



Verbal and Visual Sign in *Midsommar* Movie Posters

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Abstract. This study investigates the verbal and visual signs embedded in the promotional posters of *Midsommar* (2019), a psychological horror film directed by Ari Aster. Drawing on Dyer's (1982) theory of visual signs, Saussure's semiotic model of the signifier and signified, and Cerrato's (2012) theory of color symbolism, the research analyzes how linguistic and visual elements work together to convey layered meanings. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, five official film posters were examined to identify how signs construct thematic messages and emotional tones. The findings reveal that the posters deliberately juxtapose serene imagery with unsettling symbols, creating a tension between aesthetic beauty and psychological horror. Verbal cues such as taglines and titles signal themes of ritual, trauma, and emotional transformation, while visual signs—such as costume, color palette, facial expressions, and symbolic objects—reinforce the film's narrative of cultural disorientation and personal collapse. Color symbolism, particularly the use of red, blue, and white, plays a key role in evoking mood and implying deeper psychological and ritualistic meanings. Overall, this study demonstrates that *Midsommar*'s posters function not only as promotional tools but also as rich semiotic texts that foreshadow the film's ideological and emotional content, offering insight into how horror and beauty can coexist within cinematic visual culture.

Keywords: semiotics, film poster, verbal signs, visual signs, *Midsommar*

1. INTRODUCTION

Sociolinguistics is the study of the relationship between language and society. It explores how people use language in various social conditions, and how factors such as age, gender, class, and culture influence the way people communicate. In advertising, language plays an essential role in crafting messages that resonate with specific audiences. Advertisers often employ sociolinguistic knowledge to create advertisements that reflect the speech patterns, cultural values, and social identities of their target audience. According to Wardhaugh (2006), language may be used to represent group membership and social identity, which is a common strategy in advertising to generate a sense of familiarity or belonging. Therefore, sociolinguistics and advertising are linked by their shared focus on how language reflects and impacts society, making sociolinguistic analysis a valuable tool for examining language strategies in advertisements.

Although commonly associated with commercial products, advertising also includes promotional media such as film posters, which function as visual advertisements for movies. These posters often use verbal elements—such as taglines, titles, or reviews—that reflect certain social and cultural codes. As such, sociolinguistic analysis is also applicable to film posters, including *Midsommar*, where the use of language contributes to the construction of social meaning and audience engagement.

Semiotics is a part of linguistics that focuses on the study of meaning in language,

encompassing words, phrases, and sentences. According to Leech (1974), meaning is the linguistic form's inherent significance that links expressions to concepts, objects, or mental visualizations. In other words, meaning is contained inside linguistic structures and serves as a bridge that connects words or phrases to the concepts, objects, or pictured thoughts they are intended to convey. The uniqueness of the word selections in advertising makes it a particular area of research. This essay provides an analytical examination of the linguistic features of English advertisements at the semiotics level.

Language is a very important aspect of linguistics, especially semiotics. Language serves as a fundamental and crucial component in the intricate tapestry of human daily existence, enabling individuals to effectively convey thoughts, emotions, and information to one another through various forms of communication. Finnegan and Besnier (1989) stated that the language is a finite system of elements and principles that make it possible for the speakers to construct sentences to do a particular communicative job. It explains that the primary objective of communication is to convey significance. Many methods exist to communicate meaning.

Advertisements and posters are prime examples. Signs express emotions non-verbally and are universally understood, making them fascinating to explore. Anything that conveys meaning visually is a sign. Typically, signs feature prominently in advertisements to market products. Signs are prevalent in various communication forms, including advertisements. In semiotics, the sign's meaning is analyzed to reveal the intended message for the audience. Advertising serves as a communicative tool to promote products and stimulate consumer interest. In a conventional advertisement, there exist words, images, colors, and symbols. Each of these elements serves to facilitate the comprehension of the advertisement's intent by consumers. Film production companies are also required to market their cinematic works prior to their official release. Employing movie posters to apprise audiences of forthcoming films constitutes one method of achieving this objective.

Movie studios always create movie posters before releasing a new film. Every movie studio creates eye-catching movie posters to attract viewers and generate interest in their films. Movie posters are created with the purpose of capturing the interest of the general audience and drawing them to view the movie being promoted. This is done to increase the viewership of the film. For example, this movie was produced in the United States in 2019. A24 released this movie. Ari Aster served as the production's directors and Screenwriter; Lars Knudsen and Patrik Andersson served as producers and Pawel Pogorzelski served as cinematographer. For the movie *Bobby*, Krlic created the eerie and atmospheric score. The

key cast in the film include those of Florence Pugh, Jack Reynor, William Jackson Harper, Vilhelm Blomgren, Will Poulter.

