

MYTH AND IDEOLOGY IN SMARTPHONE ADVERTISEMENT: SEMIOTIC STUDY

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Abstract

Advertisement is a very influential communication method that can shape customer views and behaviours. Its use has significantly increased in the digital era. This study centres on the semiotic analysis of advertisements for smartphone that are accessible on YouTube. The aim of this research is to uncover the hidden ideology and myth creation that underlie visual and spoken communication. Roland Barthes' semiotic theory is the main framework used to analyse the literal, symbolic, and cultural meanings that are conveyed through signs and symbols in modern advertisements. Data is acquired by observing advertisements for smartphones displayed on YouTube. The research methodology employed is qualitative analysis using a descriptive technique. The research findings suggest that smartphone commercials not only show products in a practical way, but also establish narratives that link the products with consumers' social aspirations, prestige, and aspirations. Based on the created ideas, smartphones are commonly shown as symbols of progress, achievement, and elevated social status. Furthermore, commercials contribute to the dissemination of the idea of consumerism, which asserts that possessing the latest technology is essential for attaining happiness and success. The study's findings provide valuable insights into how smartphone advertisements utilise sign systems to influence individuals' thoughts and perceptions.

Keywords: advertisement, ideology, myth, semiotic, smartphone

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary digital age, smartphone advertisements have become ubiquitous, permeating various media channels and significantly influencing consumer perceptions and behaviours. These advertisements not only promote the technical features and functionalities of smartphones but also construct and propagate cultural myths and ideologies that resonate with target audiences. Two recent examples that warrant semiotic analysis are the advertisements for the Oppo A60 and Vivo Y100 smartphones, which have garnered substantial attention in the Asian market (Yurionica et al., 2022).

The proliferation of smartphone advertisements reflects the increasing importance of mobile technology in modern society. As smartphones have evolved from mere communication devices to essential tools for work, entertainment, and social interaction, their marketing strategies have become more sophisticated, employing complex semiotic systems to convey messages that extend beyond the product's physical attributes (Emellya, 2023). These advertisements often tap into deeper cultural narratives, aspirations, and values, creating a rich tapestry of meanings that merit scholarly examination.

Semiotics, as the study of signs and sign-using behaviour, provides a powerful analytical framework for decoding the layers of meaning embedded in these advertisements. Barthes' semiotics, in particular, offers a nuanced approach to understanding how meanings are constructed and communicated through visual and textual elements. Barthes' four levels of meaning - denotative, connotative, mythical, and ideological - provide a comprehensive toolkit for dissecting the complex interplay of signs in advertising discourse (Barthes, 2004; Uslu, 2014).

The denotative level, which represents the literal or obvious meaning of signs, serves as the foundation for analysis. In smartphone advertisements, this might include the physical depiction of the device, its specifications, or the actors using it (Barthes, 2001). However, it is at the connotative level where advertisers begin to imbue these literal elements with cultural and emotional associations. For instance, the sleek design of a smartphone might connote sophistication and modernity, while images of people using the device in social settings might suggest connectivity and popularity.

Of particular interest in this study are the mythical and ideological levels of meaning, which Barthes posited as higher-order signification systems. Myths are not falsehoods but rather culturally constructed narratives that naturalize certain worldviews or values. In smartphone advertisements, myths might revolve around concepts such as technological progress, social status, or personal empowerment through digital connectivity (Barthes, 1998; Mpofu, 2022). These myths often operate subtly, shaping consumers' perceptions and desires without explicit articulation. The ideological level, which represents the broader system of beliefs and values that advertisements both reflect and reinforce, is crucial for understanding how smartphone marketing contributes to and is shaped by societal norms and power structures (Althusser, 2020; Barthes, 1998; Thompson, 1990). For example, advertisements might propagate ideologies of consumerism, individualism, or techno-utopianism, presenting smartphone ownership as a pathway to personal fulfilment or social advancement (Bendixen, 2021).

The Oppo A60 and Vivo Y100 advertisements provide compelling case studies for applying Barthes' semiotic framework. Both campaigns have employed innovative marketing strategies that leverage cultural symbols and narratives to position their products within the competitive smartphone market. The Oppo A60, marketed as "the strongest phone on Earth," has utilized imagery and messaging that tap into myths of durability and reliability, potentially reflecting ideologies of masculinity and technological supremacy. Conversely, the Vivo Y100 campaign, featuring celebrity brand ambassadors and emphasizing aesthetic design elements, may engage with myths of beauty, youth, and social prestige.

Analysing these advertisements through a semiotic lens is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it allows for a deeper understanding of how marketing strategies operate on multiple levels of meaning, influencing consumer perceptions and behaviours in ways that may not be immediately apparent (Vera, 2019). Secondly, such analysis can reveal the cultural myths and ideologies that are being reinforced or challenged through these advertisements, providing insights into broader societal trends and values (Arinata et al., 2022). Thirdly, by decoding the semiotic strategies employed in successful advertising campaigns, this research can contribute to more effective and ethically conscious marketing practices (Sari et al., 2021). Moreover, in an era of increasing digital literacy and media saturation, understanding the semiotic mechanisms at play in smartphone advertisements is essential for fostering critical media consumption. By exposing the constructed nature of advertising messages and the myths they perpetuate, this research can empower consumers to engage more critically with the media they encounter. The application of Barthes' four levels of meaning to smartphone advertisements also bridges theoretical semiotics with practical marketing analysis, demonstrating the relevance of semiotic theory to contemporary digital communication strategies (Barthes, 2001, 2004, 1998; Culler, 2001). This interdisciplinary approach not only enriches our understanding of advertising semiotics but also provides valuable insights for marketers, cultural theorists, and media scholars alike.

