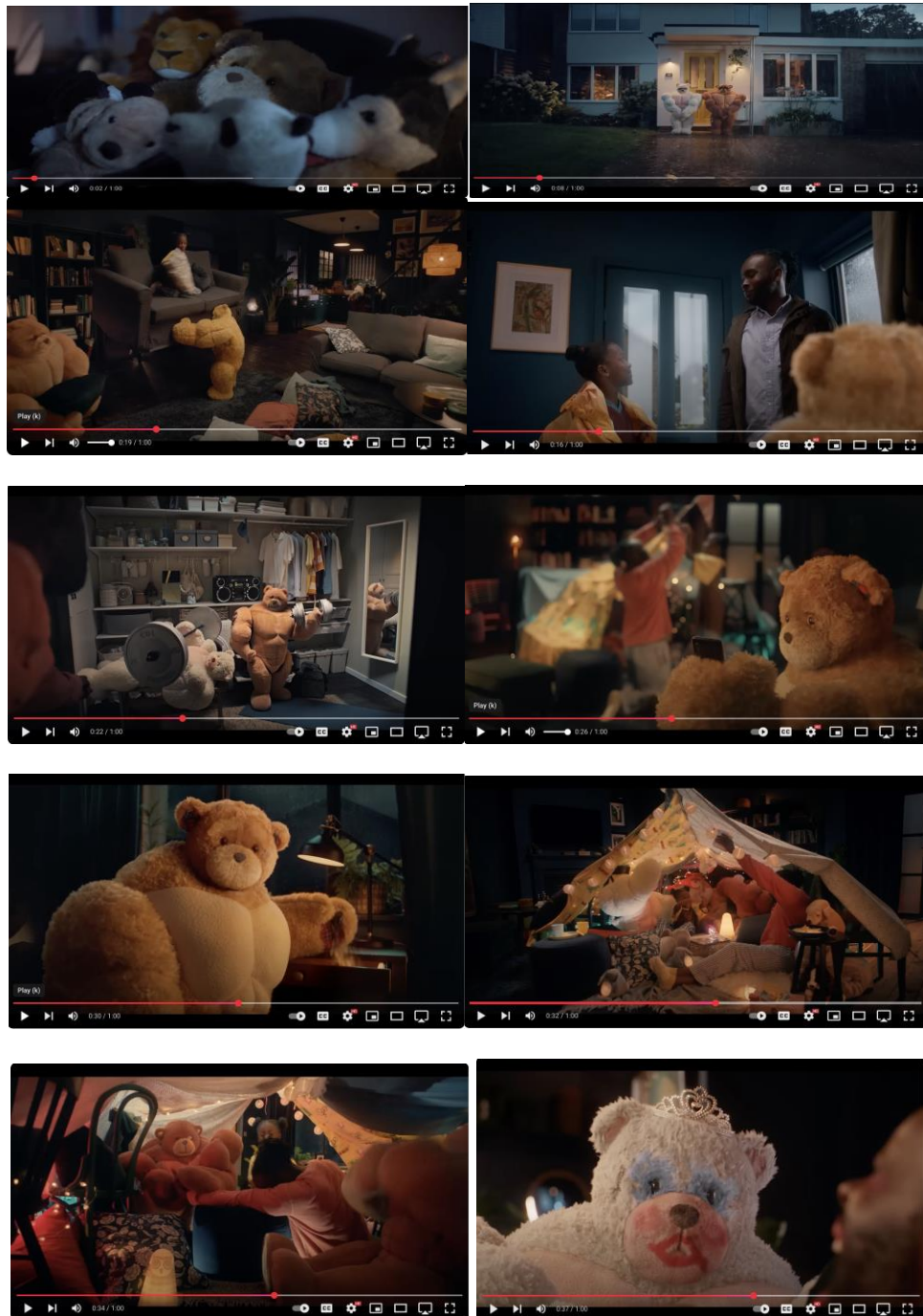
Data Analysis

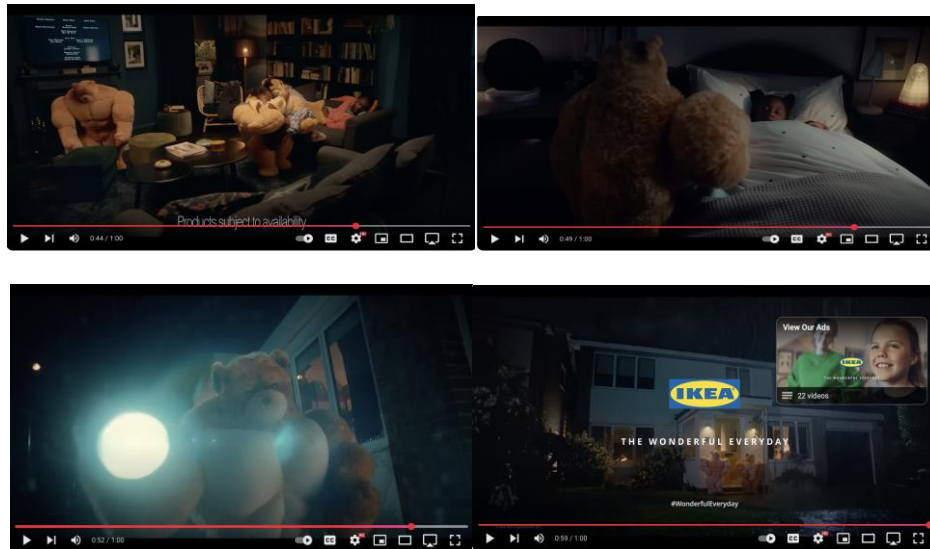
Roland Barthes expanded on Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic theory, focusing on how signs create meaning in culture and communication. In Barthes's framework:

- Signifier: The physical form of the sign, such as a word, image, or sound. For example, the word "tree" or a picture of a tree is a signifier.
- Signified: The concept or idea that the signifier represents-what comes to mind when you encounter the signifier, like the mental image or idea of a tree.

Barthes emphasized that the relationship between signifier and signified is not natural or fixed, but is shaped by cultural and social conventions. This means the meaning of a sign can change depending on context and society.

Signifier and Signified





From the data above, bears are the symbol of strength, courage, and protection, often associated with warriors or powerful natural forces. We can see that the bears are the signifiers and signified in the video to protect the children and the family, and it is a symbol that the bears have power to protect and to cheer up the family. In European heraldry, the bear is often to represent bravery and strength, in Germanic and Scandinavian traditions. And in Nordic mythology and folklore (e.g., Sweden, Norway, Finland, Iceland), the bear ("björn" in Swedish, "karhu" in Finnish) is one of the most revered and sacred animals. It represents power, nobility, protection, and ancestral connection.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Semiotics is extensively used to study various forms of media such as advertising, film, journalism, and digital platforms. For instance, in advertising, it examines how brands utilize symbols to trigger emotional responses or convey specific associations. In cinema and television, it looks at how meaning is constructed through visual cues and storytelling techniques. This method is valuable for uncovering cultural subtleties and understanding how audiences interpret messages, making it a crucial tool in analyzing mass communication. The researcher analyzed using Roland Barthes theory applied in the advertisement IKEA UK Every Home Should be a Haven on Youtube, found the signifier and signified meanings in this research. The researcher concludes from the data found that bears are the symbol of strength, courage, and protection, often associated with warriors or powerful natural forces. Moreover, the pictures in this advertisement represent strength and protection in conveying the messages to attract the viewers or the audiences about what home is.

FUTURE STUDY

This research still has limitations so further research is needed related to the topic of Semiotics in Ikea Uk Advertisement Every Home Should Be a Haven on Youtube to perfect this research and increase insight for readers.

REFERENCES

- Barthes, R. (1964). *Elements of Semiology* (A. Lavers & C. Smith, Trans.). Hill and Wang.
- Bussmann, H. (1966). *Routledge Dictionary of Language and Linguistics*. Routledge.
- Cooper, J. C. (1992). *An illustrated encyclopaedia of traditional symbols*. Thames & Hudson.
- Criticism of IKEA. (n.d.). In Wikipedia. Retrieved March 17, 2025, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criticism_of_IKEA
- Fox-Davies, A. C. (1909). *A complete guide to heraldry*. T.C. & E.C. Jack.
- Graves, R. (1955). *The Greek myths* (Vol. 1 & 2). Penguin Books.
- IKEA. (n.d.). In Wikipedia. Retrieved March 17, 2025, from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IKEA>
- IKEA UK. (2021, October 4). Every home should be a haven [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wGgcYNIH02g>
- Inter IKEA Foundation. (n.d.). In Wikipedia. Retrieved March 17, 2025, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inter_IKEA_Foundation
- Inter IKEA Holding. (n.d.). In Wikipedia. Retrieved March 17, 2025, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inter_IKEA_Holding
- Jack, R., et al. (1985). *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics*. Longman.
- Kreidler, C. W. (2013). *Introducing English Semantics* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- List of countries with IKEA stores. (n.d.). In Wikipedia. Retrieved March 17, 2025, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_with_IKEA_stores
- Marketing vs. Advertising. Ama.org. <https://www.ama.org/marketing-vs-advertising>
- N, S. (2023). *Marketing Frontiers*.
- Pentikäinen, J. (1999). *Kalevala mythology* (2nd ed.). Indiana University Press.
- Price, N. (2023). *Children of Ash and Elm: A history of the Vikings*. Basic Books.

Simek, R. (2007). Dictionary of Northern mythology (A. Hall, Trans.). D.S. Brewer.

Walker, S. (2016, July 25). Why do we see Russia as a bear? BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-36913927>

Wijayanto, C. S., & Iswari, F. (2021). Semiotics analysis of Roland Barthes' theory on Pocari Sweat's "Sweat for Dream" advertisement. *Cultural Syndrome*, 3(2), 100-108.