Dani (Florence Pugh) and Christian (Jack Reynor) are a young American couple whose relationship teeters on the edge of collapse. However, a family tragedy forces them to remain together, prompting Christian to invite a grieving Dani to accompany him and his friends on an unforgettable journey to a midsummer festival in a secluded Swedish village. What starts as a care free summer getaway in the Northern European land of perpetual daylight quickly takes a dark turn when the reclusive villagers encourage their guests to engage in celebrations that transform the idyllic paradise into something increasingly unsettling and profoundly disturbing. Midsommar movie posters were collected through internet with a total of five posters. From five posters collected, there are two posters that when viewed from a layman's perspective, would look like a romance and drama genre poster. The role of Dyer's Theory of Visual Signs and Saussure's Theory of Semiotics is very important in exploring the meaning of the posters that have been collected, the theory of color meaning by Cerrato also helps the author get a more specific analysis of the five posters that have been collected. This movie poster chosen as the data source because these posters have unique characteristics containing a lot of visual signs. The posters are very meaningful and mysterious that makes the viewer interesting to watch.

2. METHOD

This section outlines the components of the research methodology, including data sources, methods and techniques for data collection, methods and techniques for data analysis, and methods and techniques for data presentation. The components are described as follows:

The data of this research was obtained from the website on the internet http://www.impawards.com/2019/midsommar_ver5.html. There were five movie posters released by Midsommar Movie on the website, and all the released posters were used to help this study.

Method and Technique of Collecting Data

This study's data was collected using the documentation method, With a particular focus on the game posters one by one.

First, obtain images of movie posters from the website. Secondly, gathering and download the data, carefully reading it, and classifying it after a comprehensive analysis to determine the meaning of the visual and verbal cues of the poster. Lastly, the note-taking

method involves taking notes while closely observing the verbal and visual clues included in the posters. Taking notes helps capture crucial aspects including language, color, layout, and pictures. This provides a huge dataset for analysis. These rules helped this study collect and organize information for an in-depth analysis of the semiotic elements of Midsommar movie posters.

Method and Technique of Analyzing Data

The data for this study was collected from websites on the internet. The data was collected and categorized according to the type of visual or verbal sign. The data analysis procedure was grouped into several different segments. First, the data set was categorized based on Dyer's (1982) framework of verbal and visual indicators. Second, the interpretation of the symbols was examined according to Saussure's theory of signifier and signified (as referenced in Chandler, 2007), and further reinforced by Cerrato's (2012) Theory of Color Meaning.

Method and Technique of Presenting Analysis

A descriptive qualitative method was used to present the data analysis in this study. The primary objective of this study was to address the research problem by identifying and describing the intended data collection process and interpreting the meanings conveyed by signs in the poster. Following this, a detailed analysis of these meanings was carried out, employing the theoretical frameworks previously discussed in this study.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter discuss the results of the analysis of the Midsommar movie poster. This discussion focuses on two questions in the research problem, the first is what verbal and visual signs are found in the Midsommar movie poster, and the second is the meaning of the verbal and visual signs found in the Midsommar movie poster. The results of this analysis are also supported by theories from Dyer's Theory of Signs (1982), Saussure's theory of signifier and signified (cited in Chandler, 2007) and Cerrato's Theory of Colors (2012).

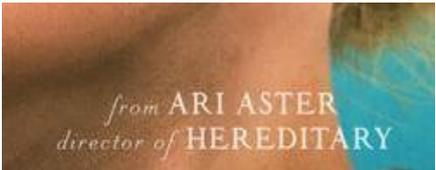
The Analysis of Verbal and Visual Sign Data 1

Picture 2.



Verbal Signs

Table 1. Verbal Signs

No	Verbal Sign	Description
1	 <p>LET THE FESTIVITIES BEGIN</p>	Let the festivities begin is the slogan used to start the festivities.
2	 <p>JULY 3</p>	This word emphasizes and informs the audience about the premiere of the film.
3	 <p>from ARI ASTER director of HEREDITARY</p>	This word refers to the author of the movie and one of the works that the author has created.
4	 <p>MIDSOMMAR</p>	Represent the name of movie
5	 <p>A24</p>	Refers to a movie studio

In the middle of the poster, there is a movie slogan written vertically “Let the festivities begin”. This words is the opening line of the Harga commune's customary July

festival. On the surface, it conveys happiness and tradition, but within the framework of the movie, it foreshadows the terrible and horrible events that take place.

The second sign found on this movie poster is the sentence “July 3”. This sign is placed in the center of the poster and between the movie slogan “Let the festivities begin”. The word “July 3” is written in white and capital letters. It is slightly larger in size compared to the movie slogan “Let the festivities begin”. This sign emphasizes and informs the audience about the premiere of the film.

Below the word “July 3”, there is the name of the director and screenwriter written in a combination of lowercase and capital letters “from ARI ASTER director HEREDITARY” in white. This writing has a larger size than the slogan and the time of the movie launch, placed below the words “July 3”. The placement and size of the letters easily catches the viewer's attention. The name is written in capital letters, giving a bold, accentuated impression and the word "HEREDITARY" refers to one of the horror films written and directed by ARI ASTER.