In conclusion, this semiotic analysis of the Oppo A60 and Vivo Y100 advertisements, utilizing Barthes' framework, promises to uncover the complex layers of meaning embedded in smartphone marketing. By examining how these advertisements construct and communicate myths and ideologies, this research aims to contribute to our understanding of the role of semiotics in digital marketing, the cultural significance of smartphones, and the broader implications of advertising in shaping societal values and consumer behaviours.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In semiotic studies, advertising serves as a compelling subject of inquiry due to its role as a means for conveying signals that transcend mere product information. Advertising employ a sophisticated system of indicators, wherein each visual, written, and auditory component conveys intricate meanings (Chandler, 2022). The utilisation of colours, shapes, and symbols in advertising can communicate meanings that are not overtly apparent but are perceived by the audience based on their cultural and societal experiences. This indicates that advertising operates on a deeper level than just product promotion, extending to a more subconscious dimension.

Advertising constructs an idealised reality rather than reflecting the actual world. In the realm of smartphone advertising, this idealised scenario may depict a life that is more productive, creative, and emotionally linked due to technological utilisation (Fitryarini, 2021). Advertisements not only market items but also sell lives and aspirations. Baudrillard posits that in contemporary society, the images depicted in ads frequently supplant reality, engendering a "hyperreality" in which customers come to perceive these idealised representations as authentic and attainable.

Additionally, Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) research offers a pertinent visual semiotics framework for assessing commercials. They emphasise that visuals in commercials serve as a systematic mode of communication, with each visual component possessing a distinct meaning that can be evaluated using cultural codes (Van Leeuwen, 2024). The positioning of items, the organisation of colours, and the attitudes of performers in commercials can be linked to specific cultural values intended for audience communication.

These works establish a basis for investigating Barthes' semiotics inside advertising, particularly to comprehend how layers of meaning interact to create intricate significations. Although numerous research have examined semiotic components in commercials, a targeted investigation of smartphone advertisements on YouTube utilising Barthes' framework is absent. This study seeks to address that gap by examining how smartphone advertisements construct myths and ideologies that affect consumers' perceptions of technology.

This study use Barthes' semiotic theory as the primary framework for assessing smartphone commercials on YouTube. Barthes posited that meaning is constructed not solely through surface-level signs (denotative), but also through deeper, concealed meanings (connotative), which eventually generate myths and propagate specific ideologies (Barthes, 2004, 1998).

a. Denotation

At the denotative level, signs are comprehended literally, referring to the immediate meaning discernible from the elements inside the advertisement. In a smartphone commercial, visuals of the device, emphasised features like the camera or display, and descriptions of technical specs exemplify elements that function at the denotative level (Barthes, 2001; Yip & Suprajitno, 2023). At this juncture, meanings are often objective, readily identifiable, and do not necessitate profound interpretation.

b. Connotation

Nonetheless, beneath this denotative significance exists a layer of connotation, wherein signs start to express deeper symbolic and cultural meanings (Barthes, 2001, 1998; Habibie, 2021). For instance, when an advertisement depicts an individual utilising a smartphone in an opulent professional setting, it not only presents the product literally but also implies social standing, a prosperous lifestyle, and exclusivity. In smartphone advertising, connotations frequently encompass emotional associations such as joy, inventiveness, or social connectivity provided by the device.

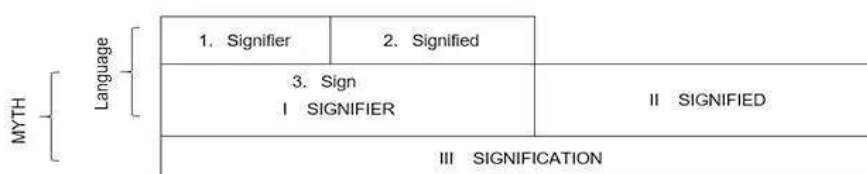
c. Myth

Barthes asserts that connotations can create myths, which are tales or representations masquerading as inherent or indisputable truths (Barthes, 1998). Myths in smartphone advertising may stem from the perception that possessing the latest smartphone is "normal" and

"anticipated" in contemporary society. This myth fosters the misconception that technology is invariably beneficial and essential for individual progress. Smartphones are frequently portrayed as instruments that enhance user productivity, connectivity, and creativity, suggesting that technology is the panacea for all of life's challenges.

d. Ideology

In the last level of ideology, Barthes elucidates that these myths are not impartial; instead, they bolster the interests of specific groups or forces inside society (Barthes, 1998; Fitryarini, 2021). Smartphone advertising frequently conceals ideals of capitalism and consumerism, wherein major technology firms perpetuate a continuous demand for people to purchase new items. This worldview further solidifies the notion that technological growth is unavoidable and consistently advantageous, while neglecting to scrutinise its adverse effects, like dependency and diminished privacy.



Pic. 1. Roland Barthes - The Signification Process and Myths (Muhammad, 2018)

This research employs Barthes' theory to reveal how smartphone commercials operate at the denotative level while simultaneously strategically fabricating myths and ideologies that shape consumer perceptions of technology, contemporary existence, and social identity.

