



Semiotics Analysis in Shopee 9.9 Super Shopping Day Advertisement Hearts2hearts Edition

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Abstract. This study analyzes the semiotic meanings in Shopee's 9.9 Super Shopping Day advertisement featuring the rookie idol group Hearts2Hearts. Using Roland Barthes's concept of denotation, connotation, and myth, supported by Charles Sanders Peirce's triadic model of sign (icon, index, and symbol), this research examines how visual and auditory elements construct cultural and emotional meanings. The study employs a qualitative descriptive method by observing and categorizing signs from the advertisement video. The findings reveal that Shopee uses orange color dominance, cheerful jingles, and synchronized choreography to symbolize happiness, energy, and emotional connection. These elements collectively create a myth that associates shopping with joy and efficiency. The advertisement also demonstrates Shopee's shift toward localized idol representation to strengthen authenticity and audience engagement. This study contributes to the understanding of how semiotic strategies shape consumer perception in Southeast Asian digital advertising and highlights the importance of emotional branding in modern marketing. The results also suggest that semiotic analysis can provide deeper insights into how advertisements influence social values and consumer identity in contemporary media.

Keywords: Advertisement; Consumer Perception; Hearts2Hearts; Semiotics; Shopee.

1. INTRODUCTION

E-commerce has become one of the most dynamic sectors in the global economy, transforming how people shop, interact with brands, and consume digital media. In Southeast Asia, the rapid growth of online platforms has been supported not only by technological advances but also by massive and creative advertising campaigns that shape consumer behavior and cultural trends. Advertising plays a crucial role. It is not only designed to promote products but also to construct images, ideologies, and lifestyles that influence audiences on a deeper cultural level.

Shopee, as one of the largest e-commerce platforms in Southeast Asia, is well known for its aggressive marketing strategies. Its advertisements often feature popular celebrities and K-pop idols as brand ambassadors, aiming to attract young audiences and strengthen emotional engagement with consumers. The presence of global icons in Shopee campaigns shows how the company relies on cultural capital and fandom to build brand loyalty. This makes Shopee advertisements an interesting object of study, especially when analyzed through semiotics, as they are rich in symbols, meanings, and representations.

Previous studies have examined Shopee advertisements from various perspectives. Dara & Muchlis (2019) highlighted the influence of K-pop idols such as Blackpink in shaping digital consumer culture and women's image. Mutoharoh (2023) and Syafitra (2023) showed that women in Shopee ads are often represented through conventional beauty standards and

consumptive behaviors. Ekawati et al. (2024) emphasized women's link with consumer culture in the Shopee 9.9 campaign, while Davidson & Novitasari (2025) explored the ideology of consumerism in Shopee's "Cetar Membahana" advertisement. Sabrina (2022) revealed the representation of feminism in Shopee's Kartini Day version. Other previous studies, such as Rahman (2020), Widya (2021), Li & Wong (2020), Chandra & Nur (2021), Huang (2021), Kim (2022), and Pratama (2020), also investigated different aspects of e-commerce advertisements, from gender representation to cultural influence and digital marketing strategies.

One of the distinctive features of Shopee's advertising in recent years is its focus on youth culture. The platform increasingly targets younger consumers who are not only digitally savvy but also emotionally responsive to relatable and authentic representations. Unlike older campaigns featuring global superstars, Shopee's newer ads often feature young, cheerful, and approachable figures, embodying friendliness and optimism. This aligns with global marketing trends where brands shift from aspirational celebrity imagery to relatable authenticity (Nguyen & Park, 2023). The 9.9 advertisement featuring the rookie idol group Hearts2Hearts marks an important shift in Shopee's communication strategy. Instead of relying on fame, the ad emphasizes joy, teamwork, and everyday moments. Through its simple choreography, bright visuals, and catchy music, the campaign constructs an image of youthfulness and emotional warmth. These qualities resonate strongly with Generation Z audiences, who value sincerity and connection over perfection (Hassan & Lim, 2024). The group's approachable image also symbolizes inclusivity, inviting viewers to see themselves reflected in the ad's cheerful tone.