Under the words “from ARI ASTER director HEREDITARY”, there is the title of the film written in capital letters “MIDSOMMAR” in white and bold font. This text is the largest on the poster and is very eye-catching. It is placed below the words “from ARI ASTER director HEREDITARY.". The placement and size of the letters easily catch the viewer's attention. This means that the movie title in the above poster is the most important information compared to the other signs in the poster.

The word "A24" appears as the final verbal sign on the poster. It is located just below the main text of the poster and is written in white. The American independent entertainment company A24 Films, also known as A24, is focused on producing movies and television shows.

Visual Signs

This poster shows a woman with a strong expression and tears in her eyes. This section focuses on the visuals of the poster. To identify the visual signs, this study uses Dyer's (1982) sign theory, and the visual signs found in this poster are appearance, attitude, activity, and background.

Table 2. Visual Signs

No	Visual Sign	Description
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<p>1.</p>	 <p>Appearance</p>	<p>Teenage girl with light skin and blonde hair tied up in a ponytail. Dani is the main character of this film.</p>
<p>2.</p>	 <p>Manner</p>	<p>The character in this poster is dressed in a white dress with blue embroidery, which is the traditional costume for the Swedish countryside's Harga summer festival. She also wears a festival flower crown pinned on her head. Dani's expression shows a frightened face, showing a traumatized and tearful expression.</p>
<p>3.</p>	 <p>Activity</p>	<p>In this poster, there are not many movements made by the character. She just stands, scrunches up her face, and cries. She shows a deep depression in her eyes.</p>
<p>4.</p>	 <p>Background</p>	<p>The setting of the poster above is only the background. The background in this poster is dominated by blue colour.</p>

Based on appearance, Dani Ardor is the main character in the movie. She is introduced

as a young white woman struggling with severe emotional trauma after the tragic murder-suicide of her family. This devastating event leaves her isolated, vulnerable, and emotionally dependent on her estranged boyfriend, Christian Hughes. Dani's journey in *Midsommar* explores themes of trauma, toxic relationships and codependency. In contrast with normal horror protagonists who struggle to break out from cults, Dani falls victim to the Harga's accept, which makes her destiny both terrible and somehow freeing.

Based on manner, the character in this poster is dressed in a white dress with blue embroidery, which is the traditional costume for the Swedish countryside's Hårga summer festival. She also wears a festival flower crown pinned on her head because she participated in the Harga village's heretical festival and was chosen to be a May Queen, or the ruling queen of the village. Dani's expression shows a frightened face, showing a traumatized and tearful expression. Dani's facial expressions refer to her transformation reaching a peak when she is crowned May Queen, a title that symbolizes rebirth and renewal. In the film's chilling climax, she is given the power to decide Christian's fate, and ultimately chooses to sacrifice him in a ritual burning.

Based on activity, there are not many movements made by the character. She just stands petrified, scrunches up his face, and cries. She shows deep depression in her eyes, as there is nothing she can do after deciding to execute her own lover.

The background in this poster is dominated by blue colour. According to Cerrato (2012), Blue is the color of the sky and the sea. Physiologically, blue is a calming color that reduces tension and fear. As a cool color, it creates a sense of

space while adding strength and unity. Blue also has a therapeutic effect on the mind and body, promoting harmony in spoken communication.

The color blue from a negative perspective is interpreted as self- righteousness, emotional instability, mercilessness, manipulation, infidelity, and distrust. In the poster, the blue color is graded with a light blue color that gives the impression of focusing on the content of the poster.

The Analysis of Verbal and Visual Sign Data 2



Picture 3

Verbal Signs

From the poster above there are five verbal signs found. The verbal signs of the slogan of the movie, the title of the movie, company names, production's directors name and the release season of the movie. The verbal sign of this poster can be seen in the table below.

Tabel 3. Verbal Signs

No	Verbal Sign	Description
1.	 THIS SUMMER	This word refers to the season when the movie premiered.
2.	 LET THE FESTIVITIES BEGIN	Let the festivities begin is the slogan used to start the festivities.
3.	 MIDSOMMAR	Represent the name of movie

4.	 <p>from ARI ASTER director of HEREDITARY</p>	This word refers to the author of the movie and one of the works that the author has created.
5.	 <p>A24</p>	Refers to a movie studio

At the top of the poster, the movie's premiere season is written horizontally, "This summer." The top sentence of this poster composition refers to the information provided so that the audience know the premiere season of the movie Midsommar, the word "This summer" has a correlation with the word "July 3" in the poster example before.

Underneath the words "This summer", there is a movie slogan written vertically "Let the festivities begin". This is the opening line of the traditional July festival in Harga commune. On the surface, this sentence conveys happiness and tradition, but within the framework of the movie, it foreshadows the horrific and gruesome events that take place.