METHOD

This study examines two official YouTube advertisements for the Oppo A60 and Vivo Y100, selected based on several criteria that ensure their relevance and significance for analysis. First, ad popularity was a key consideration, as both advertisements have garnered millions of views and interactions on YouTube, reflecting their wide reach and appeal. As flagship offerings from prominent technology firms, these ads employ visually compelling imagery and carefully crafted narratives to captivate a diverse audience. Second, the ads were chosen for their alignment with the target demographics, primarily millennials and Gen Z, who are highly active on social media and deeply engaged with technological trends. These demographic groups are often at the core of smartphone marketing strategies, making their preferences and consumption patterns critical for this research. Finally, contextual relevance played a role, as both advertisements revolve around recurring themes in contemporary smartphone marketing—productivity, social connectivity, and the enhancement of quality of life through technology. These themes make the advertisements particularly suitable for analysis through Roland Barthes' semiotic framework, which examines the production of myths and ideologies in media.

The research employs a qualitative approach, with the researcher as the primary instrument (Sugiyono, 2022). This means that the researcher independently collects, analyses, and interprets the data, leveraging a deep understanding of the topic. Supplementary tools, such as observation notes and documentation, complement the researcher's efforts. Observation notes allow for the systematic recording and analysis of key phenomena within the advertisements, while documentation—such as photographs and video recordings—provides additional support, ensuring the findings are substantiated and visually evidenced (Sugiyono, 2014).

The study unfolds in several structured methodological phases. The first phase, data collection, involves gathering official marketing videos for the Oppo A60 and Vivo Y100 from YouTube. The

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advertisements are downloaded and repeatedly analysed to identify relevant visual, textual, and auditory elements. Popularity, measured by impressions and interactions, ensures the selection of ads with substantial audience impact. The second phase entails denotative analysis, which focuses on identifying the literal and objective meaning of the advertisements. At this stage, observable elements such as the smartphone's design, technical specifications (e.g., camera and display features), and the featured actors are catalogued. For instance, the depiction of a smartphone's full-screen display used during a video call is interpreted as a denotative symbol of connectivity.

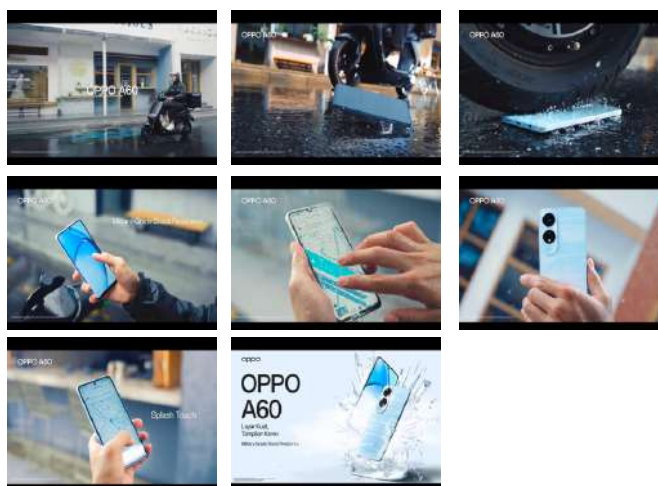
Following this, connotative analysis delves into the cultural and emotional layers of meaning, examining how the advertisements convey particular lifestyles or social aspirations. For example, the Vivo Y100 advertisement employs vibrant, youthful actors to project an image of energy, dynamism, and productivity, appealing to young consumers. The third phase, myth analysis, deconstructs the myths created by these connotative signs. In this context, myths refer to narratives presented as natural or self-evident truths, such as the notion that owning a smartphone with advanced camera capabilities is a necessity for modern living or that smartphones inherently foster social connectivity.

Finally, the study conducts an ideological analysis, which scrutinizes how these myths reinforce broader value systems, such as consumerism, modernism, and capitalism. For instance, the advertisements subtly encourage viewers to perceive technology as indispensable and progressive, while simultaneously instilling a consumerist desire for the latest, most advanced products. The concluding phase involves interpretation and inference, synthesizing the findings to identify the prevailing myths and ideologies in the Oppo A60 and Vivo Y100 advertisements. This phase also explores how these commercials shape public perceptions of technology, promoting a capitalist ethos and the relentless pursuit of technological consumption. Through this multi-layered analysis, the study provides critical insights into the semiotic underpinnings of contemporary smartphone advertising.

FINDING & DISCUSSION

This section analyzed the denotative and connotative meanings as precursors to the formation of myths and ideologies in each smartphone commercial. These significations serve as the antecedents to every advertisement. This section elucidates the verbal and non-verbal indicators included in advertising using fragments and graphics. Furthermore, it elucidates the interpretations that arise from these signals.

