

SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF TOURISM SOFT-SELLING: DECODING SHORT FILMS AS PERSUASIVE NARRATIVES

Ni Putu Anindhitha Ayesha Sandra¹
Ni Made Karunia Noina²

Received March. 06, 2024; Revised May. 01, 2024; Accepted June. 03, 2024.

Abstract: *Tourism marketing plays a crucial role in promoting destinations and attracting tourists. Nevertheless, tourism marketers are finding it increasingly difficult to attract the interest of potential travelers in a crowded digital environment. Short films have become a popular and effective medium to market destinations and influence tourist behavior due to their visually captivating storytelling and ability to evoke emotions in a short duration. Studying the impact of short films on tourism marketing is essential to comprehend their influence on tourist motivations, destination perceptions, and purchasing decisions. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the persuasion strategies used in promoting various tourist destinations through short films. By conducting a descriptive qualitative study, this study seeks to understand various semiotic elements and narratives in their short films to create persuasive messages that appeal to potential tourists. The analysis of these short films as persuasive narratives will provide insights into how cultural meanings are constructed and communicated through tourism marketing. By understanding the semiotic elements and persuasive narratives employed in these short films, we can gain a deeper understanding of how persuasive messages are crafted and how they influence tourists' perceptions and decision-making processes.*

Keywords: *semiotics; short film; tourism; promotional; persuasive narrative*

Introduction

In today's digital age, the tourism industry is leveraging storytelling to evoke emotions and inspire travel. This study focuses on visual storytelling, using subtle marketing techniques and short filmmaking to captivate and influence potential travelers. Short films offer a powerful way to tell a compelling story in a condensed format, combining stunning visuals, evocative sound, and relatable characters

to create an immersive experience for the audience. Through skillful storytelling, viewers are transported to different cultures, landscapes, and experiences, sparking a genuine desire to explore the featured destinations. This approach prioritizes emotional connections over direct promotion, making it a more effective way to engage and inspire audiences. By skillfully combining entertainment and promotional content, short films become a powerful tool for inspiring travel aspi-

¹Ni Putu Anindhitha Ayesha Sandra is a lecturer at The Faculty of Creative Industry Universitas Surabaya (UBAYA).

e-mail: anindhitaayesha@staff.ubaya.ac.id

²Ni Made Karunia Noina is a Master Applied Tourism student Bali Tourism Polytechnic.

e-mail: karunianoina22@gmail.com

rations without being intrusive, providing an enjoyable viewer experience.

Semiotic analysis in film studies involves examining the signs and symbols in a film to uncover underlying meanings and cultural implications. This method allows authors to understand how meaning is constructed and conveyed through visual communication in filmic texts (Supriatna & Savira, 2021; Liesandra, 2022). Roger Odin's proposal to integrate semiotics with a pragmatic perspective provides a structuralist approach to analyzing film narratives in relation to their reception (Colins & de Lima, 2020). This approach highlights the significance of taking into account the reception conditions when interpreting the semiotic elements in films. Additionally, the semiotic method is used in qualitative analysis of visual content on social media platforms like Instagram to understand cultural phenomena and representations (Putranto et al., 2022). The semiotic film analysis using Roland Barthes' method for tourism soft-selling involves a thorough examination of signs and symbols in films, with a focus on denotation, connotation, and myth. Roland Barthes' semiotic theory offers a framework for understanding the multiple layers of meaning in visual texts, such as films, and has been applied in various studies related to tourism soft-selling.

Tourism soft-selling in films was commonly used to create a captivating story for viewers, both internationally and domestically. This study examines how short films promoting tourist destinations use visual storytelling to persuade viewers, drawing on Barthes' semiotic theory. This study focuses on analyzing films that aim to capture audience attention and have a positive impact on viewers. The "Before Travel" and "After Travel" Duology films have garnered 12.6 million views in two weeks and increased Lotte Duty Free's store visits by 20% (Moodie, 2022). The second film which is "Encounter", pro-

duced by PT Kereta Api Indonesia, has received positive reviews from more than 10,000 viewers. By analyzing the techniques and narratives in these two films, we can compare the persuasive storytelling used by the filmmakers. This study suggests that decoding the semiotics in short films promoting tourism destinations can provide valuable insights for enhancing tourism marketing strategies. Marketers can learn about effective persuasive techniques and engaging narratives to attract audiences. This insight can help create more effective tourism campaigns, attracting more tourists to the destinations. Analyzing the semiotic elements of short films can reveal factors influencing viewers' travel decisions, leading to culturally sensitive tourism content that resonates with diverse audiences. This research offers practical strategies for improving tourism marketing in a competitive global market.