Beyond Shopee, several studies have also analyzed Tokopedia advertisements using semiotic approaches. Kurniawati, Zelfia, and Rabiah (2022) examined the message of freedom in Tokopedia's "#Celebrate Your Freedom" campaign, showing how the brand associates digital innovation with human independence and empowerment. Nafiry, Wijaya, and Safiirah (2022) analyzed Tokopedia's Ramadan special advertisement and found that the platform created a myth of emotional closeness during the COVID-19 pandemic through visual and gestural semiotics. Benjamin and Wibowo (2023) explored the representation of influencers in Tokopedia's "Tokopedia Squad" ad, highlighting how different public figures symbolized product categories and consumer communities. Dwiyanti and Huda (2022) further expanded this discourse by analyzing Gojek Tokopedia collaborative ads, revealing how semiotic elements were used to construct narratives of MSME solidarity and economic resilience.

From a semiotic perspective, advertisements do not just reflect reality, they construct it. As Hall (1997) explains, representation is a process through which meaning is produced and

exchanged within a culture. In Shopee's advertisements, visual symbols such as fashion, gestures, and color palettes work together to convey ideologies of modern consumerism. The repeated portrayal of happy, attractive young people shopping online suggests that consumption leads to happiness and belonging. Such imagery reinforces what Williamson (1978) describes as the "ideology of consumption," where individuals are defined by the products they buy rather than by their social or personal values. In Southeast Asia, where collectivism and social harmony are important cultural values, Shopee's ads often use group choreography and community-oriented visuals to associate shopping with togetherness. The Hearts2Hearts campaign reflects this approach, its synchronized movements and shared joy evoke a sense of collective celebration. This semiotic strategy connects the act of shopping to emotional bonds and shared experiences, transforming a commercial activity into a form of social participation.

While existing studies have explored Shopee's use of celebrity marketing, gender representation, and festive campaigns, little attention has been paid to its evolving use of rookie idols as cultural mediators. Rookie groups like Hearts2Hearts represent a new advertising trend, one that emphasizes approachability, optimism, and emotional familiarity rather than star power. This approach aligns with the rise of micro-influencers and relatable content in digital marketing (Zhang, 2022). Analyzing this shift through semiotics allows for a deeper understanding of how new forms of representation are used to sustain emotional engagement in e-commerce advertising. Therefore, this study focuses on Shopee's 9.9 advertisement featuring Hearts2Hearts as a primary object of analysis. By examining its visual, musical, and gestural signs, this research aims to uncover how the advertisement constructs meanings of youthfulness, togetherness, and emotional connection. The study contributes to a broader understanding of how e-commerce platforms use semiotic strategies to create affective relationships with audiences in a highly competitive digital environment. Moreover, it highlights the intersection of commerce and culture, showing how advertising reflects and shapes social values in the globalized digital economy.

Although these works provide valuable insights, there is still limited research on Shopee's strategy of using rookie idol groups as brand ambassadors. Unlike global stars such as Blackpink, rookie groups like Hearts2Hearts represent youthful energy, simple choreography, and relatable everyday settings. Their cheerful jingles and approachable image aim to build stronger emotional bonds with young audiences by creating familiarity rather than relying solely on global fame. This study focuses on the Shopee 9.9 advertisement featuring Hearts2Hearts, analyzing its symbols, choreography, relatable moments, and jingles as

representations of youthfulness and emotional connection. This research not only fills the gap in advertising studies on Shopee but also contributes to broader discussions of semiotics, consumer culture, and digital marketing strategies in the era of globalization.

2. METHOD

This study used a qualitative descriptive method because it focused on describing and interpreting the meanings of signs found in the Shopee 9.9 Super Shopping Day advertisement featuring Hearts2Hearts. The qualitative approach was chosen since the data were in the form of visual and auditory symbols rather than numerical data. The data of this research consisted of visual, verbal, and auditory signs contained in the Shopee 9.9 advertisement (Hearts2Hearts Edition). The video was taken from Shopee's official YouTube channel, uploaded in September 2024. The researcher analyzed scenes, gestures, lyrics, colors, and choreography that appeared in the advertisement. Supporting data such as screenshots, transcribed lyrics, and official Shopee promotional materials were also used to strengthen the analysis. This research applied Roland Barthes's semiotic theory of denotation, connotation, and myth, supported by Charles Sanders Peirce's triadic model of sign (icon, index, and symbol) to analyze the visual and auditory elements in the advertisement.

The data were collected through several steps:

1. Observation: The researcher watched the advertisement several times to understand the context and main message.
2. Documentation: Important scenes were captured through screenshots and transcribed, including lyrics and slogans.
3. Identification: Visual and auditory signs were identified and categorized based on their form such as color, movement, facial expression, and sound.
4. Classification: The identified signs were then grouped according to their semiotic type (icon, index, or symbol) and their level of meaning (denotation or connotation).