Data 1. Oppo A60



Pic. 2. Ads fragmentation (taken from official ads of Oppo A60) Source: (Oppo Indonesia, 2024)

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a. Denotative Analysis

This advert for the Oppo A60 showcases the advantages of a smartphone that emphasises durability and strength as its core values, making it the perfect choice for users with dynamic activities. With the slogan ‘Strong Screen, Cool Display,’ the advert shows how the Oppo A60 remains resilient and functions optimally even when facing extreme conditions. The story begins with a dramatic scene in the middle of heavy rain. An actor, who works as a courier, is seen using an Oppo A60 to help with his work. However, in the middle of his task, the smartphone falls heavily onto the road. Shortly after, the scene shows a tense moment when the smartphone is run over by the wheels of a vehicle. The audience was amazed when the Oppo A60 remained intact, with a screen that did not experience any problems. The next scene shows a close-up of the smartphone screen, accompanied by the phrase ‘*Military-Grade Shock Resistance*,’ emphasising the Oppo A60's resistance to extreme impact and pressure. The smartphone's durability is further reinforced with a scene of actors running in the rain, showing a screen that continues to function perfectly despite being exposed to water. The phrase ‘Oppo A60 can handle it’ appears to emphasise the device's toughness in wet conditions. Then, the advert showcases the innovative ‘Splash Touch’ feature through a scene of an actor easily touching the screen despite being wet. This illustrates the Oppo A60's ability to support its users' productivity, even under challenging weather conditions. The advert ends with an elegant close-up of the Oppo A60 highlighting the modern design on the back of the device, accompanied by the slogan ‘Strong Screen, Cool Look,’ leaving a deep impression that this smartphone is not only resilient but also stylish. With a mix of inspiring stories and stunning visuals, this advert conveys the message that the Oppo A60 is a reliable choice for any challenge.

The OPPO A60 advert denotatively presents a well-structured visual and verbal narrative to communicate the main message about the toughness of the product. The verbal text in the advert shows a mix of English and Indonesian, which is used strategically to reach global audiences while building closeness with local consumers. *Phrases* such as “*Military-Grade Shock Resistance*” serve as technical markers that underline the device's durability advantages, while the term “*Splash Touch*” highlights the product's waterproof capabilities. The culmination of the verbal message is reflected in the Indonesian slogans, ‘*Powerful Screen, Cool Display*,’ and “*Oppo A60 Can Handle It*” which simply but effectively summarise the core advantages of the product while instilling a sense of familiarity with the local audience.

The visual narrative in this advert is packaged through cinematically constructed dramatic sequences. The advert starts with a scene of rainy conditions, which sets the context to highlight the product's resilient features. Cinematographic techniques such as slow motion and a variety of camera angles-including *close-ups* at critical moments-reinforce the dramatic dimension and maximise visual appeal. The use of exterior settings in extreme weather conditions provides a realistic and relevant backdrop to validate the product's durability claims. The application of predominantly dark lighting with certain light accents creates a dramatic yet professional mood, reinforcing the narrative of resilience.

The advert chooses actors that represent the figure of a courier worker, a profession that requires high dependence on communication devices in challenging working conditions. Costume elements and props support the authenticity of the profession, creating an emotional connection between the audience and the narrative. Scenes where *smartphones* are dropped and run over by vehicles, although extreme, are presented with realistic and cinematic visualisation. Shooting techniques that magnify the dramatic impact are supported by instrumental music that builds tension, allowing the audience to feel emotionally engaged with the story.

Furthermore, the non-verbal elements in this advert can be seen in the actors' movements, which are designed to be natural but still measured. For example, scenes of running in the rain or direct interaction with a *smartphone* show how the product remains reliable in extreme conditions. These gestures are coordinated to show the ease of use of the device without compromising the essence of the story. The

3RD EVENT OF INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, AND CULTURE (ELITE) 2024



spatial arrangement is also strategically managed, to build situational context and *close-up shots* that highlight the main features of the *smartphone*. Overall, the visual composition of this advert follows a structured narrative progression, starting from the conflict (the *smartphone* falling), continuing to the climax (the *smartphone* being run over), to the resolution (the proof of optimal functionality). All elements—both verbal and non-verbal—are organised to convey the product's message in a coherent and evocative manner, while maintaining an appealing visual aesthetic. Through this approach, OPPO A60 not only successfully positioned itself as a powerful product, but also created a memorable viewing experience for its audience.

b. Connotative Analysis

The Oppo A60 advertisement constructs intricate connotative meanings by combining visual, verbal, and narrative elements, making it a compelling subject for analysis through Barthes' semiotic theory. At the connotative level, the phrase "*Military-Grade Shock Resistance*" transcends its literal description of the product's durability features, evoking associations with the strength, toughness, and reliability emblematic of the military. This linguistic choice positions the smartphone as an exceptionally robust device, capable of withstanding extreme conditions, and appeals to consumers' emotional needs for reliability and safety in their daily lives. The advertisement further reinforces this message through dramatic visual sequences, such as scenes depicting the phone being dropped from a significant height or run over by a vehicle. These moments, captured using slow-motion cinematography, emphasize the phone's resilience while simultaneously enhancing the drama of the narrative. Terms, such as visual techniques imbue the product with an additional layer of meaning—beyond its explicit features—allowing viewers to infer a guarantee of quality and robustness.

The visual storytelling in the advertisement is further enriched by the use of a rainy backdrop, which carries its own connotative significance. Rain, often symbolic of challenges, hardships, and unpredictability, serves as a metaphorical backdrop that highlights the phone's capacity to endure adverse conditions. This imagery aligns with the myth of technology as a solution to life's challenges, presenting the Oppo A60 as a reliable companion in uncertain circumstances. The narrative's main character, a courier, embodies themes of mobility, resilience, and hard work—qualities that resonate with the demands of modern life. By portraying the courier as a central figure who relies on the smartphone to navigate their challenging profession, the advertisement mirrors the struggles and aspirations of contemporary consumers. This narrative not only emphasizes the product's utility but also situates it as a symbol of endurance and adaptability, reflecting the lives of its target audience.

