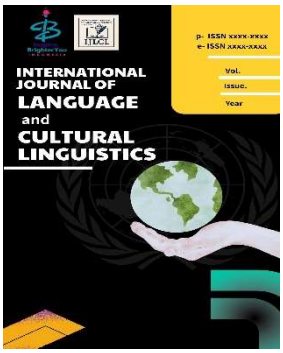
IJLCL
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL LINGUISTICS



The Meaning of Slogan in American Fast-Food Advertisement: Semantics Study

Erina Meisya Putri[1], Artiani Fatma Syariah[2], Angie Krisabel[3]
[1,2,3]English Department, Faculty of Humanity, Widyatama University, Bandung, Indonesia

Abstract:
Advertising is one of the most effective ways to promote products and attract consumers. One important part of an advertisement is the slogan, which helps companies communicate their messages and create a strong brand image. This study aims to analyze the types of meaning found in American fast-food slogans using Geoffrey Leech's Theory of Meaning and to find purposes of each slogan. This research uses a qualitative descriptive method. The data were taken from five American fast-food slogans: "Eat Fresh" (Subway), "All American Food" (A&W), "It's Bro Time" (Bojangles), "I'm Lovin' It" (McDonald's), and "Making People Happy Through Food" (Carl's). The slogans were analyzed to identify the types of meaning and their purposes. The findings show that there are three types of meaning found in the slogans: conceptual meaning, social meaning, and affective meaning. Two slogans contain conceptual meaning, one slogan contains social meaning, and two slogans contain affective meaning. The study shows that slogans are not only used to promote products but also to express values, emotions, and brand identity. Therefore, semantic analysis helps readers understand the messages behind advertising slogans more clearly.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Submitted: 20-08-2025
Revised: 20-09-2025
Accepted: 30-10-2025
Published: 31-12-2025

KEYWORDS
Advertisement; Slogan; American Fast-Food; Semantics

INTRODUCTION

Language plays an important role in human communication. People use language to express ideas, feelings, opinions and information in everyday life. Besides being used in daily communication, language is also widely used in advertisements. Through advertisements, companies try to introduce their product and attract consumers. Therefore, the language used in advertisements should be interesting, persuasive, and easy to remember.

One of the important elements in advertisements is a slogan. A slogan is usually a short phrase that represents a product or a brand. Although slogans are often simple and easy to remember, they may contain deeper meanings. According to Chandra (2013), slogans are created not only to attract consumers but also to communicate messages and build a brand

Corespondence Author: Angie Krisabel krisabel.angie@widyatama.ac.id
© 2025

image. Therefore, slogans can be analyzed from a linguistic perspective, especially through semantics.

One of the semantic theories commonly used to analyze meaning is Geoffrey Leech's Theory of Meaning. Leech (1998) classifies meaning into several types, including conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, social meaning, affective meaning, reflected meaning, collocative meaning, and thematic meaning. These types of meaning help researchers understand how language is used to convey particular messages.

American fast food restaurants often use slogans as part of their advertising strategies Slogans such as “I'm Lovin' It”, “Eat Fresh”, and “It's Finger Lickin' Good” are widely recognized by consumers. Although these slogans are short, they contain meanings that may influence consumers' perception of the products and brands. Therefore, this study focuses on analyzing the meanings found in American fast food slogans by using Geoffrey Leech's theory of meaning.

The objectives of this study are to identify the types of meaning found in American fast food slogans to explain how these meanings are used in advertising to attract consumers. Based on the description of the background of the problem and the research phenomenon, the researchers can identify the following problems:

1. What types of meaning of the American fast-food slogans in the advertisement?
2. What is the purpose of each American fast-food slogan in the advertisement?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many linguists have described semantics. Yule (2010) stated in her book that semantics is the study of the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences. The meaning or the information can be conveyed through gesture, picture, signal, etc. Language was the main tool of communication and semantics was concerned with how the meaning was conveyed by the linguistics system like sentences, phrases, words, morphemes, etc. (Umagandhi & Vinothini, 2017). Geoffrey Leech (1981) explained and divided meaning into seven types: conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, social meaning, affective meaning, reflected meaning, collocative meaning, and thematic meaning.

