THE SEMIOTIC VISUAL ANALYSIS OF NON-VERBAL LANGUAGE IN HOTEL ADVERTISEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

Numerous digital advertisements deviate from the use of nonverbal communication techniques. Instead of conveying information about a particular product, it provides a misleading and incorrect interpretation. Using the theory of visual semiotics, this study seeks to interpret and comprehend the forms of non-verbal language used in digital advertisements to convey information about specific hotel products. The primary objectives of this study are as follows: (1) to describe the structure of advertising components as nonverbal language in digital advertising for hotels marketing in Bali; (2) to describe the relationship between signs and their references as signifiers and signs in digital advertising for hotel marketing; and (3) to describe and provide an overview of recommendations regarding the appropriate role of meaning in digital advertising for hotel marketing. This research design employs qualitative methods for collecting data from research participants in the form of Instagram images. Nonverbal behavior observed in digital advertising, such as facial expressions, gestures, body language, movement, contact, and appearance, is the subject of study. To provide an overview of the applicability of semiotics to the practice of communicating specific information through digital advertising for hotel marketing. This study's findings include the incorporation of semiotic science variables into the design of digital advertisements for hotel marketing. To avoid misunderstandings between advertisers and their intended audiences, it is possible to establish a perfect match between the desired outcome and the intended message. This research also seeks to expand linguistics into emerging disciplines, such as the business world and commercial advertising.

Keywords: Digital advertisement; Nonverbal; Visual semiotic; Communication; Signs

I. Introduction

Advertising is now an integral part of daily existence. As companies compete for public sympathy, social media has become an increasingly popular advertising platform. The increasing variety of social media platforms is enjoyed by people from all spheres of life. Social media is the ideal advertising platform. In the discipline of marketing, advertising's influence on public

perception and comprehension has its own area of expertise. Advertising is one of the most effective promotional strategies for introducing and explaining a concept or inviting individuals to comprehend a specific product (Campbell et al., 2014). The focus of research products is on devices, which appear in numerous forms and varieties. Due to the proliferation of information, digital advertising now serves a different purpose (Km Tri Sutrisna Agustia, 2021). Frequently, digital advertisements deviate from nonverbal communication strategies. Instead of delivering information about a specific product, it provides an incorrect and ambiguous interpretation. On the basis of these facts, the purpose of this study is to assess the effectiveness of non-verbal communication techniques used in digital advertisements to convey meaning and provide product-specific information. This research also aims to provide input and considerations regarding digital advertising in an effort to maximize its utility.

According to semiotic theory, verbal symbols are language as we know it, while nonverbal symbols are the shapes and hues used in advertisements that do not replicate the appearance of reality. The symbols and signs used in advertisements must be symbols and signs that are familiar to the target audience, such as language, figures, rituals, etc. Typically, advertisements display images of products with each impression. However, the most recent trend in gadget and smartphone advertisements on Instagram is the use of nonverbal language that is not supported by verbal language or nonverbal language that tends not to exhibit the product itself but rather the product image. Consequently, the intended message of the advertisement is not effectively conveyed to the target audience.

A phenomenon is the recent rise of advertisements that emphasize display and use odd non-verbal language. Numerous smartphone advertisements (including those used as data in this study) employ actions with ambiguous purposes and even subconsciously. Therefore, the primary objective of creating advertisements is unreliable and off-target. Perverse in the sense that all facial expressions, body gestures, touch, and appearance employed and exhibited in digital advertisements lack a communicative effect and do not adhere to the rules of the advertisement itself. The items featured in the campaign include all varieties of hotels that operated in Bali (Km Tri Sutrisna Agustia, 2021). Given the intent of the advertisement, it is questionable whether the information intended to be conveyed about the product has been accurately communicated. Based on this phenomenon, this study aims to ascertain the message conveyed by advertisements and the effectiveness of non-verbal advertising. Based on the preceding context, this study will examine the significance of nonverbal language in hotel advertisements on YouTube.

