

Analyse Semiotic Peirce in the "Picot 2" Baby Milk Advertisement

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Abstract. This research discusses the semiotic meaning of Picot 2" baby milk advertisement produced by Laboratories Expert France. The concept of advertising creativity is explained in this research, as advertisers create creative ideas to communicate the message of the product they advertise. The paradigm in this research uses a constructivist paradigm, namely the researcher attempts to interpret the constructions of the Picot 2 baby milk advertisement in this research. The research method used is qualitative, with a study of Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory. In the results of this research, the researcher discusses it based on Peirce's classification of types of signs, it's mean icon, index, and symbols.

Keywords: Semiotic, Icon, Index, Symbol.

1 Introduction

Advertising is an important element in the world of communication that serves to shape and manage meaning within a broad social and cultural context. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), advertising is not just about conveying information about products or services, but also about building associations and the desired image in the minds of consumers. Advertisements utilize various symbolic and narrative elements to convey messages that can influence perceptions and purchasing decisions. In addition, as a mass communication medium, advertising seeks to reach a wide audience by creating texts that resonate and are relevant to specific demographic targets. In this context, the effectiveness of advertising greatly depends on how advertisers can understand and leverage the "shared knowledge" that exists within society.

Mc Quail (2010) says that mass media, including advertising, plays an important role in shaping culture and social order. Advertisements serve as a reflection and influence in popular culture, affecting the perspectives and behaviors of society. Advertisements serve as a means of promotion and a tool for disseminating certain cultural norms and values. For example, ads that display gender stereotypes or certain cultural representations can reinforce or even challenge existing social views. McQuail emphasizes that the role of advertising in shaping

culture must be considered carefully, as advertising contributes to the formation of broader social meanings and can significantly influence how society interacts with and understands the world around them.

Issues

In the context of product marketing, how a message is delivered is just as important as the content of the message itself. (Kotler & Keller, 2016: 278). The problem with advertising baby milk products like Picot2 milk is that advertisers often use visual and narrative strategies to build a positive image that associates the product with the health benefits consumers want. This study will analyze how Picot milk advertising uses visual and symbolic elements to attract audiences' attention, even those who may not be directly interested in the advertisement. The focus of this analysis is to understand how advertisers use various visual and symbolic strategies to enhance the appeal and effectiveness of their messages in the market. Baby milk product advertisements in digital media often utilize a combination of visual elements, text, and video to convey effective messages and build product credibility. Advertisers frequently use appealing graphics and touching messages to communicate health benefits and create a positive impression on the audience. This study aims to evaluate and analyze how these elements are designed to communicate product value and how they function to capture the audience's attention on digital platforms. The focus of the analysis will include the use of color, fonts, and images that shape the meaning of advertisements, as well as how the combination of these elements enhances appeal and audience engagement.

Research Objective

Specifically, this research aims to examine and analyze the signs in the advertising texts of Picot 2 baby formula displayed online in France. This research will examine various elements of signs such as dialogue, color settings, text, and captions that appear, as well as scene settings in the advertisement. By understanding how these elements are used, it is hoped that ways can be identified in which these signs function to convey effective messages and capture the audience's attention. This research aims to explore how various visual and verbal components in advertisements contribute to the formation of meaning and the appeal of products in digital media.

In general, this research aims to identify and understand the application of semiotic concepts in the world of mass media advertising. By analyzing the use of signs in the Picot 2 baby formula advertisement, this study will provide insights into how semiotic theory is applied in advertising practice to create effective and impactful messages. This research aims to highlight how meaning is constructed and conveyed through the elements of advertising and how this affects the audience's understanding and response to the ads.

Peirce's Semiotics

Semiotics is the study of signs and the systems of signs used for communication and interpretation in society. (Sobur, 2006: 7). Ferdinand de Saussure, one of the pioneers in this field, developed a theory of semiology that focuses on how signs create meaning within social and cultural contexts. (Budiman, 1999: 107 in Sobur, 2006: 12). Saussure argues that the meaning of a sign is not fixed, but rather constructed through social relations and prevailing cultural conventions. This means that the meaning of a sign is the result of the interaction

between individuals and the existing social structure, and is not solely the product of individual thought.

Charles Sanders Peirce, who also made significant contributions to the field of semiotics, expanded the concept of signs with a more detailed approach. According to Peirce, a sign is something that represents something else and consists of three main elements: the Sign, which is the element that represents; the Object, which is the reference of the sign; and the Interpretant, which is the understanding or meaning generated from the sign (Johansen & Larsen, 2002: 25). Peirce emphasizes that to understand a sign, we need to consider not only what is represented by the sign but also how that meaning is constructed in the individual's mind based on the existing references.