Under the words "Let the festivities begin", there is the title of the film written in capital letters "MIDSOMMAR" in white and bold font. This text is the largest on the poster and is very eye-catching. It is placed below the words "Let the festivities begin". The placement and size of the letters easily catch the viewer's attention. This means that the movie title in the above poster is the most important information compared to the other signs in the poster.

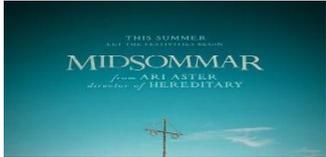
Below the word "MIDSOMMAR", there is the name of the director and screenwriter written in a combination of lowercase and capital letters "from ARI ASTER director HEREDITARY" in white. This writing has a larger size than the slogan and the time of the movie launch, placed below the words "July 3". The placement and size of the letters easily catches the viewer's attention. The name is written in capital letters, giving a bold, accentuated impression and the word "HEREDITARY" refers to one of the horror films written and directed by ARI ASTER.

The word "A24" appears as the last verbal cue on the poster. It is located at the bottom right corner and is written in white. An American independent entertainment company, A24 Films, also known as A24, focuses on producing films and television shows.

Visual signs

This poster shows a young couple under a blue sky, on green grass, is heading towards a crowd surrounded by flowers of various colors. This section focuses on the visuals of the poster. To identify the visual signs, this study uses Dyer's (1982) sign theory, and the visual signs found in this poster are appearance, attitude, activity, and background.

Table 4. Visual Signs

No	Visual Sign	Description
1.	 <p>Appearance</p>	<p>Dani and her boyfriend, Christian Hughes headed into the crowd. Dani is depicted as a fair-skinned woman with blonde hair pulled back in pigtails, while Dani is a man with slightly curly brown hair and fair skin.</p>
2.	  <p>Manner</p>	<p>Dani and Christian in this poster is dressed in t-shirts and long pants, while Harga villagers who perform the ritual wear all-white robes.</p>
3.	  <p>Activity</p>	<p>There is a crowd of people performing a ritual around a sacred wood during the Harga village festival. Dani and Christian were seen heading towards a crowd of people involved in a ritual. The poster shows Christian holding Dani's hand and walking first, suggesting that Chris is inviting Dani to participate in the ritual.</p>
4.	  <p>Background</p>	<p>The background in this poster is a blue sky and flowers of various colors.</p>

Based on appearance, Dani and her boyfriend, Christian Hughes, are heading into a crowd.

Dani is depicted in the poster as a fair-skinned woman with blonde hair pulled back in a ponytail, while Christian is a man with curly brown hair and fair skin.

In the poster, Christian's body is depicted as a man with a firm posture and a good build, while Dani has a lower height than Christian and a smaller build. Their figures are depicted as a twenty-something couple in a romantic relationship.

Based on manner, Dani is seen wearing a slightly faded orange t-shirt while Christian is wearing a brown t-shirt. They both wear long pants, Dani wears brown cloth pants while Christian wears dark jeans. The poster depicts Dani and Christian, who have just come to visit the village of Harga in the clothes they are

Wearing as in the poster and are curious about the crowd in front of them, the villagers of Harga who are performing a ritual. In front of them stood a group of Haraga villagers wearing all-white clothes from head to toe.

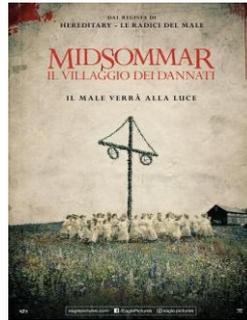
Based on activity, one part of the poster shows Christian holding Dani's hand and walking first, suggesting that Chris is inviting Dani to participate in the village dance ritual of Harga. The crowd performing the ritual around the sacred wood during the Harga village festival. The wooden pole that the dancers are surrounded by is a version of the Maypole, which in European pagan culture symbolizes fertility and life. Dani and Christian are seen walking towards a crowd of people who are performing a ritual dance around a wooden pole. This dance also serves as a selection to choose the May Queen. Dani and the other women dance until only one person is left standing. Dani eventually wins this ritual, signaling her transformation into a part of the Harga community.

The background in the poster shows an expanse of green grass covered by flowers of various colors and a blue sky accompanied by vast clouds. According to Cerrato (2012) The ocean and sky are both blue. It often conveys firmness and depth. It represents trust, loyalty, knowledge, confidence, intellect, and faith. Blue promotes strength and solidarity while also providing mental and physical healing. It creates harmony in the spoken word while Dark blue is associated with depth, expertise, and stability. In the poster the sky has a very broad blue color and has a dark blue gradation at the far corner of the poster, this gives the impression of focusing on the content of the poster and emphasizing the aspects of the blue color itself.

The poster also has a range of flower colors randomly arranged, with red flowers dominating the grass next to Christian and Dani. According to Cerrato (2012) Red is a vibrant tone that attracts attention and encourages movement. In psychology, the color red is Associated with vigour, energy, activity, and emotion. The color red is associated with energy,

passion, desire, and love, as it is similar to fire and blood. Red symbolizes power, strength, and danger. In this case, it can be interpreted that the red flower color that dominates the poster symbolizes passion, energy, activity, and emotion. The color red is associated with energy, passion, desire, and love, as it is similar to fire and blood. Red symbolizes power, strength, and danger.

