



Roland Barthes Semiotics Study in Gojek Indonesia's Ramadan Edition Advertisement and Its Implications for Indonesian Language Learning in High School

Intan Nuraeni^{1*}, Munaris², Aditya Pratama³, Siti Samhati⁴

^{1,2,3,4}Universitas Lampung

* Email: intannraenizo@gmail.com

Abstract

This study focuses on Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis of Gojek Indonesia's Ramadan edition advertisements and their implications for Indonesian language learning in high schools. The purpose of this study is to reveal the denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings in advertisements and their relevance to persuasive text learning. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with data in the form of visual and verbal signs from advertisements uploaded through the official YouTube channel. Data collection techniques were carried out through documentation and recording. The results show that the advertisement contains denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings that represent the social and cultural values of Ramadan. These findings are implied as teaching materials for persuasive texts in high school in accordance with the Merdeka Curriculum for Grade XI Phase F. The use of advertisements as a learning medium helps improve students' critical thinking skills regarding persuasive language and encourages the use of polite, rational, and contextual language.

Keywords: Roland Barthes' semiotics, advertising, Gojek Indonesia, learning.

INTRODUCTION

Advertisements serve as a means of mass communication that has a significant influence in shaping public opinion. Interestingly, symbols in advertisements often contain multiple layers of meaning, both explicit and implicit. Therefore, advertisements have their own appeal for analysis (Andika et al., 2023). In line with this, (Syahrani et al., 2020) states that advertising is simply a message that offers a product to the public through certain media, with the aim of persuading the audience to take action, especially

Purchasing, thus distinguishing it from a mere announcement. One appropriate approach to examining meaning and symbols in advertising is Roland Barthes'

semiotic approach, which includes three main layers of meaning: denotation, connotation, and myth. Denotation refers to the first level in the sign system that describes the direct relationship between the signifier and the signified, as well as between the sign and the reality it represents. At this stage, the meaning produced is explicit, objective, and generally easy to recognize.

In the semiotic theoretical framework developed by Roland Barthes, the term connotation is used to refer to a form of sign at the second level of signification. Barthes explains that connotation is the result of the interaction between the sign and the emotional context, personal experiences, and cultural values possessed by certain individuals or social groups. Unlike denotation, which is

literal and objective, connotation is expressive and reflects the subjectivity of the user in the process of interpreting meaning.

The term myth comes from the Greek language, meaning "story." In general, this term is used to refer to narratives that are not based on historical truth or empirical facts. According to Roland Barthes, myths are a system of communication that functions as a cultural message. Barthes' view of myth differs from the general meaning of myth that is known to many people. According to Barthes (in Vera, 2022), myth is language, so myth is a communication system and myth is a message. Through myth, society is guided to accept and believe in a certain idea or concept as something natural and unquestionable.

This theory was chosen because it has the ability to reveal the layered meanings implied in visual and verbal elements, so that it not only conveys commercial messages, but also the social and cultural values of Indonesian society. Roland Barthes' semiotic approach is relevant in analyzing Gojek Indonesia's Ramadan advertisements from 2021 to 2025, because these advertisements feature strong narratives that are rich in cultural and social values. Through this theoretical framework, the study is able to uncover the hidden meanings behind the visual depictions.

The problem identified in this study is the lack of utilization of digital advertisements, particularly Gojek advertisements, as contextual teaching materials in Indonesian language learning in high schools. This study is important because it is based on two main conditions. First, in terms of language, culture, and communication, visual advertisements as multimodal texts have great potential to be used as learning materials. Second, the dominance of visual media in the lives of teenagers and digital natives makes the results of this study relevant for application

in persuasive text materials in the form of advertisements as a means of learning Indonesian in line with the Merdeka Phase F Curriculum in the book *Cerdas Cergas Berbahasa dan Bersastra Indonesia (Smart and Agile in Indonesian Language and Literature)* for Grade XI Odd Semester. Therefore, the problems to be discussed in this study can be formulated as follows: 1) How are denotation, connotation, and mythical signs interpreted in the Gojek Indonesia Ramadan Edition advertisement? and 2) What are the implications of the results of the semiotic study of the Gojek Indonesia Ramadan Edition advertisement for Indonesian language learning in high school?