"Before Travel" and "After Travel" Duology Summary

The duology is produced by a famous Korean first duty-free representative (Lotte Duty Free, n.d.), Lotte Duty Free, as a campaign to promote the Lotte Duty Free Store in Changi Airport, Singapore. The characters in this film are played by a rising South Korean singer and actor, Lee Junho, and an actress known as 'Summer' in the series. The focus of this duology is on a couple who reunite after being apart. Their reunion takes place in a related store when they both intend to buy a bottle of perfume that is believed to hold strong memories for both of them. In "Before Travel", it describes the tension between Junho and Summer, the fact that they haven't met each other since the day they broke up. They finally managed to sit and talk awkwardly, while we saw glimpses of their separation. In this film, we see the relevance between their relationship

and their past with the brand and related store, it also describes the uncertainty of the relationship between two characters in the future. Meanwhile in “After Travel,” we see glimpses of hope for the couple’s future. They reminisce about their time together by buying the same perfume they used as a couple. They also talk about the time they spent traveling and how the store became their signature spot for each trip. The series ends with an open ending, leaving the possibility for the couple to rekindle their lost connection. This is likely to happen given the positive vibes between the two.

“Encounter” Summary

The film tells the story about a meeting of a man named Arian and a woman named Amanda. It begins with Arian coming to Bandung, a city that silently witnessed the journey of his father’s life—a figure who has long been an exemplar and guiding light in his own life. Armed with classic photographs belonging to his father, Arian enthusiastically embarked on a quest to find a historical monument at Bandung Station, a landmark that holds significance for the city.

While at Bandung Station, fate led him to an unexpected encounter with Amanda, a woman who wholeheartedly assisted Arian in tracing the footsteps of the sought-after monument. This unforeseen meeting unfolded a new chapter in Arian’s life. Amanda became not only a fellow explorer but also a witness to the happiness and romance radiating from every step they took. After navigating through an adventurous search, Arian finally located the desired monument. Amanda gladly helped Arian capture the moment in a photograph that closely resembled the old pictures cherished by Arian. The expressions of joy and romance reflected on their faces became an unforgettable tale. The real surprise came when Arian discov-

ered that his recent experience mirrored his father’s past. It all started with an unexpected encounter at Bandung Station, captured in a photograph by his mother. This love story spans generations, highlighting the importance of family and the beauty of life’s journey.

Methodology

Generally, the aim of this study is to analyze and compare the use of soft-selling techniques in tourism marketing in South Korean and Indonesian cinematography. Furthermore, the study aims to compare visualization techniques used in both countries to represent tourism attractions from the audience’s perspective. To explore more about visual storytelling that is used as a soft-selling medium in short films, the authors conducted a descriptive qualitative study by examining, analyzing, and comparing short films between the two origin countries; Lotte Duty Free short film series “Before Travel” (Lotte Duty Free, 2022) and “After Travel” (Lotte Duty Free, 2022) as study cases from South Korea’s tourism campaign with a total duration of around 6 minutes long. This study also uses “Encounter” from Kereta Api Kita channel as a sample of Indonesia’s tourism campaign which has a total duration of 11 minutes long. Both short films are sourced from a popular online video platform, YouTube.