II. Methods

This study concentrates on the nonverbal signs used in digital advertisements for Bali hotels (taken from the YouTube channels of Intercontinental Bali Resort and Aloft Bali Kuta),

including facial expressions, gestures, body language, movement, and the appearance of images without text. These advertisements were chosen for their use of nonverbal communication. This was contemplated so that the study could focus more on the application and significance of nonverbal language. This advertisement discusses the services provided, the hotel's characteristics, and other supporting values such as the hotel's facilities and the quality of the services offered. The researcher functions as the instrument for data collection. This study employs qualitative descriptive research methodology. Qualitative research is a research method used to examine natural object conditions (as opposed to experimental research), where the researcher is the primary instrument, the data acquisition technique is triangulation (combining), and the data analysis and research results are inductive. In qualitative research, significance is prioritized over generalization (Lotman et al., 2019).

This study employs ad scenes as its unit of analysis, selecting advertisements according to a set of criteria. These criteria are primarily related to the study's goals and objectives, which are to comprehend the application and significance of nonverbal language. After analyzing these scenarios, we will be able to determine how the advertisement's nonverbal language is intended to be portrayed and what it is attempting to communicate. In this study, the researcher interpreted nonverbal components of selected hotel advertisements. Initially, the advertisement's scene was divided into multiple images. These advertisements are between 60 and 80 seconds in length and comprise primarily of nonverbal cues. The information will then be displayed in a table for the purposes of nonverbal identification and semiotic component analysis. Consequently, the advertisements chosen for this study comprise nonverbal cues. After the data has been partitioned, it is analyzed to generate representations and interpretations of nonverbal language use. The semiotic theory of Pierce offers an explanation for this.

Charles Sanders Peirce introduced the term "semiotics" and a number of its foundational concepts. According to Peirce, anything can be a sign, phrase, image, odor, or object as long as a person perceives it to be a substitute for someone or something other than themselves in specific situations. In other words, these signs are meaningless in and of themselves; they acquire meaning (and thus sign status) only when they are comprehended as signs (Franzia et al., 2015). Based on how they convey meaning, the sign model (semiotic triad) and the sign categorization system are the most pertinent to advertising among Peirce's theories. Peirce's triadic sign model consists of the object (object) to which the sign refers, the interpretant (the mental interpretation of the sign, which may be another sign), and the symbol (sign), which is the form of the sign (not necessarily physical). These three elements constitute the semiotic triangle, which functions as a symbol of meaning. As previously mentioned, the interaction between the sign, the interpreter, and the object functions as a medium of meaning rather than being explicitly associated with the sign (Siregar, 2022).

Figure 1. The Semiotic Triad

The primary characteristic of this form of signage is the deliberate incorporation of the interpreter as a distinct element. The process of inferring items is employed instead of drawing them, as the interpreter is a construct created by the observer. Consequently, the interpretation of a sign is significantly influenced by its surrounding context. A same symbol can be subject to two distinct readings, contingent upon the perspectives of two different interpreters. In a similar vein, it is possible for two distinct items to individually symbolize a single object. A sign is an object that refers to or symbolizes something beyond its own existence, and it possesses physical attributes that can be detected by the five sensory faculties of human beings. Symbols are semiotic entities that emerge from a consensus among individuals, whereas icons are semiotic entities that arise through their physical resemblance to the objects they represent. On the other hand, indexes, as defined by Peirce, are semiotic entities that originate from causal connections between the sign and the object it signifies. The referent, despite being characterized as an object, pertains to the social environment that the sign refers to or depicts. The individual who employs a sign and subsequently construes it within a specific framework of interpretation or significance pertaining to the object in their cognitive processes is sometimes referred to as the interpreter or user. The development of meaning in signs through their utilization in human communication is a crucial element within the semiotic process (Ibrahim, 2020). The application of social semiotics can facilitate the development, reinforcement, and explication of the meaning inherent in information that necessitates communication. The evaluation of advertising efficiency can be conducted through the analysis of products, logos, and slogans. The cultural context of the subject significantly influences the efficacy of semiotic application (Annisa et al., 2022). One potential approach to gain a comprehensive understanding of the cultural landscape and its impact on consumer preferences and lifestyles is by examining the interconnectedness of culture, brand, and customer. Acquiring this knowledge is crucial for cultivating the organization's conceptual framework and enhancing its standing within the broader public sphere (Nam & Dân, 2018).