Referring to the problem formulation described above, the objectives of this study are as follows. 1) To identify the denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings contained in Gojek Indonesia's Ramadan Edition advertisements. 2) To imply the results of semiotic analysis in Gojek Indonesia's Ramadan Edition advertisements on Indonesian language learning in high schools.

Theoretically, the results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of Roland Barthes' semiotics studies, particularly in analyzing cultural representations in digital advertisements. Furthermore, this research expands the understanding of the relevance of semiotics in the context of visual communication and popular culture in Indonesia. From a practical perspective, the findings of this research are expected to be utilized by Indonesian language teachers as a reference in developing teaching materials based on persuasive texts. By utilizing digital advertisements that are familiar to students' daily lives, learning can be more contextual and interesting.

METHOD

This study falls under the category of qualitative descriptive research. Qualitative descriptive research is a qualitative

research approach that focuses on the systematic discovery of meanings, concepts, characteristics, symptoms, or descriptions of a phenomenon, which are then presented in narrative form (Roosinda, et al., 2021).

The data in this study are visual, verbal, and nonverbal, using Roland Barthes' Semiotics theory of denotation, connotation, and myth. The data sources were obtained from digital media, specifically Ramadan-themed advertisements produced and published by Gojek Indonesia's official YouTube channel. The data collection technique used in this study was the observe-and-record technique.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research results collected, 38 data points were found related to the denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings in Gojek Indonesia's Ramadan edition advertisements. In 2025, there were a total of 15 data points, including 8 verbal data points and 7 visual data points, which was also the highest number of data points. In 2024, there were a total of 10 data points, including 6 verbal data points and 4 visual data points. In 2023, no data was found because in that year, Gojek's official account did not broadcast Ramadan edition advertisements. The advertisements that were uploaded featured themes and daily activities of the community. One of the themes that was consistently featured was "Mitra Juara" (Champion Partners), which depicted activities such as donating staple foods to help people in need. This activity was organized by the GoRide driver partner community. In 2022, there were a total of 3 data points, all of which were visual data, while in 2021, there were a total of 10 data points, including 4 verbal data points and 6 visual data points.

Roland Barthes' Semiotic Analysis of Gojek Indonesia's Ramadan Edition Advertisements in 2021

This study found 10 pieces of semiotic data in Gojek Indonesia's Ramadan edition advertisements in 2021, with a total of 2 Ramadan edition advertisements. The following is one of the results of the study on Gojek's 2021 advertisements.



The image above is a Gojek advertisement from 2021 titled "Gojek Ramadan 2021 Advertisement Contains Onions," which aired on April 3, 2021, at 00:01. The following is an explanation of the meaning behind the advertisement.

Denotative Meaning

The denotative meaning, or first level of meaning, of the signs in the 2021 Ramadan edition of the Gojek advertisement can be seen through various visual and verbal elements that appear directly on the screen. The visual sign that appears is a tablet held horizontally by two hands. On the tablet screen, four people are seen sitting around a dining table, consisting of two men and two women wearing hijabs. Another signifier is the presence of various dishes on the table, such as drinks, kolak, traditional cakes, and fried foods. In addition, the dim lighting in the room indicates that it is nighttime. The smiling expressions of the characters facing the camera are also clear visual markers. Meanwhile, the verbal marker is displayed through text at the bottom of the screen that reads, "Hi, we're breaking the fast together, right?"

These markers then refer to specific signs. The tablet as a marker refers to a sign in the form of a digital device used to display or record images. The four people sitting around the dining table refer to a

sign of a group of friends or relatives gathering. The dishes served on the table refer to a sign of food for breaking the fast. The dim lighting refers to the sign of nighttime, specifically the time after sunset. The smiling expressions refer to the sign of a relaxed and convivial atmosphere, while the verbal text “Hi, we're breaking the fast together, right?” refers to the sign of a direct statement about the activity being carried out, namely breaking the fast together.