The Peirce triangle model illustrates the relationship between the three elements in the communication process. In this model, **Sign** is in one corner, **Object** in another corner, and **Interpretant** in the third corner. The relationship between these three elements shows that the meaning of a sign is formed from the interaction between these elements, where the understanding of the sign is influenced by how the sign refers to the object and how the interpretation of that object is formed in the individual's mind. Thus, semiotics offers a framework for analyzing how signs function in communication and how meaning is constructed in various social and cultural contexts.

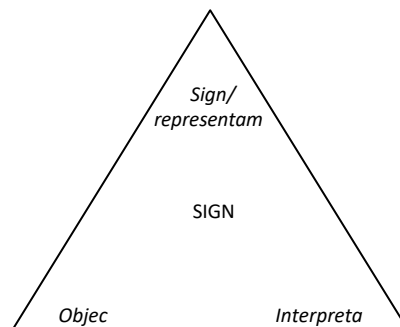


Fig 1. Three Important Elements in Signs

Charles Sanders Peirce developed a theory of semiotics that divides signs into three main categories based on their relationship with objects or references: icons, indexes, and symbols (Johansen & Larsen, 2002: 51). These three categories illustrate different ways of connecting signs with the objects or meanings they represent, providing a framework for understanding how signs function in communication.

1. An icon is a type of sign that is connected to its object through similarity or physical resemblance. An icon links the signifier (representation) with the signified (concept or object) through similarities in shape or visual characteristics. For example, an image of a book in an online catalog is an icon because it mimics the shape and appearance of a real book. This visual similarity facilitates the understanding of the sign, as the appearance of the icon directly indicates the intended object.

2. An index is a sign that indicates a causal or direct relationship with its object. An index connects the signifier with the signified through a cause-and-effect relationship or direct association. An example is footprints in the sand, which directly indicate someone's presence in that place. Footprints have a causal relationship with the individual who left them, thus providing a concrete indication of the existence of the referenced object.

3. A symbol is a sign that connects the signifier and the signified through social conventions or agreements that are in place within a society. Symbols do not have a physical or causal relationship with their objects; rather, that relationship is constructed based on norms or social rules that have been agreed upon. For example, a national flag is a symbol that represents the identity and values of a nation. The meaning of the flag is determined by social and cultural consensus, making this symbol function in a broader context than just a physical representation.

These three categories of signs complement each other in forming complex and diverse meanings. Icons provide a direct visual representation, indexes indicate specific causal or contextual relationships, and symbols rely on social conventions to convey meaning. Together, icons, indexes, and symbols form a system of signs that enables humans to communicate effectively and understand meaning in various social and cultural contexts.

Signs in Advertising

According to Sobur (2003: 116), to analyze advertisements in depth from a semiotic perspective, we need to examine the system of signs present within them. This sign system includes verbal and nonverbal elements. Verbal symbols are language components such as text or words used in advertisements to convey messages to the audience. Meanwhile, nonverbal symbols encompass visual elements such as shapes, colors, and images that enrich the advertisement's message. For example, the product image displayed in the advertisement is an icon because it resembles the actual product being promoted. In this case, the object of the advertisement itself—whether it is a product or a service—becomes the center of the sign system that forms advertising communication.

Berger (2005: 29-32) highlights that the commercial aspect plays an important role in advertising. Signs in advertisements are not only related to products or services but also connected to material and social culture. For example, elements such as clothing, jewelry, and furniture displayed in advertisements can convey messages about a certain social status or lifestyle. In addition, aspects such as body language, movement, and elements of sound or music are also an integral part of advertising. Sound and music, in this case, act as emotional cues that help elicit an emotional response from the audience, adding an extra dimension to the message conveyed in the advertisement and enhancing emotional engagement.

Hjemlev (1961, in Denzin & Lincoln, 2009: 617) explains that a sign consists of two main components: 'expression' and 'content.' Expression refers to the material elements of the sign, such as words or visual symbols, while content is the meaning conveyed by the sign. A sign refers to something that exists outside of itself, and meaning is formed through the relationship between the object or idea referred to and the sign itself. The meaning is highly dependent on social context and individual interpretation, indicating that signs require context to effectively connect expression with content (Manning & Swan in Denzin & Lincoln, 2009: 618).

According to Manning & Swan (in Denzin & Lincoln, 2009: 622), media often blurs the boundaries between reality and artificial elements, combining elements of reality with dramatization. For instance, television shows like *Top Cops* or *Rescue 911* present a reality infused with dramatic elements, creating a version of reality that is mixed with artificial components. Advertisements are often combined with news or drama, creating fragments of images that are atemporal and surreal. The media disseminates vibrant images associated with various forms of entertainment, such as music videos and melodramas, all of which influence how the audience interprets the signs in advertisements.

In the semiotic perspective of structuralism, Barthes (1975, in Denzin & Lincoln, 2009: 621) states that the meaning of a text can be read in various ways depending on the context. Barthes argued that meaning is the result of coding the text, and every text has a meaning that can change based on shifts in the social context behind it. In other words, meaning is not fixed and can vary depending on how the text is encoded and understood in a particular context (Manning & Swan in Denzin & Lincoln, 2009: 620).