This study uses Roland Barthes’ semiotic approach to analyze how audiences perceive and understand persuasive and soft-selling messages in short films from two different countries. The study focuses on comparing the cinematography of the films and examining visual elements, such as camera usage and narrative storytelling techniques, in relation to Barthes’ concepts of denotation, connotation, and myth. Moreover, the semiotic method of Roland Barthes (2013) is used to refine concepts such as the reconstruction of

social reality, representation of tourism, and experience, influenced by the cultural values from two different countries. In his book, Barthes argues that the language people use to interact with each other, including myths, behaviors, visuals, show cards, furniture, and fashion, immediately form a meaningful unit that has connotations, creating social meaning in linguistic and semiological aspects. Barthes also emphasized that the indicated is not simply an “object” but a mental representation of the object. He also acknowledges that a sign gains meaning in relation to its context, and without context, its meaning becomes relative, as Saussure (1966) proposed.



Figure 1. Illustration of Sign Meaning Structure according to Semiotic Analysis

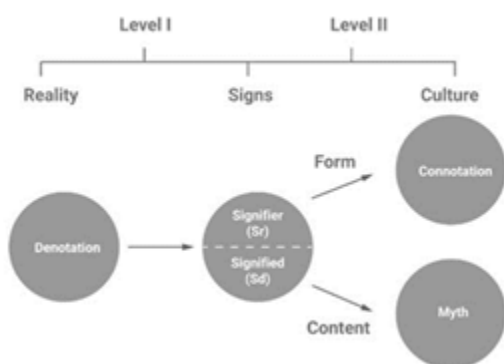


Figure 2. Roland Barthes Semiotic Framework (Source: Fiske, 2010)

To prove these claims to be true, various previous studies had been done. For example, the research conducted by Agustia & Oka (2021) aims to examine the involvement of Indonesians in symbolic rivalry via tourism tactics, particularly fo-

ocusing on hospitality in Bali, Indonesia. It reveals that these strategies blend Western values such as technology and comfort with Eastern values like hospitality and exoticism. Current tourism ads emphasize local culture, particularly in Bali. However, this approach has limitations in the competitive symbolic landscape. The study suggests that incorporating input from authoritative figures and ensuring alignment of markers and signifiers can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the promotional video's meaning and purpose.

Moreover, Wijayanto & Iswari (2021) conducted a semiotic analysis of Roland Barthes' theory on Pocari Sweat's “Sweat for Dream” advertisement delves into the intricate layers of meaning embedded within the visual and textual elements of the ad campaign. Drawing from Barthes' semiotic framework, which emphasizes the interplay between denotation and connotation, this analysis aims to unveil the underlying cultural assumptions and societal values reflected in the advertisement. In the case of the Pocari Sweat advertisement, the denotative elements may include visuals of athletes engaged in physical activity, accompanied by text highlighting the product's hydration benefits. However, upon closer examination, the connotative layers become apparent. The imagery of athletes striving towards their dreams and aspirations taps into broader cultural narratives surrounding perseverance, ambition, and success. The choice of “Sweat for Dream” as the campaign slogan further reinforces these connotations, suggesting that Pocari Sweat is not just a beverage but a symbol of determination and achievement. Furthermore, the advertisement may employ subtle cues such as lighting, color palette, and framing to enhance its emotional impact and resonance with the audience. These visual elements contribute to the overall semiotic texture of the advertisement, shaping the viewer's interpretation and

response.

These studies emphasize the significance of employing semiotic methods in film analysis to interpret the cultural and social dimensions that influence the portrayal of a particular culture. This portrayal can also impact a country's promotion of tourism destinations. A detailed and comprehensive descriptive approach is essential for understanding the content of films and using them as soft-selling tools for tourism. By combining qualitative methods with Barthes' semiotic analysis, authors can decode cultural and symbolic representations in films, revealing their potential impact on tourism promotion and destination branding. This approach also allows for a thorough exploration of the layers of meaning in films, providing valuable insights for using films as effective tools for promoting tourism destinations.

Result

This study focuses on two cinematography series that are used as soft-selling media through specific institutional actors, namely "LDF TV" by Lotte Duty Free and "Kereta Api Kita" by PT Kereta Api Indonesia through their official YouTube accounts. The analysis of these two cinematography series is conducted using Roland Barthes' semiotics theory on visual representation, which is elaborated through the portrayal of characters, dialogue, and the setting of several scenes within them.