Based on the relationship between the signifier and the signified, the denotative meaning produced by this advertisement is an image of a group of people breaking their fast together at night and displaying or documenting the moment through a digital device in the form of a tablet.

Connotative Meaning

The second level of connotative meaning, regarding a group of people breaking their fast together and documenting the moment, then develops into a connotative level when these visual and verbal signs are associated with the cultural context and social experiences of Indonesian society. The scene of togetherness depicted through the circular seating arrangement, smiling expressions, and the presence of iftar dishes conveys connotative meanings of warmth, togetherness, and emotional closeness that are synonymous with the month of Ramadan. In Indonesian Muslim culture, Ramadan is understood not only as a time for fasting, but also as a social moment that strengthens relationships between individuals, both within the family and among friends.

The use of digital devices such as tablets in breaking the fast scenes also presents connotative meanings related to modernity attached to Gojek and technological developments. Breaking the fast is not only experienced as a personal or collective experience directly, but also

mediated by technology that allows the moment to be displayed, recorded, or shared. This reflects the social practices of contemporary society, which tends to capture important moments in daily life, including religious moments such as Ramadan, through digital media. Thus, the connotation that emerges is the representation of Ramadan as a warm and meaningful moment of togetherness, yet at the same time in harmony with a modern lifestyle that is inseparable from the use of technology.

In addition, the verbal text “Hi, let's break the fast together, okay?” reinforces the connotative meaning of a friendly and informal invitation. This sentence creates an impression of social closeness and openness, as if the audience is involved in the moment of togetherness that is taking place. This connotation emphasizes that breaking the fast is not only positioned as a ritual activity, but also as an emotional and social experience that can be shared with others. Through this representation, Gojek's advertisement builds the connotation that Gojek is close to people's lives, understands the cultural context of Ramadan, and is present as part of important moments that are both personal and collective. This connotation indirectly shapes a positive perception of Gojek as a humanistic brand that is relevant and in tune with the social and cultural values of Indonesian society.

Myth

The image creates a myth that when breaking the fast together during Ramadan, Indonesians feel incomplete without taking photos or creating content as a form of expression of togetherness and modern lifestyle.

Through this representation, Gojek is positioned as an integral part of people's lives, including in religious contexts such as Ramadan. The presence of Gojek advertisements in iftar scenes instills the idea that the use of digital services is

normal and in line with religious values and togetherness. Thus, Gojek's role is no longer perceived solely as a service provider, but as an entity that is "present," "accompanying," and "facilitating" meaningful moments in people's social lives.

Roland Barthes' Semiotic Analysis of Gojek Indonesia's Ramadan Edition Advertisements in 2024

This study found 10 pieces of data from Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis in Gojek Indonesia's Ramadan edition advertisements in 2024, with a total of 6 Ramadan edition advertisements. The following are some of the results of the study of Gojek advertisements in 2024.



The image above is a Gojek advertisement from 2024 titled "Expressions from the Heart, Send Something Meaningful," aired on March 22, 2024, at 01:19. The following is an explanation of the meaning contained in the advertisement.

Denotative Meaning

The first level of denotative meaning is conveyed through the image of a metropolitan city taken from a bird's eye view. A row of skyscrapers can be seen towering high with lights shining on almost every floor. In the center of the image, the city's main road can be seen with vehicles moving in both directions, leaving trails of light from their headlights and taillights. The dark blue sky indicates that it is late afternoon or just after sunset. Several digital billboards are lit up between the tall buildings, emphasizing the character of a

modern city. Traffic density appears to be decreasing, indicating that people's activities are slowly winding down.

These markers refer to specific signs. Tall buildings refer to the signs of big cities and urban life. Highways and vehicles refer to the signs of mobility and community work activities. City lights refer to the signs of nighttime. The sound of the call to evening prayer refers to the sign of prayer time for Muslims. The combination of the visual of the city and the audio of the call to prayer refers to the sign of the meeting between modern life and religious practices.