According to Berger (2005: 39-42), variations in visual aspects of advertising, such as the use of color, play an important role in the way the message is conveyed. Color can trigger certain feelings or emotions in the audience, and size also contributes to understanding the message. For example, the size of objects in advertising is related to physical dimensions and how the object relates to other sign systems. Space in advertising, such as white space, can convey a message about quality or lifestyle—as seen in cosmetics ads that use white space to highlight elegance and high taste.

Contrast is also an important visual element that helps emphasize opposition, such as light-dark or complex-simple. Advertisements that use sharp contrast can attract the audience's attention and clarify the message. The form also plays an important role in conveying meaning; a red heart shape often symbolizes love or affection. Small details in an ad, such as grain in a photo, can add dimension and clarity to the visuals displayed, giving depth to the message being conveyed.

Overall, all the visual elements in an ad—such as color, size, scope, contrast, shape, and detail—work together to create meaning. By understanding how these signs function and interact with each other, we can gain deeper insight into how advertising shapes messages and influences audiences. Each visual element in an ad not only serves to attract attention but also to convey the meaning and emotion desired by the advertiser, creating a more holistic and effective experience for the audience.

2 Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach, especially to examine how messages in advertisements are signalled and conveyed. Therefore, this research uses a semiotic analysis method to reveal the signs in the researcher's object of study, namely advertisements for baby milk products like Picot2 milk. The unit of analysis that will be studied is the texts that appear in the advertisement, in the form of words, images, and colours.

3 Result and Discussion

Based on the image of the Picot 2 baby milk advertisement above, the results of the analysis can be described as follows:

1. The French sentence "D'abord, bien nourrir bébé. Et pour l'écharpe de portage, vous avez le temps d'apprendre" using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory, we will divide this analysis into three main categories: icons, index, and symbol. Each category will be described to identify how the signs in these sentences convey meaning and function in a communication context.

1. Icon

In Peirce's semiotics, an icon is a sign that functions based on physical similarity or resemblance to the object it represents. In the sentence "D'abord, bien nourrir bébé. Et pour l'écharpe de portage, vous avez le temps d'apprendre," the elements that function as icons are the words "bébé" and "écharpe de portage." The word "bébé" is iconic because it represents a baby that needs to be well fed, which can be visually represented by an image of a baby looking healthy and content. Likewise, the "écharpe de portage" (baby shawl) is iconic because it represents a physical object used to carry a baby, which is visually similar to a shawl tied around the body to carry a baby.

2. Index

The index in Peirce's theory shows the causal or contextual relationship between the sign and its object. In this sentence, "bien nourrir bébé" functions as an index for the baby's basic needs that must be met. The words "bien nourrir" indicate direct action necessary to maintain the health of the baby, indicating that babies who are not fed well may experience health problems. Meanwhile, the section "pour l'écharpe de portage, vous avez le temps d'apprendre" serves as an index of the learning process required to use a baby shawl correctly. This shows that wearing a baby shawl does not require speed or immediacy and can be learned over time, showing a direct relationship between learning how to use a shawl and readiness or time available to learn it.

3. Symbol

Symbols are signs whose meaning is determined by social conventions and agreements. In this sentence, "bien nourrir bébé" is a symbol that implies social norms regarding proper baby care. In a cultural context, feeding a baby well is a symbol of parental responsibility and concern. Meanwhile, the "écharpe de portage" is a symbol of modern and practical baby-rearing methods. The use of baby shawls is often associated with a particular lifestyle that values physical involvement and comfort in caregiving.

The combination of icons, indexes and symbols in this sentence creates a comprehensive meaning regarding baby care and the use of baby shawls. This sentence conveys the message that the baby's basic needs, such as providing good food, are the main priority. On the other hand, using a baby shawl is something that can be learned in a more relaxed time and does not require immediate treatment. This relationship indicates a distinction between important aspects of infant care that require immediate attention and other aspects that are additional or can be learned gradually.

Peirce's semiotic analysis of this sentence shows that the signs used in this message serve to convey two main aspects of baby care: the urgent need to feed the baby well and the importance of learning how to use the baby's shawl properly. Icons, indexes, and symbols work together to communicate messages about priorities in infant care and the learning processes associated with the use of parenting tools. It reflects a communication structure that combines visual, contextual, and conventional elements to convey clear and structured information.

4 Conclusion

Interpreting an advertisement in online media can be done by reading the texts presented in it. The sign system contained in the Picot 2 baby milk advertisement has shown that the signs contained in the advertisement are full of icons and symbols that can be interpreted by mothers who have children under five to choose this milk if they want children. the toddler grew up smart and accomplished. Each sign in the advertisement is built in stages and each sign is visual, audio-visual, and textual to approach the reader, which ultimately gives the reader the interpretation that the secret to having children who grow up to be successful is by drinking the milk.

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