Table 1 shows the analysis from "Before Travel", depicting each denotation, connotation, and myth from the scenes.

Table 1. Connotation, Denotation, and Myth analysis from "Before Travel"
(Source: Lotte Duty Free, 2022)

(1.A) "Before Travel" (00:18-00:48)	
Denotation	A man and woman are seen looking for something at the perfume counter in a luxurious store, being asked by the concierge
Connotation	They are looking for something to buy, considerably have a special meaning for both of them
Myth	Certain objects hold meaningful emotional value that compels someone to want to possess them again, despite the memories associated with them
(1.B) "Before Travel" (01:28-01:50)	

Denotation	A man and a woman are smiling and chatting about their past, especially about specific places and times
Connotation	Both characters are reminiscing about an event that had a lasting impact on each of them
Myth	The scene emphasizes the importance of the past in shaping the characters' identities and relationships, highlighting its value and significance

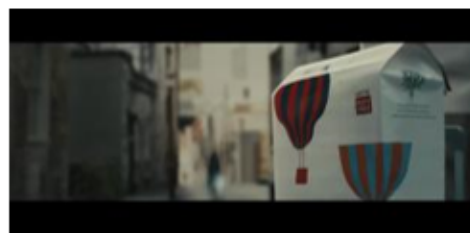
(1.C) "Before Travel" (02:14-02:15)



Denotation	A scene where the woman is seen leaving while the man is looking helpless, the coloring of the scene is in cool mood
Connotation	The woman's departure evokes feelings of separation, abandonment, and conflict, while the man's helpless expression conveys vulnerability and powerlessness. The cool tones of the scene intensify the emotional impact, emphasizing the distance between the characters
Myth	The woman leaving and the man's helpless look enhance the idea of romantic tragedy, where love is linked to

	suffering. The cool tones in the scene highlight emotional detachment, suggesting the characters are resigned to their fate.
--	--



(1.D) "Before Travel" (02:22-02:25)




Denotation	A scene depicting the woman walking away from the man, with the camera clearly capturing the brand on a shopping bag that the man is holding
Connotation	The woman walking away from the man may suggest separation or conflict. The camera focusing on the brand on the shopping bag hints at consumerism or economic status
Myth	The shopping bag brand symbolizes consumer culture, where material possessions define identity and status. The woman's separation from the man, highlighted by the branded bag, reinforces societal norms around wealth and consumption

In addition, Table 2 also outlines a comparable method used in "After Travel," which is a continuation of "Before Travel" as a compact series set. The analysis is described as below:

Table 2. Connotation, Denotation, and Myth analysis from "After Travel" (Source: Lotte Duty Free, 2022)

(2.A) "After Travel" (00:40-00:46)	
 <p><i>"Likewise, our ending came naturally."</i></p>	
Denotation	A scene about a man leaving an empty bottle of perfume while talking about the ending of a relationship
Connotation	The male lead is letting go of the unexplained memory about the perfume behind
Myth	Giving a sign that it might be better to move on and continue living without being haunted by the past
(2.B) "After Travel" (01:41-01:46)	
 <p><i>"You know it was our first matching perfume"</i></p>	
Denotation	The woman discloses that she and the man used to wear the same perfume when they

	were together
Connotation	The female lead still remembers the significance of the perfume to her and the male lead
Myth	A statement that the memory between the two people is still lingering in her mind even after the break up

(2.C) "After Travel" (02:13-02:24)	
 <p><i>"Did you know that the Lotte Duty Free Changi Airport store is the largest among all other overseas stores?"</i></p>	
Denotation	A man and a woman are talking about the perfume they bought and the stores where they got them
Connotation	The man and woman discussed their perfume purchases, mentioning specific stores where they bought them, hinting at a shared interest or connection.
Myth	The discussion on perfumes and shopping can reinforce consumer culture's focus on material possessions and identity. It also perpetuates traditional gender roles by associating perfume with femininity and portraying shopping as a leisure activity
(2.D) "After Travel" (02:30-02:38)	






"Our journey starts and ends with (Lotte Duty Free logo)"