After the data were collected and classified, they were analyzed using semiotic theory proposed by Roland Barthes and Charles Sanders Peirce. The analysis followed these stages:

1. Descriptive Analysis: Each sign was described in its literal (denotative) meaning.
2. Interpretative Analysis: The connotative meanings and cultural messages behind each sign were interpreted.
3. Triadic Model Application: Peirce's model was applied to explain how the signs functioned as icons, indexes, or symbols in the advertisement.

4. Synthesis: The results from both models were combined to reveal how the advertisement constructed representations of youthfulness, happiness, and emotional connection through its visuals, jingles, and choreography.

Through these steps, the data were systematically processed so that the final interpretation truly reflected the meanings embedded in the advertisement.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study analyzed the Shopee 9.9 Super Shopping Day advertisement featuring Hearts2Hearts, which was officially uploaded on Shopee's YouTube channel on September 9, 2025. The video lasts for 1 minute and 4 seconds and presents a bright, rhythmic, and cheerful atmosphere that reflects the spirit of the campaign. The focus of the analysis is on four dominant signs: the orange color, the heart gesture, the cheerful choreography, and the jingle lyrics. Each of these signs contributes to the construction of meaning and ideology through the interaction between visual and auditory elements.

To interpret these elements, this study applies Roland Barthes's theory of denotation, connotation, and myth, supported by Charles Sanders Peirce's triadic model (icon, index, and symbol). Barthes's framework helps uncover cultural meanings and ideological messages hidden behind the visual and linguistic signs, while Peirce's model clarifies how signs function as systems of representation. The table below summarizes the four signs analyzed in this study:

Table 1. Sign, Denotative Meaning, Connotative Meaning, Semiotik Type (Peirce).

No	Sign	Denotative Meaning	Connotative Meaning	Semiotik Type (Peirce)
1.	 Orange color	Shopee's brand color	Symbol of joy, enthusiasm, and energetic shopping spirit	Symbol
2.		Shape of a heart	Representation of love and emotional connection with consumers	Icon

	Heart symbol (gesture)		
3.		Dance movement	Reflection of youthfulness and collective enjoyment Index
4.	<p>Cheerful choreography</p> <p>Lyrics "Shopee lebih hemat, Shopee lebih cepat"</p>	Promotional slogan	Encouragement of consumerism through excitement and rhythmic repetition Symbol

The first dominant sign in the advertisement is the orange color, which visually dominates the background, costumes, and animation. At the denotative level, orange represents Shopee's corporate identity. It is used consistently in almost all Shopee campaigns, symbolizing the company's brand recognition. At the connotative level, however, orange conveys deeper cultural meanings associated with warmth, excitement, and positivity. These emotional associations make the advertisement feel energetic and uplifting.

From Barthes's semiotic perspective, orange functions as a cultural code that connects the idea of shopping with happiness. The color operates as a myth it naturalizes the belief that consumption leads to joy. In this context, color is not just a design choice but a narrative tool that evokes emotion and reinforces ideology. The brightness of the orange also evokes daylight and celebration, creating a visual metaphor for activity, productivity, and modern life. In Peircean terms, orange serves as a symbol, a sign whose meaning is learned through social convention. Viewers immediately associate the color with Shopee, even without seeing the logo. This automatic recognition reflects the strength of Shopee's visual branding. As Peirce explained, symbols rely on cultural agreement to generate meaning, and Shopee has successfully established this color as part of its symbolic identity.

Previous studies have also emphasized the importance of color in Shopee's advertisements. Dara and Muchlis (2019) found that the use of bright color palettes, particularly orange, plays a central role in communicating happiness and youthful energy. Similarly, Ekawati et al. (2024) noted that color saturation in Shopee's campaigns reinforces emotional warmth and consumer enthusiasm. This study supports those findings but extends them by interpreting orange as both a corporate symbol and an emotional myth that connects brand

identity with consumer psychology. The visual dominance of orange throughout the advertisement also enhances the sense of coherence. It serves as the visual “glue” that unites other elements like gesture, movement, and sound. Thus, the color operates both aesthetically and semantically it attracts attention and simultaneously shapes interpretation.