III. Findings and Discussion

This section aims to examine nonverbal communications. The scenes depicted in advertising are systematically organized based on the narrative structure, followed by the identification and evaluation of the specific section chosen for examination. The advertisement comprises a series of sequences that are analyzed in accordance with the Pierce triangle theory. This theory is composed of two essential components: the sign, the object, and the interpretant.

Data 1. (Aloft Bali Kuta)
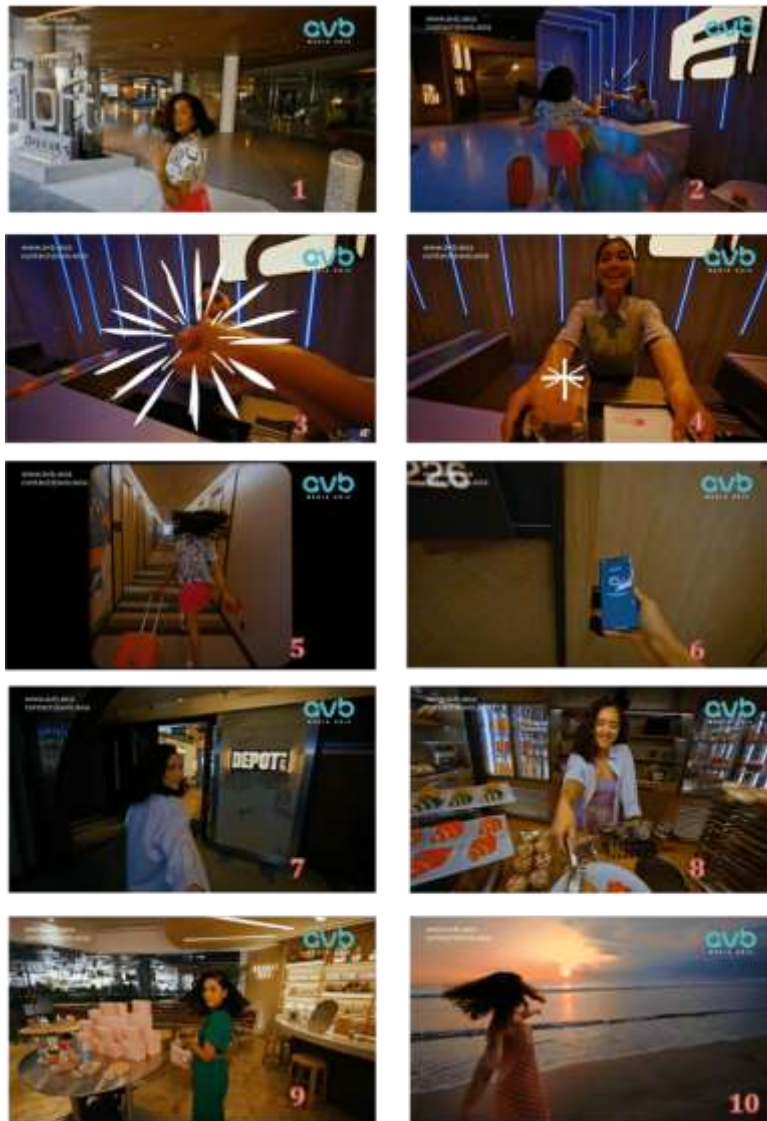
Source: Aloft Bali Kuta YouTube Channel
Figure 2. Aloft Bali Kuta