Collectively, these elements coalesce into a myth that transcends the product's basic functionality. The Oppo A60 is presented not merely as a smartphone but as a technological emblem of strength, reliability, and adaptability. This myth addresses consumers' psychological needs by offering not only a practical device but also a sense of security and empowerment in challenging situations. Through its layered connotative meanings, the advertisement constructs a narrative that appeals to both rational considerations of product quality and emotional desires for reassurance, ultimately reinforcing broader ideological themes of technology as a cornerstone of modern resilience and progress.

c. Myth And Ideology

The Oppo A60 advertisement constructs the myth of technology as a savior through a carefully crafted interplay of visual and linguistic elements. Central to this construction are slogans such as "*Layar Kuat, Tampilan Keren*" (*Strong Screen, Stylish Display*) and "*Oppo A60 Bisa Mengatasinya*" (*Oppo A60 Can Handle It*), which serve as pivotal anchors in establishing the narrative. The word "*kuat*" (*strong*) transcends its denotative meaning of physical durability, symbolizing absolute protection from external threats. This is complemented by the phrase "*Tampilan Keren* (*Cool look*)," which integrates functionality with aesthetics, addressing the dual aspirations of modern consumers for both practical reliability and a visually appealing lifestyle. Together, these slogans

naturalize the idea that technology is not merely a tool for overcoming physical damage but also a social shield that alleviates anxieties surrounding imperfection or inadequacy. The phrase "*Oppo A60 Bisa Mengatasinya*" (*Oppo A60 Can Handle It*) reinforces this narrative by portraying the smartphone as a versatile solution capable of tackling any challenge, thereby amplifying the myth of technology as a multifaceted saviour.

The advertisement elevates this myth further through the phrase "*Military-Grade Shock Resistance*," which draws upon the authority and credibility associated with military institutions. The term "*military-grade*" transforms the Oppo A60 from an ordinary consumer device into a symbol of extraordinary resilience and reliability, imbued with an aura of strength that resonates with the highest standards of durability. This linguistic strategy constructs a fantasy of protection that exceeds the practical needs of daily life but is effectively naturalized through visual narratives showcasing the smartphone enduring extreme conditions, such as falls, vehicular impacts, and harsh weather. These dramatized depictions magnify the perception of the product as an unyielding safeguard, not only against physical threats but also symbolic vulnerabilities, such as social inadequacy or loss of connectivity.

The advertisement further reinforces the myth of technology as a saviour through the term "*Splash Touch*," which positions the Oppo A60 as a device capable of overcoming natural constraints. The phone's ability to function seamlessly in wet conditions transcends its technical specifications, constructing a narrative of technological dominance over nature. This narrative reassures consumers of their security against environmental uncertainties, such as rain or water splashes, creating a sense of empowerment and control. The visual depiction of the smartphone surviving various forms of physical assault, such as drops, crushes, and exposure to water, strengthens this narrative. The Oppo A60 is portrayed not merely as a passive tool but as an active protector, safeguarding users' vital data and connectivity from potential threats. This resonates with contemporary anxieties about human dependence on technology and the fear of losing access to digital resources, transforming the smartphone into a metaphorical saviour in an increasingly technology-reliant world.

These narratives extend beyond individual security to encompass social and economic dimensions, as illustrated by the character of the courier featured in the advertisement. The courier, despite facing extreme working conditions, remains productive and resilient thanks to the phone's durability. This underscores not only the robustness of the device but also the indispensable role of technology in maintaining productivity and livelihoods. In this context, dependence on technology is not only normalized but celebrated as desirable, offering an illusion of control and stability in an uncertain modern world.

This myth operates as a second-order signification system wherein the denotative meanings of the product's features—such as screen durability, aesthetic design, and resistance to extreme conditions—are elevated into broader cultural narratives about security, protection, and control. Technology is thus reframed not as a mere tool but as a symbolic solution to existential fears about human vulnerability and social alienation. By intertwining narratives of protection with aspirational aesthetics, the advertisement embeds the belief that technology is a true saviour in the modern era.

The Oppo A60 advertisement exemplifies how technology consumerism is strategically constructed through layered verbal, non-verbal, and symbolic elements to shape deep-seated perceptions about the indispensability of technology in everyday life. In the framework of Barthes' semiotics, the advertisement operates through second-order signification, transforming the product's literal features into cultural myths that communicate broader values (Barthes, 2004; Hufford, 2024). In this case, these myths not only reflect but also reinforce the ideology that technology is central to modern existence, embodying strength, control, and aspirational lifestyles. At the denotative level, features such as "*Military-Grade Shock Resistance*" and water resistance highlight the product's durability. However, at the mythic level, these features construct a broader narrative of technology as a protector and saviour.