The second sign analyzed is the heart gesture, made by the members of Hearts2Hearts during several moments of the video. The gesture involves forming a heart shape with the hands, directed toward the camera or to fellow members. At the denotative level, the gesture simply represents the shape of a heart a widely recognized symbol of love and affection. At the connotative level, it signifies emotional warmth, friendliness, and connection between the idols and the audience. Using Barthes’s model, the gesture operates as a sign that transforms a universal emotion love into a cultural message of consumer intimacy. The myth constructed here is that Shopee “cares” for its users and builds relationships based on affection, not just transactions. By repeatedly performing the heart gesture, the advertisement invites viewers to feel emotionally close to the brand. This aligns with Barthes’s argument that advertising often disguises economic exchange as emotional connection.

In Peircean terms, the heart gesture functions as an icon because its form directly resembles its object (love). However, when interpreted in a cultural context, it also acts as a symbol, representing the brand’s desire to connect with consumers emotionally. This dual function shows the richness of the gesture as a sign it operates both visually and ideologically. Compared to Shopee’s earlier advertisements featuring Blackpink, the use of the heart gesture in the Hearts2Hearts campaign feels more authentic and less performative. While Blackpink’s gestures were associated with glamour and fan service, Hearts2Hearts’ gestures appear more spontaneous, reflecting sincerity and friendliness. This difference shows Shopee’s shift from global celebrity appeal to local emotional authenticity. The heart gesture also reinforces the jingle’s emotional tone. When combined with the lyrics and rhythm, it visually translates happiness into bodily expression. This synchronization between gesture and sound enhances the semiotic depth of the advertisement it becomes not just a visual display but a performance of emotion.

The third sign analyzed is the cheerful choreography performed by Hearts2Hearts. The choreography consists of synchronized movements, light steps, and rhythmic arm gestures that follow the beat of the jingle. At the denotative level, these are dance moves designed for visual appeal. At the connotative level, they represent energy, teamwork, and youthfulness. From Barthes’s perspective, the choreography operates as a system of signs that creates meaning through repetition and structure. The movements are not random; they are carefully designed

to embody the concept of unity and joy. When the members move in harmony, it symbolizes cooperation suggesting that Shopee, too, is a platform that connects people and facilitates community.

The myth embedded here is the idea that shopping with Shopee is a social activity rather than a solitary act. It transforms the economic act of buying into a collective celebration. This myth normalizes consumerism as something natural, enjoyable, and even communal. From Peirce's viewpoint, choreography functions as an index because it directly reflects the physical energy and coordination of the performers. It points to the emotion of excitement and the state of liveliness. The dance becomes an indexical sign of happiness its movement points to the inner feeling of joy.

Previous studies also highlight the role of choreography in shaping advertisement messages. Ekawati et al. (2024) found that synchronized dance movements in Shopee's 9.9 campaign reflect community participation and emotional bonding. This study supports that finding and adds that the choreography in the Hearts2Hearts edition is deliberately simplified, making it easier for audiences to imitate. This accessibility strengthens the participatory aspect of the advertisement and invites consumers to engage physically, such as through social media dance challenges. In short, the cheerful choreography not only entertains but also communicates a message of inclusiveness and shared happiness. It visually embodies Shopee's slogan of "more savings, more speed" through coordinated motion that represents efficiency and harmony.

The fourth and most dominant sign is the jingle, with lyrics:

"Shopee lebih hemat, Shopee lebih cepat.

Lebih hemat lebih cepat di Shopee, pi, pi."

At the denotative level, the lyrics serve as a direct promotional message emphasizing Shopee's two main advantages: saving money and saving time. At the connotative level, the jingle functions as an emotional trigger that creates excitement and memorability. The playful repetition of "pi, pi" at the end acts as a rhythmic hook that stays in the listener's mind, turning the advertisement into a catchy tune rather than a traditional commercial. From Barthes's semiotic theory, the jingle illustrates how language creates myth. The words "lebih hemat" (more saving) and "lebih cepat" (faster) construct an ideology where convenience and affordability are equated with happiness. This reflects a cultural myth of modern life: that efficiency leads to satisfaction. Through this myth, Shopee presents itself as not only a shopping platform but also a provider of emotional well-being.