Table 1. Non-Verbal Identification in Aloft Bali Kuta

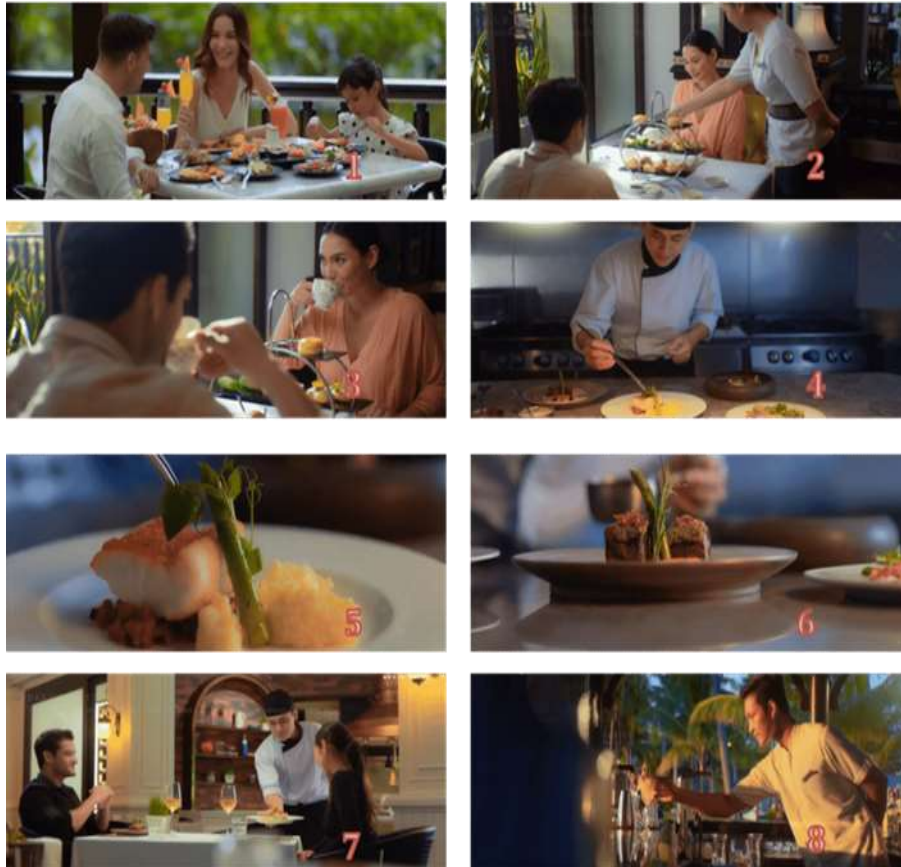| Setting	Non-Verbal Sign	Description
Various places with aspects of beach, hotel area/insider, bar and lounge (pic. 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10)	Facial: smiling (pic. 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9) Gestural: • A woman running toward a hotel lobby (pic. 1) • 2 women make a toss (pic. 2, 3) • A woman handed a drink on a tray (pic. 4) • A woman while small run through hotel's alley (pic. 5) • A hand tipping a smartphone to a door key (pic. 6) • A woman walks into a bar (pic. 7) • A woman enjoying various places (pic. 8, 9, 10) Postural: • All pictures showing standing postural	• Fragments of images from the video show objects that show the tourism side of a place that is synonymous with beaches and natural beauty. • There are 2 female subjects act as guests and officer of a hotel. • A woman as a subject enjoys some of the facilities provided by the hotel. • There are only 1 hotel staff shown in the images/video providing services to hotel guests

Table 2. Semiotic Analysis in Aloft Bali Kuta

Sign	Object	Interpretant
• Begin with an excitement by the subject entering the hotel • A tossing and handed drink activity between 2 subjects. • Subject enjoying some facilities	• Smart key (pic. 6) • Various food (pic. 8) • Other stuff provided (pic. 9)	As the idea of the scene is showing the facilities, services and the effect of that facilities to the guests