Denotation	Both the man and the woman are seen to have a pleasant conversation with LDF logo appear on the center of the frame
Connotation	The LDF brand is a significant part of the couple's relationship, serving as a witness to their journey
Myth	The LDF brand holds a special place in the couple's hearts and will remain their chosen brand for the future experience

To make a solid comparison between Korean and Indonesian techniques in cinematography, Table 3 describes an analysis from "Encounter", the short film that promotes Kereta Api Indonesia as its focus. The analysis is shown as below:

Table 3. Connotation, Denotation, and Myth analysis from "Encounter"
 (Source: Kereta Api Kita, 2023)

(3.A) "Encounter" (00:03-00:56)	
	
Denotation	The bustling atmosphere at the train station, specifically Bandung Station, accompanied by the clearly visible KAI logo in several frames
Connotation	Bandung Station is always a popular stop for traveling and KAI is a trusted brand in the tourism and travel industry
Myth	The best way to experience Bandung is by taking the train, as it is operated by KAI
(3.B) "Encounter" (01:45-01:58)	
	
Connotation	A scene of a woman holding and carefully studying an old camera which she accidentally dropped
Denotation	Studying the camera after dropping it may suggest feelings of concern, regret, or nostalgia, adding tension to the scene and hinting at a loss of control

Myth	The woman's gentle touch as she picked up the camera suggests a longing to hold onto or revisit the past, highlighting the emotional value and memories associated with objects
(3.C) "Encounter" (01:34-01:40)	
	
Denotation	The woman expresses her shock after knowing that the man is speaking in sign language
Connotation	The woman's shock could suggest surprise, confusion, or disbelief, while the man's sign language use may indicate disability, communication challenges, or cultural differences. Her response may reflect attitudes towards sign language and its users
Myth	The discovery of sign language can challenge or reinforce myths about communication, disability, and diversity. The woman's surprise reflects societal views on sign language, highlighting the need for awareness and understanding of different communication methods
(3.D) "Encounter" (02:09-02:26)	

	
<i>"You can speak in sign language?"</i>	
Denotation	The man expression is shocked and pleased at the same time
Connotation	The man expressed his surprise after seeing the woman next to him could also use sign language to communicate with him
Myth	People who isn't the part of the community but understands and use sign language are even rarely encountered in society
(3.E) "Encounter" (04:37-04:45)	
	
<i>"Bandung Station has two entrances."</i>	
Denotation	A woman standing in front of a train monument while reciting the dialog
Connotation	Standing in front of a train monument can evoke thoughts of travel, transportation, and nostalgia for old locomotives and railways. Reciting the phrase "Bandung station has two entrances" may bring back

	memories, history, or personal experiences connected to train stations and travel
Myth	The dialogue recitation and train monument can amplify nostalgia for a romanticized past and the mentions of "Bandung station" evoke cultural and historical ties to the city's railway system. The repeated reference to "two entrances" may symbolize duality of the station that the woman is proud of to be mentioned

(3.F) "Encounter" (05:40-05:49)



Denotation	The man and the woman are seen standing close and smiling to each other
Connotation	The closeness of the man and woman suggests intimacy and connection. Their smiles reflect happiness and mutual understanding. Their body language and expressions show comfort and positivity in their interaction


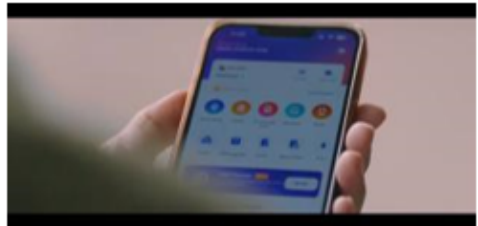
Myth	The image of the man and woman standing close and smiling reinforces the myth of romantic love as a source of happiness and emotional connection. It idealizes romantic relationships as harmonious and joyful unions
------	---

(3.G) "Encounter" (05:58-07:24)



Denotation	The man is posing in front of the monument and the woman is taking photos of him while smiling
Connotation	The man stands proudly in front of the monument while the woman smiles affectionately as she photographs him, capturing a moment of admiration and joy
Myth	A man posing in front of a monument while a woman takes photos may symbolize travel, adventure, and creating memories together. The monument represents history or culture, adding depth to the scene.