Within the ideology of technological consumerism, these myths position devices like the Oppo A60 as essential symbols of modern life, normalizing the belief that advanced technology is a prerequisite

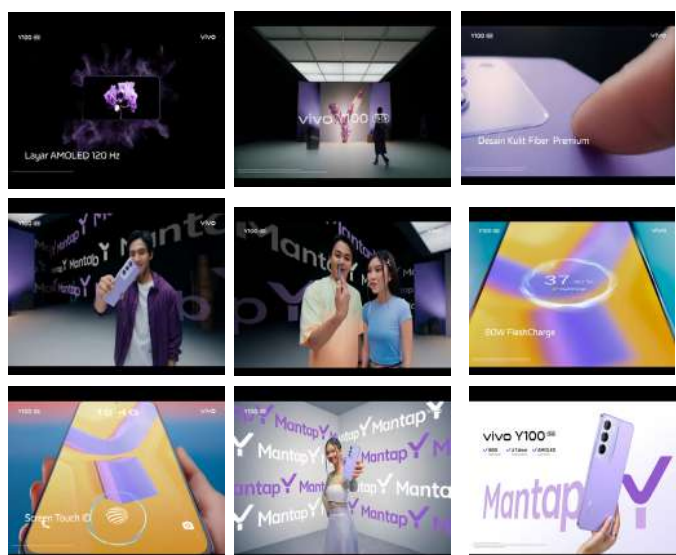
3RD EVENT OF INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, AND CULTURE (ELITE) 2024



for survival and success in an increasingly challenging world. The advertisement skilfully establishes a symbolic link between technology and aspirational values such as resilience, control, and aesthetics. This represents a process where primary signs, such as durability features, become cultural signifiers that associate technology with the identity of a strong and modern user (Asri & Nurhayati, 2024; Octaviana, 2020). Consumers are not merely purchasing a product for its technical functionality but are buying into a narrative: owning the Oppo A60 signifies being prepared for anything while maintaining a stylish appearance.

Thus, the advertisement does not simply sell a product but embeds a worldview into the consumer's consciousness. Technological consumerism, in this context, is framed as both a rational and emotional practice, wherein technology not only meets practical needs but also fulfils fantasies of protection, resilience, and self-actualization (Asri & Nurhayati, 2024; Barthes, 1998). This reflects an ideology naturalized through myths of technology as the ultimate saviour and indispensable enabler of modern life, as described by Barthes. Consequently, consumers connect not only with the product but also with the cultural values mediated by the device.

Data 2. Vivo Y100



Pic. 3. Ads fragmentation (taken from official ads of Vivo Y100) Source: (Vivo Indonesia, 2024)

a. Denotative Analysis

The Vivo Y100 5G advert presents a story full of energy, reflecting the active and dynamic lifestyle of today's youth. With a single catchy slogan, 'Mantap Y,' the advert highlights the superior features of the Vivo Y100 designed to support users' daily activities, while looking stylish and modern. The story begins with the stunning appearance of the Vivo Y100 smartphone, introducing the 120Hz AMOLED screen that provides a smooth and sharp visual experience. Energetic instrumental music harmonises the youthful feel with the advanced technology offered by this product. The next scene features a young actress touching the back of the smartphone, revealing the premium fibre leather design that gives a sense of elegance and toughness. The phrase 'Premium fibre leather design' reinforces the message that the Vivo Y100 is not only robust, but also stylish, suiting the personality of its users. Then, the scene switches to two cheerful smiling teenagers holding their smartphones, with the slogan 'Mantap Y' appearing in the background. This scene emphasises that the Vivo Y100 is a fun and relevant choice for the younger generation. In an action-packed moment, a teenage actress is shown playing tennis, with a close-up on a fast-moving tennis ball, showcasing the *80W Flash Charge* fast charging capability. The phrase '*80W Flash Charge*' emphasises that this smartphone is designed to keep up with the rhythm

3RD EVENT OF INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, AND CULTURE (ELITE) 2024



of a fast-paced, active life without the worry of running out of power. The advert ends with the appearance of the *Screen Touch ID* feature, which combines convenience and security in one touch. An actress confidently holds the Vivo Y100 smartphone, accompanied by the slogan 'Mantap Y,' giving the final impression that the Vivo Y100 is the perfect choice for those who want to stay productive, creative and stylish. With a mix of playful visuals and a clear message, this advert successfully conveys that the Vivo Y100 5G is a 'steady' device to support the activities of modern teenagers.

The verbal elements in the Vivo Y100 5G advert play an important role in conveying the product message directly to the audience, using explicit language to highlight the advantages of its key features. Phrases such as '*Premium* fibre leather design' literally describe the materials used on the device, giving a sense of exclusivity and high quality. The word '*premium*' denotatively means something of high or special quality, reinforcing the aesthetic appeal of the product while creating a sense of luxury that users can associate with added value. Meanwhile, the phrase "*80W Flash Charge*" directly refers to the fast charging capability of the device, which can be understood literally as the efficiency of the technology in meeting users' daily needs. This phrase, in addition to providing functional information, also underlines the product's competitive advantage in a technology market that demands speed and convenience.

Other verbal elements, such as "*Screen Touch ID*," refer to the fingerprint recognition technology integrated in the screen, literally indicating the security and accessibility features of the device. The use of this term gives a modern and sophisticated impression, directly communicating the added value of the technology without requiring further interpretation. The slogan "Mantap Y" functions as a more communicative and familiar verbal element, relying on the power of everyday language to create an emotional connection with the audience. The word 'Mantap' denotatively means something good or outstanding, reinforcing the positive image of the product. The letter "Y" in the slogan serves as a play on words that implies the name of the product series while reinforcing the brand identity. Taken together, these verbal elements act as a foundation that helps interpret the visual meaning in the advert, ensuring the audience understands the key messages of technological sophistication, design quality and the relevance of the product for modern needs.