Conceptual Meaning

Conceptual meaning is the literal meaning of words. Geoffrey Leech states that "conceptual meaning is important for understanding language because it provides the exact meaning of a word" (Leech, 1981). In the slogan, this literal meaning can help customers to easily understand the information that the slogan intended to convey without trying to guess the meaning. For example, the word "needle" conceptually means a small, thin, sharp tool for sewing.

Corespondence Author: Angie Krisabel krisabel.angie@widyatama.ac.id
© 2025

Connotative Meaning

Connotative meaning depends on personal experience, culture, and historical context so it is not the same for everyone (Leech 1981). It is in contrast with conceptual meaning which is in line with the dictionary definition, connotative meaning based on personal and cultural meanings conveyed by words (Elfisnur, 2025). For example, "needle" in connotative meaning might evoke pain, an injection, or acupuncture.

Social Meaning

Leech (1981) stated social meaning includes variations in language style that indicate social nuances. Aspects of language variation including dialect or style like formal, informal,colloquial, slang, etc (Umagandhi & Vinothini, 2017). For example, when a student talks with a teacher is different with when the same student talks with a friend.

Affective Meaning

Affective meaning indicates the speaker's feelings. Leech (1981) conveyed that affective meaning is the way to express feelings and attitudes toward other people or the topic discussion. The feelings are usually negative through forms of language use like insults, flattery, hyperbole, or sarcasm (Kurman & Zuraida, 2022). For example, when the boss said "The floor is so clean" to the office boy, it indicates the boss's feeling of anger or dissatisfaction through sarcasm.

Reflected Meaning

Leech (1981) stated the reflected meaning as "what is communicated through association with another sense of the same expression." Palmer (1976) named certain example pairs of synonyms that can be regarded as having elements of Leech's reflected meaning. The example pairs are: politician and statesman; hide and conceal; liberty and freedom.

Collocative Meaning

Collocative meaning refers to the words that often appear together in a particular context (Leech, 1981). The pairs of words enhance emotional expression and imagery. It also helps reader to understand sentences more easily. For example, both pretty and handsome conceptually mean good looking, but pretty collocates with women, while handsome collocates with men.

Thematic Meaning

Thematic meaning refers to the use of different sentence structures to highlight or emphasize certain information in a sentence (Leech, 1981). The speaker can describe the message through word choice and word order to emphasize the message (Kurman & Zuraida, 2022). For example, better to use active voice when the doer is important and use passive voice when the object is more important to know than the doer.

Corespondence Author: Angie Krisabel krisabel.angie@widyatama.ac.id
© 2025

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method to analyze the meanings found in American fast-food slogans. Qualitative research is appropriate because this study focuses on understanding and interpreting the meanings contained in language rather than using numerical data.

The data were collected from five slogans of American fast-food restaurants, namely "Eat Fresh" (Subway), "All American Food" (A&W), "It's Bro Time" (Bojangles), "I'm Lovin' It" (McDonald's), and "Making People Happy Through Food" (Carl's). These slogans were selected because they are popular and widely recognized by consumers.The data were analyzed using Geoffrey Leech's Theory of Meaning (1981). The researcher identified the types of meaning found in each slogan and explained their purposes in advertising. After that, the findings were described and interpreted to provide a better understanding of how meanings are used in American fast-food slogans.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research is using the semantics study approach to find types of meaning of each American fast-food slogan by using Leech's Theory, Types of Meaning. The theory consists of conceptual meaning, connotative meaning, social meaning, affective meaning, reflected meaning, and collocative meaning. Also, this research is trying to find the purposes of each slogan.

