

## INTENDED MEANING OF COLDPLAY'S ALBUM COVER "A HEAD FULL OF DREAMS": SEMIOTIC STUDY

Nur Fadilla<sup>1</sup>, Dwi Setiyadi<sup>2</sup>, Rosita Ambarwati<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup> Department of English Teaching  
Universitas PGRI Madiun

---

### Article Info

#### *Article history:*

Received January 12, 2018

Revised March 20, 2018

Accepted Mei 29, 2018

---

#### *Keywords:*

Semiotic

Ideology

Album Cover

---

### ABSTRACT

The study entitled "Intended Meaning of Coldplay's Album Cover "A Head Full of Dreams": Semiotic Study". The data taken from Coldplay album cover. The aims of this study is to describe semiotic elements and to describe the meaning intended in the album cover. The data analysis described in qualitative using semiotic theory from *Peirce* icon, index, and symbol. Then, to represent the meaning and the ideas used theory ideology from *Dijk*. The results shows that theory of semiotic succeed to describe the meaning intended in album cover. The visual and verbal elements have functions to persuade the people to buy Coldplay album A Head Full of Dreams.

Copyright © 2018 Department of English Teaching.  
All rights reserved.

---

### *Corresponding Author:*

Nur Fadilla,

Department of English Teaching,

Universitas PGRI Madiun,

Jalan Setiabudi No.85 Madiun, Eas Java, Indonesia.

Email: [nurfadilla.khamid@gmail.com](mailto:nurfadilla.khamid@gmail.com)

---

### 1. INTRODUCTION

There are so many signs around us in our daily life, for example, the danger signs, everyone knows that red light means there is a danger. When the danger came to us, the red light will on automatically. The red light signs inform us that there is a danger and we must run away from it. The example shows that the signs is very important in the daily life, especially for the process of communication.

Semiotic is the study about signs in human life which contains a meaning. Here, the album cover Coldplay's album cover: A Head Full of Dreams (2015) called as semiotic sign because it contains the combination of colour, sign, symbol and of course contains the meaning behind. Semiotic theory is the way to interpret the elements in the album cover. Based on the problems above, the aims of this study can be determined as follows 1) To describe the semiotic elements found in Coldplay album cover A Head Full of Dreams. 2) To describe the intended meaning of Coldplay album cover A Head Full of Dreams.

### 2. METHOD

The data in this study taken from Coldplay official website that is Coldplay album cover A Head Full of Dreams (2015). In collecting data, this study used qualitative method and document. Document is the technique of collecting data because the data is available in document form. The data were displayed using table. The data described and analyzed using semiotic theory by Peirce and ideology theory by Dijk. Several

steps of analyzing the data are first, displayed the data originally, second, reduced the data which only focus on the signs (text, colour, shape, layout), third, analyzed the data using semiotic theory, and the last, interpreted the meaning intended using ideology theory.

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### 1. The Semiotic Analysis of Coldplay Album Cover A Head Full of Dreams

Semiotic analysis is the study about signs that has relationship between object, sign/representamen, and its interpretant. The sign/representamen consist of icon, index, and symbol.

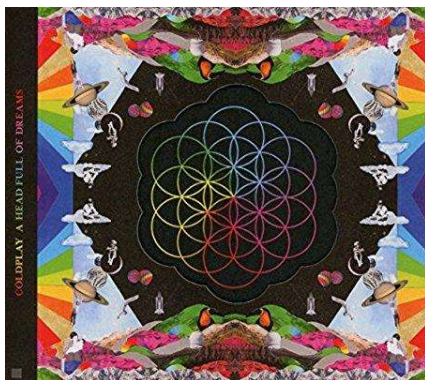


Figure 1. Coldplay album cover: A Head Full of Dreams

##### 1.1 Icon

There are 13 icons found in Coldplay's album cover A Head Full of Dreams, are gradation rainbow colour of flower of life and gradation colour in rainbow of circle shape in flower of life, a silver boy sits on the sky, a silver boy sits on gray black crescent moon, a silver boy hangs in the creme Saturn planet ring, a silver white rocket, a rainbow hot air balloon, a somersaulting boy, a channel billed toucan bird sitting on the hill, a silver boy which is carrying baby, black hexagon shape as the background of flower of life, triangle shape in light blue sky, in rainbow, and in set of hill. Those are include in icon, because based on the theory, something which became an icon it must in form of color, shape, dimension, sound, and taste.

##### 1.2 Index

The index here is not found. because there is no something which represents as index. Based on the theory, index has relationship with physical connection, cause and effect. Here, in Coldplay album cover A Head Full of Dreams there is no elements which is classified as an index.