Based on the relationship between the signifier and the signified, the resulting denotative meaning is a description of the atmosphere of a metropolitan city at sunset, when urban activity begins to slow down, accompanied by the sound of the call to prayer as a sign of worship time.

Connotative Meaning

At the second level of connotation, the sound of the maghrib call to prayer echoing in the middle of a big city landscape gives the connotation of a moment of pause from the hustle and bustle of work and urban routines. The call to prayer not only serves as a sign of prayer time, but also as a spiritual reminder that calls individuals to return to religious values, family, and self-reflection. The metropolitan city, which is beginning to quiet down, provides a meaning of transition from public space to private space, from productivity to togetherness.

The Gojek advertisement conveys the connotation that fast-paced modern life still has room for religious and emotional values. Although Gojek does not explicitly appear in the form of service activities in this scene, it is implicitly positioned as part of the rhythm of city life. This advertisement conveys the connotative meaning that amid the high mobility and emotional distance characteristic of urban

communities, Gojek serves as an intermediary that allows people to express their attention, feelings, and concern for others, especially during sacred moments such as Ramadan. For Indonesians, especially during Ramadan, the call to evening prayer is an important sign that reminds people to take a break from their busy lives, return home, and gather with their families to pray and break their fast. The call to evening prayer in the middle of the city symbolizes the balance between work and religious life.

Myth

In Indonesian society, sunset is often viewed as a sacred time. It is recommended that people stay at home during this time and refrain from outdoor activities. This advertisement shapes the understanding that using Gojek services at sunset during Ramadan is something normal and acceptable. Gojek's presence at sunset is naturalized as part of modern society's daily life, as if technology and digital services have become an integral part of religious and social practices.

This advertisement also builds the myth that attention, care, and togetherness do not always have to be manifested through physical presence. Sending something via Gojek is mythologized as a form of care that is equivalent to being present in person. In this way, the consumption of Gojek services is no longer seen as an economic act, but as a meaningful act in line with the values of Ramadan.

Roland Barthes' Semiotic Analysis of Gojek Indonesia's Ramadan Edition Advertisements in 2025

This study found 15 pieces of data from Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis in Gojek Indonesia's Ramadan edition advertisements in 2025, with a total of 9 Ramadan edition advertisements. The following are some of the results of the study in 2025.



The Gojek advertisement in 2025 above is titled "There is Always a Way to Be Patient During Ramadan" and aired on March 1, 2025, at 00:01 seconds. The following is an explanation of the meaning contained in the advertisement.

Denotative Meaning

The denotative meaning, or the first level of meaning, is indicated by the image of an adult man sitting in the front yard of a house. The man is wearing a green cap, a plain white shirt, and a neatly folded dark blue sarong. He is sitting facing the camera with both hands raised and open, resembling the gesture of someone who is talking or giving an explanation. The background consists of a white door and window with a minimalist design, as well as several potted plants neatly arranged around it. The bright natural lighting indicates that the scene was taken during the day. The Gojek logo is visible in the upper right corner of the screen, while the words "goride presents" appear in the center. At the bottom of the screen is a subtitle that reads, "Ramadan is a month in which our patience is tested."

Meanwhile, the signifier of the sign is an image of a male figure delivering a religious message or advice in a simple and calm atmosphere. The presence of the Gojek logo indicates that this scene is part of a Gojek advertisement or brand campaign. The subtitle serves as a verbal statement explaining the content of the message being conveyed, which is a reflection on patience during Ramadan. From the relationship between the signifier and the signified, the denotative meaning that is formed is an advertising scene

featuring a religious figure delivering a message about patience during Ramadan, in the context of promoting Gojek.