Conceptual Meaning

Data 1: Subway

Slogan: Eat Fresh

This slogan falls into the conceptual meaning type because readers can directly understand the meaning of the slogan without needing to think the implied meaning. Because the word "Fresh" immediately shows the quality of the food being sold. The purpose of this slogan is to clearly show the quality of the food and increase trust in food that is always fresh.

Data 2: A&W

Slogan: All American Food

This slogan also includes conceptual meaning, because the slogan clearly states that they sell all kinds of typical American food. The goal is to sort out customers who are actually looking for American food and also to emphasize their identity as pioneers of American-style fast-food restaurants.

Social Meaning

Data 3: Bojangles

Slogan: It's Bro Time

Corespondence Author: Angie Krisabel krisabel.angie@widyatama.ac.id
© 2025

This slogan has a social meaning, because the word "Bro" in the slogan refers to friendship and closeness in certain social groups. The aim is to show that this fast-food restaurant can be a place to gather with close friends on special moments.

Affective Meaning

Data 4: McDonald's

Slogan: I'm Lovin' It

This slogan falls into the affective meaning, the word "Lovin'" indicates a feeling of pleasure or satisfaction when enjoying food and also indicates positive emotions. The objective of the slogan is for customers to feel happy when eating at McDonald's.

Data 5: Carl's

Slogan: Making People Happy Through Food

This slogan also includes in the affective meaning because the slogan explains that feelings of happiness can be obtained from food. The goal is to ensure that customers are happy when eating food from Carl's.

Therefore, by knowing the types of meaning and purpose of each slogan, it can make it easier for us to understand the meaning of these slogans more deeply. Thus, potential buyers can easily choose which one American fast-food restaurant by just reading their slogan.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis, this study found three types of meaning in American fast-food slogans: conceptual meaning, social meaning, and affective meaning. The slogans "Eat Fresh" and "All American Food" contain conceptual meaning because their meanings can be understood directly. The slogan "It's Bro Time" contains social meaning because it reflects friendship and social interaction. Meanwhile, the slogans "I'm Lovin' It" and "Making People Happy Through Food" contain affective meaning because they express positive feelings and emotions.

The findings show that slogans have an important role in advertising. They are not only used to promote products but also to create a positive image and connect with consumers emotionally. Through semantic analysis, readers can better understand the messages, values, and purposes behind advertising slogans. This study also shows that slogans play an important role in influencing consumers and building brand identity.

REFERENCES

Chandra, E. N. (2013). Meaning Analysis of English Slogans Advertisements. Journal LPPM Unindra https://journal.lppmunindra.ac.id/index.php/Deiksis/article/download/458/770

Corespondence Author: Angie Krisabel krisabel.angie@widyatama.ac.id
© 2025

Elfisnur, N. (2025) Leech's Seven Types of Meaning Analysis in NCT Dreams's Song 'Rains in Heaven. Universitas Riau Kepulauan. https://repository.unrika.ac.id/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/636/REPOSITORY%20JURNAL%20Nurfaradilla%20Elfisnur%20%28211060026%29.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Kurman A. G., Zuraida I. (2022) The Meaning of Slogan in Cosmetics Advertisement: Semantics Study. Budapest International Research and Critics Institute Journal (BIRCI-Journal), 5(3), 18891-18893. https://www.bircu-journal.com/index.php/birci/article/view/5888/pdf

Leech, G. (1981) Semantics The Study of Meaning. Penguin Books.

Palmer, F. (1976). Semantics a New Outline. Cambridge University Press.

Saeed, J. I. (2016). Semantics (4th ed.). Wiley Blackwell.

Umagandhi, R., Vinothini, M. (2017) Leech's Seven Types of Meaning in Semantics. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Reasearch and Development, 4(3), 71-72. https://www.allsubjectjournal.com/assets/archives/2017/vol4issue3/4-2-30-733.pdf

Yule, G. (2010) The Study of Language. Cambridge University Press.

Corespondence Author: Angie Krisabel krisabel.angie@widyatama.ac.id
© 2025