(3.H) "Encounter" (08:25-08:40)	
	
Denotation	The photo of his father in the old days and the current photo that he recently took with the woman is shown
Connotation	The photo was taken by his mother during the first meeting with his father
Myth	History and patterns of love in the family is repeating
(3.I) "Encounter" (09:04-09:10)	
	
Denotation	The man feels pleased or happy after receiving a message from a woman with a smiling face
Connotation	The message received by the man contained a photo of him and his father at Bandung Station.
Myth	Bandung Station can be considered a place of romance or nostalgia
(3.J) "Encounter" (09:16-09:20)	

(3.K) "Encounter" (03:12-03:23)	
	
Denotation	The woman invites the man to meet and take another photo at the train monument.
Connotation	The woman's invitation to meet at the train monument may suggest a desire to connect or reminisce. Taking another photo together could be a way to create shared memories or strengthen their bond
Myth	Meeting at the train monument for a photo could enhance the romantic love myth, portraying love as a source of happiness and emotional connection. The monument symbolizes travel and adventure, adding depth to the narrative.
	
Denotation	The woman opens the KAI Access application.
Connotation	Booking a train ticket through the KAI Access application.
Myth	The KAI Access application provides convenience in transactions anywhere.

Discussion

The analysis of related films focuses on two aspects of visual language: film semiotics and color theory in cinematography.

The Film Semiotic

Table 1 and Table 2 shows various techniques in modern Korean cinematography to convey the emotional bond with the audiences by using an evoking and intriguing storyline as the opening scene. The opening scene (1.A) shows a deep connection between the lead actors and the brand, Lotte Duty Free, by starting a story where the actors engage with the store of the respective brand. In (1.B), it is explicitly explained that both characters also share past memories related to the brand and its store, especially the Lotte Duty Free Store in Changi Airport, Singapore. The dialog goes on with glimpses of flashbacks in between to indicate that the two main characters are still trapped in the past and have mixed reality with the present time. Furthermore, despite the fact that the characters' conversation explicitly mentions the locations and tourist attractions linked to the brand in question (1.B and 2.C), it is smoothly and naturally woven into the narrative, ensuring that the dialogue does not come across as contrived or forced. Creating an immersive narrative in such an approach is crucial for engaging the audience when watching similar films due to its ability to create engaging and memorable experiences for tourists. Additionally, immersive storytelling has been proven to enhance intrinsic motivation and encourage behavioral change. Stories that incorporate immersive elements can motivate individuals to embrace the behaviors depicted in the narrative (Lu et al., 2012). By crafting interactive narratives, destinations can effectively showcase their unique attractions, create memorable experiences, and ultimately attract and retain tourists. The

film uses memories and nostalgia to create a compelling narrative that evokes a specific sense of place in the audience's mind. This technique aims to bring back fond memories from the past and entice viewers to revisit the location. The goal is to encourage previous visitors to return and relive their experiences, rather than attract new tourists (1.B, 2.C, 2.D).

On the contrary, Indonesian cinematography took a different approach when it came to using films as a promotional medium, which can be seen in Table 3. The brand KAI heavily influences the whole cinematic piece. Although there is no explicit mention of this brand in the dialogue, the exposure to KAI is done openly and quite dominant throughout the visual narrative of the film (3.A). In addition, the setting of the film also focuses on Bandung Station, which is closely linked to the story of its characters (3.E, 3.G-I). While it is also using an immersive narrative and romantic story as its focus, the promoting attempts in "Encounter" are more straightforward compared to either "Before Travel" and "After Travel". The film prominently features the KAI brand in multiple scenes and repeatedly mentions Bandung Station, emphasizing its significance as the main attraction while KAI is portrayed as the overseeing brand of the station (3.A, 3.E, 3.G-I). Moreover, the KAI brand is promoted in (3.K) through the use of the KAI app by one of the characters in the film, demonstrating soft-selling and creating an indirect connection between the audience and the brand (Okazaki et al., 2010). This discovery reinforces the significance of promoting a brand tied to the story's location and plot, reminding the audience of its relevance. It also highlights the filmmakers' efforts to integrate the brands into the viewers' experience of the short films. While both brands engage in similar promotions, the creators of "Encounter" excel by integrating the KAI application and providing clear instructions for its use,

serving as a helpful guide for viewers.