The Analysis of Verbal and Visual Sign Data 3



Picture 4

Verbal Signs

This poster is a Midsommar movie poster from the region of Italy. From the poster above, there are five verbal signs found. Verbal cues such as the film's title, company name, director's name, and slogans. The table below displays this poster's verbal sign.

Table 5. Verbal Signs

No	Verbal Sign	Description
1.	 DAL REGISTA DI HEREDITARY – LE RADICI DEL MALE	This Italian words can be translated as “From the director of Hereditary - the roots of evil”. This word represents promotional tagline that connects the movie Midsommar (2019) with Hereditary (2018), both directed by Ari Aster.
2.	 MIDSOMMAR	Represent the name of movie.

3.	 <p>IL VILLAGGIO DEI DANNATI</p>	This Italian words can be translated as “The villaage of the damned” This word represents a closed community with dark rules and secrets.
4.	 <p>IL MALE VERRÀ ALLA LUCE</p>	This words can be translated as “evil will be revealed”.The phrase “evil will be revealed” in Midsommar can be interpreted as a reflection of the darkness hidden beneath the surface of the seemingly peaceful, serene and unsuspecting-looking Harga commune.
5.	 <p>A24</p>	Refers to a movie studio.

At the top of the poster, there are words in capital letters, “Dal regista di hereditary – le radici del male” translated from Italian to “from the director of HEREDITARY—The roots of evil,” in black. This writing is smaller than the movie title, placed above the words “Midsommar.” The placement easily draws the viewer's attention to the work of director Ari Aster before the movie Midsommar. The name of the film is written in capital letters, giving a firm and standout impression, and the word “HEREDITARY” refers to one of the horror films written and directed by ARI ASTER. “The roots of evil” refers to the slogan of the movie Midsommar in the region of Italy.

The movie's title is shown below the words "Dal regista di hereditary – le radici del male" in bold, red capital letters "MIDSOMMAR." This is the poster's largest and most noticeable text. "Dal regista di hereditary – le radici del male" is where it appears under the words. The viewer's attention is instantly captured by the letters' size and positioning. As a result, the movie title on the poster above is the most crucial piece of information when compared to the other indicators.

Underneath the words “MIDSOMMAR”, there is a phrasal words in the poster written horizontally “Il villaggio dei dannati”. This Italian words can be translated as “The villaage of the damned” This word represents a closed community with dark rules and secrets.

Below the words “Il villaggio dei dannati”, there is a movie slogan in the poster written horizontally “Il male verra alla luce”. This words can be translated as “evil will be revealed”.The phrase “evil will be revealed” in Midsommar can be interpreted as a reflection of the darkness hidden beneath the surface of the seemingly peaceful, serene and unsuspecting-looking Harga commune.

The word “A24” appears as the last verbal cue on the poster. It is located at the bottom left corner and is written in white. An American independent entertainment company, A24 Films, also known as A24, focuses on producing films and television shows.

Visual Signs

This poster shows a group of Harga villagers performing a ritual around a wooden pole. This section focuses on the visuals of the poster. To identify the visual signs, this research uses Dyer's (1982) sign theory, and the visual signs found in this poster are appearance, attitude, activity, and background.

Table 6. Visual Signs

No	Visual Sign	Description
1.	 <p>Appearance</p>	A group of Swedish women, especially in the village of Harga, are performing a ritual worship around a wooden pole to choose a May Queen.
2.	 <p>Manner</p>	women dressed all in white with happy facial expressions and surrounding a wooden pole.
3.	 <p>Activity</p>	There is a crowd of people performing a ritual around a sacred wood during the Harga village festival. They make quick circular motions and circle around a wooden pole.

4.	 <p>Background</p>	<p>The background in this poster are the blood in both upper corners of the poster, an execution house, ritual wooden pillars and green grass filled with flowers of various colors.</p>
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Based on appearance, this poster depicts a group of Swedish women, specifically in the village of Harga, performing a cult ritual around a wooden pole to elect the May Queen. The ritual is participated in by women from the village of Harga of all ages, and is dominated by teenage women.

Based on manner, the poster shows a group of women from Harga village participating in a ritual, wearing all-white clothes and flower crowns. The white clothes used are traditional clothes from Harga village, especially for women, who have blue patterns and motifs in their clothes, while for men they have white color without motifs and patterns. The flower crown used in the ritual is a symbol of power pinned to the May Queen candidate who will be elected after the ritual is complete. For the expression part, the women look very excited to perform the ritual.