The objective of this commercial is to visually depict the range of amenities and accommodations offered by the hotel for the convenience and satisfaction of its clientele. The amenities offered create a pleasant impression for guests, as evidenced by the advertisement's consistent portrayal of smiling individuals. The advertisement additionally portrays a sense of affability and camaraderie, exemplified through the depiction of the group engaging in high-fives during certain sequences. From a procedural standpoint, the hotel has implemented a practice of offering welcome beverages to guests upon their arrival. The advertisement also aims to demonstrate the presence of technological advancements in the realm of security, exemplified by the implementation of a keyless entry system for hotel rooms. This exemplifies the hotel's

commitment to guest security and its adoption of advanced software for modernizing purposes. This poster also showcases a diverse range of non-residential amenities, including a retail outlet for purchasing food and beverages, as well as a dedicated establishment for acquiring cosmetic products. This suggests that the hotel aims to differentiate itself in the commercial by featuring non-residential aspen, so establishing a unique selling proposition compared to other hotels in Bali. Nevertheless, it is evident that certain aspects of this campaign lack clarity and thoroughness. The absence of explicit information pertaining to the specific geographical whereabouts of this hotel, which is indeed situated in Bali. The presence of a beach scene in the promotional material for this hotel in Bali has been observed; yet its effectiveness in clearly establishing the hotel's specific location is deemed insufficient (Maulana et al., 2020).

Data 2. (Intercontinental Bali Resort)

Source: Intercontinental Bali Resort YouTube Channel
Figure 3. Intercontinental Bali Resort

Table 3. Non-Verbal Identification in Intercontinental Bali Resort

Setting	Non-Verbal Sign	Description
Various places focus on food and beverage (all pics.)	Facial: smiling (all pic.) Gestural: • Women, men and a kid sitting in the dining table while enjoying foods and drinks (pic. 1, 2, 3, 7) • A woman and a man standing as a server (pic. 2, 7) • A man standing while preparing a food (pic. 4) • A man standing preparing an alcoholic drink (pic. 8) Postural: • All pictures showing standing and sitting postural	• Part of the scene shows some of the activities carried out at the dining table. • There are some male and female subjects acts as guests and server of a hotel.

Table 4. Semiotic Analysis in Intercontinental Bali Resort

Sign	Object	Interpretant
• It starts with a scene of a small family of 3 enjoying the food and drinks served. • Followed by a couple enjoying tea. • The scene is mostly done at the dining table with a float serving the food.	• Various foods and drinks (all pics.)	As the idea of the scene is showing the dining facilities, services and the food beverages that offered.

The central theme of this advertising centers around the culinary and beverage amenities provided by the hotel for its patrons. This is evidenced by the prevalence of food and beverage consumption depicted in the advertisement, often accompanied by the presence of waitstaff serving the patrons. Additionally, this is enhanced by the inclusion of visual recordings showcasing the culinary or mixology processes involved in the preparation of food and beverages, performed by either the chef or bartender, as well as the subsequent steps involved in their presentation and serving. The advertising effectively demonstrates that the hotel's greater value stems from the food and beverages provided to its customers throughout their stay. The hotel places great emphasis on the artful presentation of food and beverages, as well as providing exceptional service, as its core principles. Furthermore, the hotel also aims to demonstrate its inclusivity across all age groups. The advertising places emphasis on the presence of a child partaking in a meal with his parents. The commercial has effectively demonstrated the primary offerings of food and drinks. However, it would be advantageous for the campaign to showcase additional values, considering that the hotel primarily serves as a location of accommodation (Suadnyana & Koeswiryono, 2022).

IV. Conclusion

Both of the advertisements for hotels in Bali make use of non-verbal communication, yet the meaning of this language is clear in both cases. What we want to highlight in the first advertisement that we run (data 1) is the fact that the conveniences and security measures that are in place for visitors are among our most important selling points to the demographic that we are trying to reach. The posh and cutting-edge dining and drinking establishments are the focus of the second advertisement (data 2) in this set of data. In addition, the second commercial that was requesting to be shown was for a hotel that welcomes families with children. It featured a scene in which a child was eating with his family. In terms of the use of non-verbal language, the comprehension and utilization of signs and markers is already comprehendible; yet, as the primary reference for advertising and marketing and making use of exclusively non-verbal language, there is still the perception that there is a risk of misinterpreting the advertisement itself.

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