Connotative Meaning

Secondly, the presence of Habib Husein Ja'far Al Hadar as the main figure gives the connotative meaning that this advertisement presents a religious leader who is widely known as a representative of moderate Islam, who is polite and close to the younger generation. In Indonesian culture, religious leaders are seen as a source of moral and spiritual legitimacy, especially during Ramadan, which is a time for self-reflection and increased worship. The use of simple clothing, a modest home setting, and a calm tone of voice conveys the connotative meaning that religious messages do not have to be delivered in a formal or patronizing manner, but can be presented in a relatable and relaxed way. In the context of Gojek's advertisement, this gives the connotative meaning that Gojek positions itself not merely as a provider of transportation and digital services, but as part of the daily lives of a community that understands the religious and emotional values of its users.

The message of "tested patience" in Ramadan conveys the connotation that life's challenges, whether in the form of limited time, energy, or emotions, are something that is natural to experience during fasting. Through the presence of the Gojek brand in this narrative, the advertisement implicitly conveys that Gojek is there as a solution that can help ease this burden, so that people can continue to experience Ramadan with more peace and patience. The hidden meaning of this advertisement is Gojek's effort to build its image as an empathetic, religious, and emotionally relevant brand by linking its services to the values of patience, sincerity, and inner peace, which are at the core of the Ramadan experience.

Myth

The myth that has been created is the assumption that observing Ramadan properly requires moral guidance and external support in order to maintain patience. Religious leaders are mythologized as figures who are always present to provide spiritual guidance, while Gojek is mythologized as an "everyday helper" that naturally becomes part of the community's solution during Ramadan.

This advertisement naturalizes the idea that using Gojek services in daily life during Ramadan is normal and in line with religious values. Thus, Gojek is not only perceived as a technology company, but as a life partner that understands the spiritual and emotional needs of the Muslim community. This myth makes Gojek's presence appear neutral, natural, and in line with religious practices, so that the ideology of consuming digital services is disguised as part of an effort to maintain patience and the quality of worship during the month of Ramadan.

Implications of Research Results for Indonesian Language Learning in Senior High School

The results of this study are implied in the teaching of Indonesian persuasive texts in the form of advertisements, grade XI phase F, odd semester in high school, as stated in the Indonesian language textbook Kurikulum Merdeka Cerdas Cergas Berbahasa dan Bersastra Indonesia untuk SMA/SMK Kelas XI (Independent Curriculum: Smart, Agile, and Fluent in Indonesian Language and Literature for High School/Vocational School Grade XI) by Heny Marwati and K. Waskitaningtyas (Marwati & Waskitaningtyas, 2021).

In persuasive text learning, students will be invited to understand what persuasive texts are, the types of persuasive texts, and the characteristics of persuasive texts. In the final stage, students will work on a project to create advertisements as a

final product that reflects their understanding of persuasive texts. Advertisements were chosen as the learning material in persuasive texts because through this project, students can practice composing messages aimed at persuading the public to buy or use a product. Thus, advertisements become an effective medium for conveying persuasive messages to a wide audience.

Research on persuasive texts in the form of advertisements has significant implications for Indonesian language learning in high school, particularly in the development of writing and speaking skills. Through writing activities, students are trained to create advertising texts that contain persuasive messages in a logical, ethical, and interesting manner in accordance with the structure and linguistic characteristics of persuasive texts. Meanwhile, speaking skills are developed through discussion and presentation activities to train students' ability to express their opinions and convey advertising messages convincingly. The use of advertisements as teaching materials allows students to learn from real examples, making learning more contextual, creative, and oriented towards the application of language in everyday life.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that Gojek Indonesia's Ramadan edition advertisements were able to convey the values and atmosphere unique to the month of Ramadan in line with the theme and cultural context of Indonesian society. This is evident through visuals of various activities synonymous with Ramadan, such as worship, the tradition of breaking the fast together, social sharing activities, and the use of symbols in the form of food, clothing, and settings that depict the religious atmosphere of Ramadan. The results of this study can be applied in Indonesian language learning in Grade XI Phase F of senior high school as teaching material in

the form of authentic examples in the subject "Persuasive Texts in the form of advertisements in Gojek's Mudik Gak Repot Pake GOBANDARA advertisement."

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