Colors and Emotions

Both “Before Travel” and “After Travel” use a similar approach on the color theory of the cinematography by combining both warm and cool colors. Warm colors in cinematography are recognized for their ability to elicit particular emotions and reactions from audiences. Studies have demonstrated that warm colors like red, yellow, and orange are linked to powerful visual cues that bring to mind warmth, the sun, and fire, leading to feelings of excitement, stimulation, and heightened arousal (Chen et al., 2022). These colors are also frequently utilized to express positive feelings and are associated with ideas such as enjoyment and increased excitement (Liew et al., 2022). In the beginning of both films, the warm color tones on the cinematography could also stand as a hope and a welcoming journey for the actors to start a new chapter of their lives. The colors also dominate the whole film, indicating that the events are currently happening in the present time (1.A-B, 2.A-C). The color technique is also evident in “Encounter,” as the overall cinematography’s color grading represents a warm meeting in the present time. Pink hues are used to create a romantic and desirable scene from the perspective of someone in love (3.E-G).

On the other hand, cool colors are often used to create a feeling of peace, serenity, and self-reflection in movie scenes. However, it is also connected to negative stimuli and are conceptually associated with feelings of sadness and negativity (Jonaszkaitė et al., 2018). The deliberate use of cool colors in cinematography can have a profound effect on how viewers perceive and emotionally react to a scene, whether it’s to convey a sense of mystery or to evoke feelings of detachment or isolation. In this case, while the LDF em-

phasizes memories by using cool colors to evoke a sense of sadness, prompting a longing for the past. In contrast, the KAI utilizes warm colors to evoke excitement, creating anticipation for what lies ahead (1.C and 1.D).

Conclusion

Barthes’ semiotic analysis is a useful tool for uncovering the hidden meanings and messages in soft-selling short films. This study suggests that Barthes’ framework can be applied to analyze the visual and textual elements in these films, revealing the subtle promotion of a brand or product. By examining the signs and symbols used in these films, authors were able to identify how they contribute to the overall persuasive effect. These findings demonstrate the effectiveness of Barthes’ semiotic analysis in revealing the covert persuasive strategies employed in soft-selling short films.

The film’s denotative meaning suggests that conveying messages through moving images can make it easier for viewers to understand the content and message of the film. Despite using different cinematography techniques, the films studied in this study effectively serve as a soft-selling medium, capturing the audience’s attention and evoking their emotions and curiosity. The language used is simple and easy to understand and the basic techniques of filming, from extreme close-ups to long shots, are demonstrated throughout each film. The connotations of each film are quite different and similar at the same time. “Before Travel” and “After Travel” indicate memories of parting and reuniting of a couple, while “Encounter” focuses on the introduction of two individuals. However, both storylines have a commonality, which is the meeting of a couple based on an emotional attachment to a brand and a ‘historic’ location for both parties. Thus, the myth in both

storylines suggests that personal experiences with certain brands and places can create lasting and meaningful memories, benefiting the brand and the tourism attraction