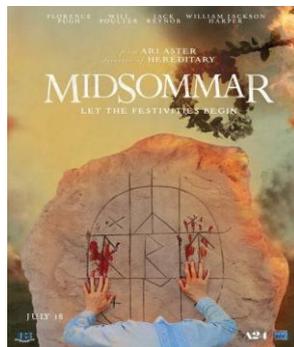
Based on activity, there is a crowd performs a ritual around a sacred wood during the Harga village festival. They make quick circular movements and circle around a wooden pole until they are eliminated one by one due to exhaustion. The purpose of this ritual is to find a May Queen or female leader of the Harga village who has full power over the village.

The background in this poster are the blood in both upper corners of the poster, an execution house, ritual wooden pillars and green grass filled with flowers of various colors. The background in this poster is the blood in both upper corners of the poster, the execution house, the ritual wooden pillars, and the green grass filled with flowers of various colors. Blood in Midsommar is associated with ritual sacrifice. The Hårga community performs various rituals involving blood as part of a ceremony to maintain balance and fertility. Blood sacrifices became their way of obtaining blessings from their gods, sacrificing certain souls

for the common good of the community. The image of a house in the poster correlates with the place of execution of the blood sacrifice as the house is burnt along with the sacrificial victims of the ritual. The wooden pole that appears in the poster is an important element in the ceremony or ritual and is often seen as a symbol of the spiritual world or the transition between life and death.

In certain sections, the wooden stake is used as a place to perform sacrifices, depicting the continuous cycle of birth, death, and renewal. Finally, the background flowers of various colors do not have any correlation with the scene in the film, the slightly faded colors give the impression of horror in accordance with the genre of Midsommar.

The Analysis of Verbal and Visual Sign Data 4



Picture 4.

Verbal Signs

From the poster above there are six verbal signs found. The verbal signs of the slogan of the movie, the title of the movie, company names, four movie cast names, production's directors name, and the release date of the movie. The verbal sign of this poster can be seen in the table below.

Table 7. Verbal Signs

No	Verbal Sign	Description
1.	<p>FLORENCE PUGH, WILL POUTER, JACL REYNOR,</p>  <p>FLORENCE WILL JACK WILLIAM JACKSO PUGH POULTER REYNOR HARPER</p> <p>WILLIAM JACKSON HARPER</p>	<p>These words are the 4 cast of characters in the movie Midsommar, this verbal sign is written horizontally.</p>

2.		This word describes the writer of the film as well as one of their creations.
3.		Represent the name of movie.
4.		Let the festivities begin is the slogan used to start the festivities.
5.		This word emphasizes and informs the audience about the premiere of the film. Midsommar premiered on July 18, 2019, at the Babelsberg Studio in Potsdam, Germany.
6.		Refers to a movie studio.

There are four cast names from the movie Midsommar in capital letters, written horizontally. The first name on the poster in the top left corner is Florence Pugh, known as Dani in the movie. The second name on the poster next to Florence Pugh is Will Poulter; in the movie, Will Poulter plays the role of Mark. Next to Will Pouter, there is the name Jack Reynor written on the poster. In the movie, Jack Reynor plays the role of Christian. The last name on the top line as a cast member in the movie is William Jackson Harper. In the movie, William plays the role of Josh.

Below the cast of Midsommar, the name of the director and screenwriter is written in a combination of lowercase and uppercase letters, “FROM THE DIRECTOR ARI ASTER HEREDITARY,” in white. This writing has a larger size than the slogan and the time of the movie launch, placed above the writing “Midsommar.” The placement and size of the letters easily catch the viewer's attention. The name of the movie is written in capital letters, giving it a bold and prominent impression, and the word “HEREDITARY” refers to one of the horror

movies written and directed by ARI ASTER.

Under the words “FROM THE DIRECTOR ARI ASTER HEREDITARY,” there is the title of the film written in capital letters, “MIDSOMMAR,” in white and bold font. This text is the largest on the poster and is very eye-catching. It is placed below the words “FROM THE DIRECTOR ARI ASTER HEREDITAR"Y. The placement and size of the letters easily catch the viewer's attention. This means that the movie title in the above poster is the most important information compared to the other signs in the poster.

There is the word “18 July” in the poster, which emphasizes and informs the audience about the premiere of the film in the German region. Midsommar premiered on July 18, 2019, at the Babelsberg Studio in Potsdam, Germany.

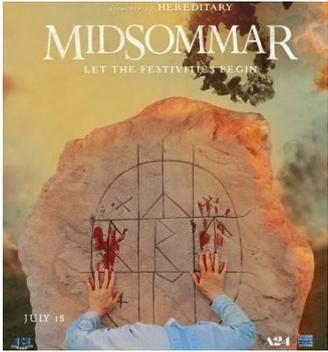
The word “A24” appears as the last verbal cue on the poster. It is located at the bottom right corner and is written in white. An American independent entertainment company, A24 Films, also known as A24, focuses on producing films and television shows.

Visual Signs

This poster shows a headless person facing a ritual stone with blood on his palm and holding a ritual stone, to identify the visual signs, this research uses Dyer's (1982) sign theory, and the visual signs found in this poster are appearance, attitude, activity, and background.