The non-verbal elements in the Vivo Y100 5G advert are designed to reinforce the visual and emotional appeal of the product, creating a sense of modernity and relevance to a young audience. The main visual features a *smartphone* with a 120Hz AMOLED screen, a technology that denotatively provides a smooth and responsive visual experience. These details are accentuated through sharp lighting and close-up shooting angles, literally highlighting the premium design quality of the device. Every visual aspect of the *smartphone*, such as the smoothness of the screen, the texture of the material, and the slim frame, is explicitly displayed to emphasise the sense of luxury and technological sophistication. The placement of the *smartphone* in the centre of the frame with high focus clarifies the product's position as the centre of attention, reflecting its functional value as the main object in the advertisement.

In addition, the scenes of smiling, cheerful teenagers playing tennis and using *smartphones* provide a literal depiction of an energetic, active and dynamic lifestyle. The choice of sports activities such as tennis represents the spirit of competition and fitness, which resonates with the positive values of young audiences. The happy expressions on the models' faces and their interaction with the device create a direct association between the product and happiness, without the need for deeper interpretation. Bright colours such as blue and yellow dominate the visual background, providing a cheerful and optimistic feel that attracts attention and reinforces the relaxed and energetic atmosphere. These colours also literally reflect the teenage target market which is generally associated with positive vibes and youthful spirit.

In combination with these visual elements, the advert conveys a clear message that the Vivo Y100 5G is a modern device with excellent features that support an active and dynamic lifestyle. These non-verbal elements work to build emotional and aesthetic appeal, emphasising the product image without the need for symbolic interpretation or more complex cultural meanings.

b. Connotative Analysis

At the connotative level, the Vivo Y100 5G advertisement constructs the product's image as a symbol of a modern, energetic, and efficient lifestyle, skilfully intertwining verbal and visual elements to evoke emotional resonance with the target audience. Verbal components such as the claims "*Premium Fiber Leather Design*" and "*80W Flash Charge*" extend beyond their technical descriptions to evoke associations of luxury, speed, and efficiency. The term "*premium*" conveys exclusivity and sophistication, aligning the product with aspirations for an elevated social status. Similarly, "*80W Flash Charge*" is not merely a feature of rapid charging but symbolizes a fast-paced, productivity-oriented lifestyle, appealing to consumers who prioritize convenience and efficiency in their daily routines. These linguistic choices imbue the product with an aspirational identity, positioning it as an essential tool for achieving modern success.

Complementing these verbal elements are the advertisement's vibrant visuals, such as the portrayal of active teenagers playing tennis. This imagery symbolizes vitality, mobility, and social success, suggesting that the Vivo Y100 5G is not just a smartphone but a companion for living a dynamic and fulfilling life. The active engagement in sports like tennis connotes energy, health, and competitiveness, implying that the product empowers users to excel in their personal and social endeavours. Through this depiction, the advertisement positions the Vivo Y100 5G as a facilitator of joy, movement, and achievement, resonating with the desires of millennials and Gen Z audiences who value experiences that enhance their lifestyles.

The advertisement metaphorically presents the Vivo Y100 5G as a means to achieve the ideal lifestyle. For instance, the feature "*80W Flash Charge*" embodies the metaphor "*Speed Is Advantage*," where the rapid charging capability is associated with efficiency and productivity. This metaphor suggests that the Vivo Y100 5G is not just a functional device but a competitive edge in navigating the demands of modern life. Similarly, the visual of teenagers playing tennis reflects the metaphor "*Life Is a Game*," which implies that the challenges of contemporary living can be approached as a series of opportunities to excel and thrive. In this context, the Vivo Y100 5G is framed as the technological tool that enables users to "win" in the game of life, equipping them with the speed, reliability, and style necessary for success.

By integrating these verbal and visual elements, the Vivo Y100 5G advertisement transcends the mere promotion of technical features and instead constructs a broader narrative about the product's role in fulfilling emotional and aspirational needs. It aligns the smartphone with values of luxury, efficiency, and vitality, embedding it within a myth of technological empowerment. This narrative resonates with contemporary consumer ideologies, where technology is perceived as a gateway to personal and social fulfilment. Consequently, the Vivo Y100 5G becomes more than a device—it becomes a symbol of an idealized lifestyle that blends modernity, energy, and efficiency into a cohesive and desirable identity.

c. Myth And Ideology

In the context of the Vivo Y100 5G advertisement, myths are constructed through the careful packaging of signs that build a specific narrative about technology and modern life. One of the central myths embedded in the advertisement is that advanced technological features, such as an AMOLED display, rapid flash charging, and premium design, are essential requirements for the younger generation. This myth creates the perception that these features are not mere add-ons but fundamental prerequisites for living an optimal life. Consequently, the smartphone is no longer perceived as a practical tool but as an indispensable element defining a dynamic and modern lifestyle. The advertisement also promotes the myth that owning the Vivo Y100 5G is a marker of identity for contemporary youth. Through visuals of energetic and active teenagers engaging in daily activities, the product is directly linked to a spirited and relevant lifestyle for young audiences. In this way, the

3RD EVENT OF INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, AND CULTURE (ELITE) 2024



smartphone is portrayed not only as a tool but also as a status symbol, signifying inclusion within a trendy and successful community. This reinforces the notion that ownership of the device reflects not just functionality but also who the owner is and how they wish to be perceived.