##### 1.3 Symbol

The symbol here are 2 (two) text in Coldplay's album cover. First is capitalized Coldplay text written in times new roman font. Second is A Head Full of Dreams also capitalized in times new roman font. Based on the theory, the example of a symbol can found in word, insignia, morse code, logical sign, algebraic sign. A symbol stands for its referent in a conventional way.

Semiotic elements found in Coldplay album cover A Head Full of Dreams are 13 (thirteen) icons, no index, and 2 (two) symbols. This case is supported by Diryani (2013) that also found semiotic elements in other album cover Love by Angels and Airwaves Band. The result shows there are 1 (one) icon, 3 (three) indexes, and 1 (one) symbol which appears on it. Thus, it can be concluded that semiotic theory from

Pierce (in Chandler, 2007) icon, index, and symbol can help to find the semiotic elements which stand in the album cover as the object.

## 2. The Ideology of Coldplay Album Cover A Head Full of Dreams

The ideology, they are primarily some kind of 'ideas' which believed by the people as the foundation of life. The ideology or the intended meaning in Coldplay's album cover are about their memories, dreams, and experiences. The ideas are about hope and dreams, freedom, love, grateful and optimism. The ideas found from the context of the album itself, that is the topic of each song in the album which has relationship with semiotic elements found before. The 11 (eleven) songs, are :

1. A Head Full of Dreams tells about hope and dreams and it represented the elements of rocket, toucan bird, and the hill.
2. Birds tells about freedom and it represented the elements of toucan bird.
3. Hymn For the Weekend tells about love and it represented the elements of boy carrying baby, boy somersaulting, and boy hanging on the Saturn planet ring.
4. Everglow tells about reminder ex-lover/not really moving on and it represented the elements of boy sitting on crescent, boy sitting on the sky.
5. Adventure of A Lifetime tells about adventure to looking for someone/moving on and it represented the boy somersaulting, boy hanging on the Saturn planet ring, and toucan bird.
6. Fun tells about reminder ex-lover/not really moving on and it represented the elements of boy sitting on crescent and boy sitting on the sky.
7. Kaleidoscope tells about be grateful for everything in life/life reflection and it represented the elements of the flower of life.
8. Army of One tells about finding new lover/moving on and it represented the elements of boy somersaulting and boy hanging on the Saturn planet ring.
9. Amazing Day tells about grateful everything in life and it represented the elements of the flower of life.
10. Colour Spectrum tells about be grateful and accepted everything in life and it represented the elements of the flower of life.
11. Up&Up tells about optimism and it represented the elements of the flower of life and hexagon shape.

Thus, it can be concluded that Coldplay would like to share their memories, dreams, thoughts, and experiences to all of people to make them inspired and motivated to always stay strong and always do the best in life. This case also supported by Diryani (2013) that the semiotic elements found in the album cover has the meaning intended. Diryani (2013) analyzed album cover Love by Angels and Airwaves Band. The meaning intended behind on the album cover is analyzed by theory from Odgen and Richard (1923). The result shows that the messages or meaning that can be captured from the sign and the following components of the theory. There are from the symbol, thought of reference, and the referent. The intended meaning that about the basic needs of a human being as a social creature to communicate and cooperate with other creatures and it remains us to still believe in God.

---

#### 4. CONCLUSION

From the analysis of Coldplay's album cover: A Head Full of Dreams, there are some points that can be taken as conclusions. By using theory of Semiotic from Peirce and theory of Ideology from Dijk, all of the semiotic elements in Coldplay's album cover: A Head Full of Dreams (2015) are found and interpreted. The combination of colour and visual elements makes the album cover eye catching and contains the meaning deeper. The semiotic elements found are thirteen icons, no index, and two symbols. Those elements interpreted as the foundation of life, likes hope, freedom, love, grateful and optimism. The Times New Roman font and colour gradation in the verbal elements have function to give emphasizing on every word, easy to read and remember.

#### REFERENCES

- Chandler, Daniel. (2007). *Semiotics: The Basics*. New York: Routledge.
- Cobley, Paul. (2001). *To Semiotics and Linguistics*. New York: Routledge.
- Creamer, David. (2003). *Computer Typography Basics*. California: I.D.E.A.S Publishing Consultant and Trainer.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. London: Sage.
- Danesi, Marcel. (2004). *Messages, Signs, and Meanings: A Basic Textbook in Semiotics and Communication Theory, 3rd Edition*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press Inc.
- Dijk, Teun. A. Van. (2006). *Ideology and Discourse Analysis*. Journal of Political and Ideology. 11 (2): 116.
- Frutiger, Adrian. (1928). *Signs and Symbols: Their Design and Meaning. Translated by Andrew Bluhm*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis*. London: Sage.