Table 8. Visual Signs

No	Visual Sign	Description
1.	 <p>Appearance</p>	Headless man facing the ritual stone with blood on his palm and holding the ritual stone.
2.		The headless man holds the ceremonial stone while facing it and has blood on his palm. This individual is dressed in a blue shirt.

	Manner	
3.	 <p>Activity</p>	This person was worshipping the ancestors of the village of Harga with blood offerings and heads executed by the villagers of Harga.
4.	 <p>Background</p>	The background is the clouds, the orange twilight sky, blood, and the flowering wooden poles used during the ritual.

Based on appearance, the poster features a headless white man performing a cult ritual on a stone monument with a bloodied hand holding the stone.

Based on manner, the headless man is holding a ceremonial stone while facing towards it and there is blood on his palm. The man is wearing a blue shirt during the ritual and appears headless in the poster.

Based on activity, this person worships the ancestors of Price village with blood offerings and heads executed by Harga villagers. Harga villagers often sacrifice human lives for the continuation of the Harga village heretical sect. It is hoped that with the offering of the lives of the Harga villagers, prosperity and welfare will be obtained for the villagers and adherents of the Harga village heretical sect and rituals.

The background shows an orange sky and some black clouds at the top of the poster. According to Cerrato (2012) Orange symbolizes curiosity, joy, creativity, willpower, attractiveness, achievement, inspiration, and excitement. It combines the force of red with the cheerfulness of yellow and is associated with happiness, the sun, and the tropics. Inside

the poster is also a ritual stone of worship. The stone may symbolize an ancient tradition or ritual, indicating the heritage of the village of Price. Red markings can imply blood, sacrifice, or danger, hinting at darker themes beneath the surface of the celebration. The red markings could imply blood, sacrifice, or danger, hinting at darker themes beneath the surface of the festivities. The flowers adorning the pole symbolize the fertility and blossoming of life, emphasizing the theme of rebirth and the cyclical nature of existence. This pole is the primary means by which the Harga community undergoes the ritual to elect the May Queen.

The Analysis of Verbal and Visual Sign Data 5



Picture 5.

Verbal Signs

This poster is a Midsommar movie poster that comes from the German region. From the poster above, there are five verbal cues found. Verbal cues such as movie title, company name, director's name, and slogan. The table below displays the verbal cues from this poster.

Table 9. Verbal Signs

No	Verbal Sign	Description
1.	 DAS BÖSE WIRD ANS LICHT KOMMEN	These German words can be translated as “Evil will be revealed”. This is the promotional tagline used by the movie Midsommar in the German region.
2.	 MIDSOMMAR	Represent the name of movie.

3.	 <p>Von ARI ASTER Regisseur von HEREDITARY</p>	This German words can be translated as “From ARI ASTER director of HEREDITARY”. This word describes the writer of the film as well as one of their creations.
4.	 <p>NUR IM KINO</p>	This words can be translated as “only in the cinema”.
5.	 <p>A24</p>	Refers to a movie studio.

This poster shows Dani as the main character with a grimacing expression and blood pouring out of Dani's head. The first verbal sign found in the poster is the word “DAS BÖSE WIRD ANS LICHT KOMMEN” right above the movie title on the “MIDSOMMAR” poster.

The word “DAS BÖSE WIRD ANS LICHT KOMMEN” translates to “Evil will be revealed.” This word refers to all the perverted rituals and habits of the price society that will soon be revealed in the movie.

Secondly, there is the word “MIDSOMMAR” printed in the largest and most prominent way on the poster. This word refers to the title of the movie and the most important information on the poster, so this word is made to be noticed by the audience.

Under the word "MIDSOMMAR" there is a word written in german "Von ARI ASTER Regisseur von HEREDITARY, which means "From ARI ASTER, director of HEREDITARY." This word means that the writer of the movie Midsommar is Ari Aster and one of Aster's works before Midsommar is Hereditary.

There are the words “NUR IM KINO” at the bottom of the poster, translated from German, which means “only in cinema.” The text has a red color and stands out to emphasize that this film can only be seen in cinema.

The word “A24” appears as the last verbal cue on the poster. It is located at the bottom middle and is written in red. An American independent entertainment company, A24 Films, also known as A24, focuses on producing films and television shows.

Visual Signs

This poster shows Dani as the main character with a grimacing expression and blood pouring out of Dani's head. To identify the visual signs, this research uses Dyer's (1982) sign theory, and the visual signs found in this poster are appearance, attitude, activity, and background.