Furthermore, the advertisement constructs the myth that technology is a source of happiness and an enhancer of life quality. Scenes of smiling faces and vibrant moments suggest that the Vivo Y100 5G facilitates positive emotional experiences, fostering an illusion that happiness can be instantly achieved through ownership of this product. Through this narrative, technology, which is fundamentally a tool for simplifying daily tasks, is elevated to a role of significant emotional importance. This myth also obscures the primary function of a smartphone as a communication device, transforming it into a symbol of aspirational living. By presenting users in stylish, progressive scenarios, the product transcends its functional purpose and becomes an icon of idealized lifestyles. Through these subtle mechanisms, the myth reconfigures consumer perceptions, encouraging them to see the Vivo Y100 5G as more than just a technological device but as an integral part of living a perfect life.

From Barthes' semiotic perspective, myths not only create new meanings but also serve as vehicles for reproducing dominant ideologies within society (Barthes, 1998; Wibisono & Sari, 2021). In the Vivo Y100 5G advertisement, the ideology of consumerism is prominently articulated. The advertisement fosters the belief that happiness, success, and personal identity can be achieved through the consumption of the latest technological products (Barthes, 1998; Hufford, 2024). Products like the Vivo Y100 5G are constructed not merely as tools but as essential commodities that promise to enhance life quality. This narrative reflects the ideology of consumerism, which positions the consumption of goods as the primary pathway to emotional and social satisfaction.

Additionally, the advertisement reflects the ideology of individualism by emphasizing features tailored to personal needs (Barthes, 1998; Wicaksono & Nur, 2023). Elements such as the "premium fibber leather design" and "80W Flash Charge" highlight not only the device's technical superiority but also reinforce the idea that technology should be adaptable to support the unique lifestyles of individuals. This messaging solidifies the belief that success and comfort in life depend on one's ability to select technology that aligns with personal requirements—an idea central to the ideology of individualism. Through these layered narratives, the Vivo Y100 5G advertisement successfully intertwines myths and ideologies, positioning technology as both an emotional and practical necessity for modern life.

CONCLUSION

This study offers a comprehensive semiotic analysis of smartphone advertisements, focusing on the Oppo A60 and Vivo Y100 5G commercials through the lens of Roland Barthes' theoretical framework. The findings reveal that these advertisements extend far beyond promoting technical specifications, engaging instead in the construction of layered narratives that traverse denotative descriptions, connotative associations, and the creation of myths and ideologies. These narratives effectively reshape consumer perceptions and behaviours by embedding cultural and aspirational meanings within the advertised products. For example, the Oppo A60 commercial constructs a powerful myth of technology as an invincible protector, emphasizing resilience and security through features like military-grade durability and splash resistance. In contrast, the Vivo Y100 5G advertisement crafts a narrative centred on youthful energy and dynamism, presenting the device as a gateway to an idealized modern lifestyle characterized by mobility, style, and social connectivity. These advertisements exemplify how technological products are transformed into cultural artifacts that symbolize broader societal values and aspirations.

The study makes several critical contributions across theoretical, methodological, practical, cultural, and interdisciplinary domains. Theoretically, it demonstrates the continued relevance of Barthes' semiotic theory in decoding the complex sign systems employed in contemporary digital advertising. By dissecting how myths and ideologies are constructed through the interplay of visual, verbal, and

symbolic elements, the study advances our understanding of the cultural underpinnings embedded within marketing strategies. Methodologically, it offers a structured framework for analysing multimedia advertisements, integrating denotative, connotative, mythical, and ideological levels of interpretation. This approach provides a robust template for future research in semiotics, advertising studies, and digital media, ensuring a comprehensive analysis of meaning-making processes in marketing texts.

From a practical perspective, the research offers actionable insights for marketers and advertisers, highlighting the effectiveness of leveraging semiotic strategies to craft narratives that resonate deeply with target audiences. It underscores the importance of transcending mere product features to connect with consumers on an emotional and cultural level, aligning marketing messages with broader values, aspirations, and identities. Culturally, the study contributes to media literacy by exposing the myths and ideologies embedded within smartphone advertisements. By revealing how advertising shapes perceptions of technology as a source of happiness, success, and personal empowerment, it equips consumers with the critical tools to engage more thoughtfully with the messages they encounter. Furthermore, the study bridges semiotics with marketing, cultural studies, and technology, providing an interdisciplinary lens that enriches our understanding of how advertising functions as a cultural and ideological medium.

In conclusion, this research underscores the role of smartphone advertisements as more than mere promotional tools. Instead, they serve as powerful cultural texts that reflect and shape societal values, aspirations, and beliefs about technology. By decoding these complex semiotic systems, the study reveals how contemporary advertising constructs and reinforces ideologies of consumerism, technological determinism, and individual empowerment. The findings emphasize the centrality of technology in modern cultural narratives, illustrating how digital devices are imbued with symbolic meanings that transcend their functional purposes. This study not only enhances our understanding of the intersection between technology and culture but also paves the way for further exploration into how advertising mediates consumer identities and shapes collective perceptions of technology's role in contemporary life.

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3RD EVENT OF INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, AND CULTURE (ELITE) 2024



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