References

- Agustia, K. T. S., & Oka, I. B. M. J. R. (2021, January 4). Analisis Semiotik Iklan Promosi Perhotelan di Kabupaten Badung. Seminar Ilmiah Nasional Teknologi, Sains, Dan Sosial Humaniora (SINTESA), 3. <https://doi.org/10.36002/snts.voio.1247>
- Barthes, R. (2013). *Mythologies: The Complete Edition*, in a New Translation (R. Howard & A. Lavers, Trans.; 2nd ed.). Hill and Wang.
- Chen, Z., Meng, X., & Yao, Z. (2022, February 1). The Effect of Object Color Tones on Emotions. *Proceedings of the 2021 International Conference on Education, Language and Art (ICELA 2021)*. 10.2991/assehr.k.220131.014
- Colins, A. T., & de Lima, M. G. (2020, 10 14). Etnografia de tela e semio-pragmática: um diálogo entre metodologias de análise fílmica. *Avanca Cinema*. doi.org/10.37390/avancacinema.2020.a146
- Fiske, J. (2010). *Introduction to Communication Studies* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Jonauskaitė, D., Althaus, B., Dael, N., Dan-Glauser, E., & Möhr, C. (2018). What color do you feel? Color choices are driven by mood. *Color Research and Application*, 44(2), 272-284. <https://doi.org/10.1002/col.22327>
- Kereta Api Kita (Director). (2023). Film Pendek "Encounter" [Film]. Kereta Api Indonesia. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fhz43QdGtP4> (Original work published 2023)
- Liesandra, S. O. (2022, July 19). A Cultural Semiotics Study: Ethnomathematical Exploration in Geometry Materials Through Cultural Site in Aceh. *Jurnal Cakrawala Pendas*, 8(3), 688-697. <https://doi.org/10.31949/jcp.v8i3.2537>
- Liew, T. W., Tan, S.-M., Gan, C. L., & Pang, W. M. (2022, November 8). Colors and Learner's Gender Evoke Different Emotional and Cognitive Effects in Multimedia Learning. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 2022, 15. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/1235732>
- Lotte Duty Free. (n.d.). About Lotte Duty Free. Lotte Duty Free. Retrieved March 3, 2024, from <https://en.lottedfs.com/about/lottedfs/content.do>
- Lotte Duty Free. (2022, 11 21). [ENG] [A LDF Original Series] Lee Junho EP.1 Before Travel. Youtube. Retrieved 01 31, 2024, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7fwW5Jjil>
- Lotte Duty Free. (2022, 11 22). [ENG] [A LDF Original Series] Lee Junho EP.2 After Travel. Youtube. Retrieved 01 31, 2024, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cdaxochPDL4>
- Lu, A. S., Baranowski, T., Thompson, D., & Buday, R. (2012, June 6). Story Immersion of Videogames for Youth Health Promotion: A Review of Literature. *Games for Health Journal*, 1(3), 199-204. <https://doi.org/10.1089/g4h.2011.0012>
- Moodie, M. (2022, November 20). Lotte Duty Free hosts fan meeting with superstar Lee Jun-ho as travel recovery gains pace. *The Moodie Davitt Report*. Retrieved April 29, 2024, from <https://moodiedavittreport.com/lotte-duty-free-hosts-fan-meeting-with-superstar-lee-jun-ho-as-travel-recovery-gains-pace/>

- Okazaki, S., Mueller, B., & Taylor, C. R. (2010, June 1). Global Consumer Culture Positioning: Testing Perceptions of Soft-Sell and Hard-Sell Advertising Appeals between U.S. and Japanese Consumers. *Journal of International Marketing*, 8(2). <https://doi.org/10.1509/jimk.18.2.20>
- Putranto, T. D., Susilo, D., Suyanto, B., & Ariadi, S. (2022). Indonesian millennials: Building metrosexual capitalist industry through Instagram #cowokmilenial. *Plaridel Journal of Communication, Media, and Society*, 19(2), 29-54. <https://doi.org/10.52518/2021-09pssa>
- Saussure, F. d. (1966). *Course in General Linguistics* (C. Bally, A. Sechehaye, A. Riedlinger, & W. Baskin, Eds.; W. Baskin, Trans.). McGraw-Hill.
- Supriatna, E., & Savira, R. T. (2021, October 17). The Potential of Jenderal Soedirman's Short Film as Learning Media in National Events of the Colonial Period's Material for Fifth Graders: A Semiotics Analysis. *Journal of Education Technology*, 5(3), 409-416. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jet.v5i3.36022>
- Wijayanto, C. S., & Iswari, F. (2021). Semiotics Analysis of Roland Barthes' Theory on Pocari Sweat's "Sweat for Dream" Advertisement. *Cultural Syndrome*, 3(2), 100-108. <https://doi.org/10.30998/cs.v3i2.804>