In Peirce's framework, the jingle functions as a symbol, as its meaning is established by convention and repeated exposure. Over time, consumers have learned to associate this particular tune with Shopee's identity. The sound itself becomes a sign that evokes the brand even without visual context. This phenomenon shows how auditory semiotics reinforces brand recognition. The melody and rhythm also carry semiotic weight. The major key and fast tempo create an atmosphere of cheerfulness and positivity. These musical features operate as non-verbal signs that emotionally align the audience with the brand's optimistic tone. As Ekawati et al. (2024) argued, Shopee's jingles are a form of emotional branding that uses rhythm and sound to foster consumer loyalty. The Hearts2Hearts version builds on that concept by using softer vocal tones and playful delivery, which make the message sound more youthful and relatable.

Thus, the jingle acts as both a linguistic and emotional code. Linguistically, it communicates Shopee's values; emotionally, it stimulates joy and excitement. The repetition of the jingle across multiple Shopee campaigns also reinforces what Barthes called naturalization a process where ideology becomes accepted as normal. Consumers no longer question the link between shopping and happiness; it becomes a natural belief encoded through music. The semiotic analysis of the four signs color, gesture, choreography, and jingle reveals a coherent structure of meaning centered on joy, youthfulness, and emotional engagement. All elements work together to construct a cultural myth that shopping is a source of happiness and connection.

Barthes's framework helps explain how the advertisement turns ordinary elements (color, dance, sound) into carriers of ideology. The myth of joyful consumerism operates beneath the surface of entertainment, making the audience internalize emotional values through repeated exposure. Peirce's model, on the other hand, shows how different types of signs icons, indexes, and symbols interact to create layered meanings. Compared with previous research, this study expands the understanding of Shopee's advertising strategy. While Dara and Muchlis (2019) emphasized glamour and global appeal, and Ekawati et al. (2024) discussed rhythm and emotional engagement, this study highlights the shift toward simplicity and authenticity through the use of a rookie idol group. Hearts2Hearts' natural gestures, approachable choreography, and cheerful tones represent a more localized emotional strategy aimed at building cultural closeness.

The findings of this study are significant for both semiotic theory and advertising practice. Theoretically, they show how Barthes's and Peirce's frameworks complement each other in explaining modern advertisements that blend visual and auditory signs. Practically, the

findings illustrate how brands like Shopee use semiotic layering color, gesture, movement, and sound to construct emotional branding and strengthen consumer loyalty. In the context of Southeast Asia's digital market, the advertisement reflects how globalization and localization coexist. Shopee adopts global marketing techniques such as jingles and idol culture but adapts them to local tastes through simplicity and warmth. This localization strategy aligns with current consumer trends that favor authenticity over fame.

Furthermore, the study highlights how advertising today plays a role in shaping cultural perception. By naturalizing the connection between happiness and consumption, Shopee's advertisement reflects the values of digital consumerism efficiency, joy, and connection. Understanding these semiotic patterns is crucial for researchers and marketers alike, as it shows how meaning operates subtly yet powerfully within modern media.

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study concludes that Shopee's 9.9 Hearts2Hearts advertisement constructs a myth of joyful and efficient shopping through a combination of visual, auditory, and symbolic signs. The dominance of orange color, cheerful jingle, and heart-shaped choreography all work together to create an image of happiness, energy, and connection that aligns with Shopee's branding strategy. Through Barthes's and Peirce's semiotic frameworks, the advertisement is shown to use both denotative and connotative meanings to promote consumerism in a more emotional and youthful way. The findings indicate that Shopee's marketing approach is shifting from using global celebrities toward local or rookie idol groups to create a sense of authenticity and cultural closeness with young consumers. This reflects a broader trend in Southeast Asian digital marketing, where emotional branding and localized identity are key to maintaining audience engagement.

However, this study is limited to a single advertisement and focuses only on visual and auditory elements. Future research can include comparative analyses of multiple Shopee campaigns or examine audience perception to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how semiotic meanings are interpreted by viewers. Furthermore, advertisers may consider balancing emotional appeal with ethical and cultural awareness to ensure that media representations remain inclusive and meaningful in the digital era. (Davidson & Novitasari, 2022) (Rais & Fadillah, 2025) (Dara & Muchlis, 2019) (Pendidikan et al., 2021) (Mutoharoh, 2023) (Humaira et al., 2022) (Khalisha et al., 2025) (Iman Prasetya, 2025) (Romo Gonzalez & Sena Perez, 2024) (Feramayatasari & Wiedarti, 2020) (Asih, 2019) (Napitupulu et al., 2018) (Sitohang et al., 2025) (Dwita, 2018)

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