Table 10. Visual Signs

No	Visual Sign	Description
1.	 <p>Appearance</p>	<p>Teenage girl with light skin and blonde hair tied in a ponytail with blood dripping from her head. Dani is the main character of the movie.</p>
2.	 <p>Manner</p>	<p>The character in this poster is wearing a typical outfit for the Harga summer festival in the Swedish countryside, a white dress with blue embroidery. She has a crown of festival flowers pinned on her head as well. Furthermore to being terrified, Dani's face is disturbed and crying.</p>

3.	 <p>Activity</p>	<p>In this poster, there are not many movements made by the character. She just stands, scrunches up her face, and cries. He shows deep depression in his eyes with blood dripping from his head towards her face.</p>
4.	 	<p>The setting of the poster above is only the background. The background in this poster is dominated by blue colour.</p>

	Background	
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Based on her appearance, Dani Ardor is the main character in this movie. She is introduced as a young white woman struggling with severe emotional trauma after the tragic suicide of her family. The poster below shows Dani participating in a festival in a village in Sweden. Dani's journey in Midsommar explores themes of trauma, toxic relationships and addiction.

Based on manner, the character in this poster is wearing a white dress with blue embroidery, which is the traditional costume for the Harga summer festival in rural Sweden. She is also wearing a crown of festival flowers pinned on her head because she participated in the cult festival in Price's village and was elected May Queen, or the ruling queen of the village. Dani's expression shows a frightened face, showing an expression of trauma and

crying. Dani's facial expressions refer to her transformation that culminates in her being crowned May Queen, a title that symbolizes rebirth and renewal. There is blood dripping from Dani's head onto her face, implying the pain she has endured. In the movie's gruesome climax, she is given the power to decide Christian's fate and ultimately chooses to sacrifice him in a ritual burning.

Based on activity, there are not many movements made by the character. She just stands petrified, scrunches up his face, and cries. She shows deep depression in her eyes, as there is nothing she can do after deciding to execute her own lover.

This poster's the background is mostly blue. Cerrato (2012) describes blue as the color of the sky and sea. Blue is a relaxing color that decreases stress and fear. Cool colors give a feeling of open space while also bringing power and togetherness. Blue also has a calming effect on the mind and body, which promotes harmony in spoken interaction. From a negative perspective, the color blue represents self-righteousness, emotional instability, mercilessness, manipulation, infidelity, and distrust. The color blue in the poster is graded with a light blue color, giving the impression that the poster's content is the main focus.

4. CONCLUSION

This study has explored the verbal and visual signs present in the promotional posters of the film *Midsommar*, interpreting their meanings through a semiotic approach based on Dyer's theory of signs (1982), Saussure's model of signifier and signified, and Cerrato's (2012) theory of color. The findings reveal that the posters employ a deliberate interplay of linguistic and visual elements to convey both explicit and implicit messages.

Verbal signs such as the film title, director's name, slogans, release date, and production company not only serve promotional purposes but also provide initial cues about the film's disturbing themes. Slogans such as "Let the festivities begin" and "*Das Böse wird ans Licht kommen*" (Evil will be revealed) introduce the film's atmosphere while subtly indicating the underlying darkness beneath the seemingly joyous celebrations.

Meanwhile, the visual signs reinforce the narrative through symbolic representations of trauma, transformation, and ritual. Several posters depict the village women of Harga dressed in white garments and flower crowns, symbolizing purity and the ritual power associated with the selection of the May Queen. Circular movements around a maypole and cheerful facial expressions create a stark contrast with the backdrop of blood, sacrificial

houses, and ritual objects—elements that represent sacrifice and the cyclical nature of life and death.

Another poster presents a headless man facing a ritual stone with blood on his hands, alluding to dark forces and extreme forms of worship. The orange sky combined with violent symbols such as blood and a severed head further emphasizes the tension between visual beauty and thematic horror.

Posters featuring Dani, the central character, serve as significant markers of her emotional and transformational journey. Her crying expression, bleeding head, and ceremonial attire all signify suffering, alienation, and eventually empowerment as she is crowned the May Queen. The use of blue in the background evokes calmness while simultaneously suggesting emotional instability and manipulation—resonating with the film's psychological themes.

A more detailed analysis of the third poster further reinforces these findings. The depiction of Dani and Christian walking toward the ritual gathering in contrasting outfits illustrates the tension between the outside world and the insular Harga community. Christian's leading posture suggests initial dominance, while the villagers' uniform white clothing symbolizes purity, unity, and cult identity. The Maypole ritual depicted here, rich in pagan symbolism, marks a psychological and social turning point for Dani.

Color symbolism plays a central role throughout. The wide blue sky implies harmony and intellect, yet its darker gradations suggest underlying menace. The dominant red flowers surrounding Dani and Christian amplify emotional intensity, representing passion, power, danger, and desire—central elements in Dani's personal journey and the cult's ritualistic allure.

In conclusion, the *Midsommar* posters function not merely as marketing tools, but as layered visual texts that embed horror beneath beauty, and fear beneath festivity. This study highlights the value of semiotic analysis in uncovering hidden meanings within visual media, illustrating how signs, colors, and expressions collectively shape audience perception even before the film's opening scene. The *Midsommar* posters thus offer rich insights into how visual semiotics can reflect and construct cinematic ideology.

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