

Oh Sehun's Brand Ambassador Representation for Whitelab Products on Instagram

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.61796/icossh.v2i2.425>



Sections Info

Article history:

Submitted: April 16, 2025

Final Revised: May 26, 2025

Accepted: June 10, 2025

Published: June 20, 2025

Keywords:

Brand ambassador

Oh Sehun

Whitelab

Instagram

Semiotika

ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aims to analyze the meaning of visual signs in Whitelab's Instagram content featuring Oh Sehun as a brand ambassador, using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic approach. This study examines how visual elements such as photos, text, and colors displayed in Instagram posts can build brand image and influence audience perception of Whitelab products. **Method:** Using triadic semiotics theory involving representamen, object, and interpretant, this study identifies how visual signs interact to form meanings understood by the audience. **Results:** Data was collected through documentation of Whitelab's official Instagram posts featuring Oh Sehun and analyzed qualitatively to understand how brand messages are constructed and received by the audience. **Novelty:** The results of this study show that the representation of visual elements such as poses, colors, and text in promotions serves to reinforce Whitelab's image as a modern and scientific premium skincare brand, as well as strengthen emotional connections with the audience, especially K-pop fans.

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has brought about major changes in the patterns of communication within society. Social media, as one of the main products of this development, is now not only used as a means of personal interaction, but has also transformed into a strategic communication medium for various interests, including the world of business and marketing[1]. Through social media, a brand can connect directly with its consumers, build emotional closeness, and expand its market reach, which was previously limited by space and time.

The Instagram platform offers visual power through photos, videos, and short texts that are considered more effective in attracting consumers' attention and flooding them with information. Instagram's popularity makes it the primary medium for various brands to showcase their image, introduce products, and strengthen their brand identity through intense and repeated visual communication[2].

Indonesia itself is one of the largest markets for the beauty industry in Southeast Asia. In recent years, local brands in the skincare sector have grown rapidly and are able to compete with international brands. This is driven by increasing public awareness of the importance of skin health and appearance, especially among the younger generation[3].



Figure 1. Oh Sehun's post as Whitelab Brand Ambassador.

Among these local brands, Whitelab has emerged as one of the celebrities that has successfully positioned itself in the beauty industry competition. Whitelab is known for its products that combine high-quality active ingredients, scientific formulations, and competitive prices. However, more than just product quality, Whitelab's communication strategy through social media, especially Instagram, has been one of the keys to its success in building brand image and consumer trust.

One of Whitelab's important strategies is appointing Oh Sehun, a member of the South Korean idol group EXO, as its brand ambassador. This decision was not without reason. Oh Sehun was chosen because of his enormous global popularity, including in Indonesia, which is one of the countries with the largest EXO fan base in the world.

The phenomenon of collaboration between local brands and global figures such as Sehun cannot be separated from the context of the Korean Wave (Hallyu), which has long been a trend in Indonesia. Korean popular culture, ranging from K-pop music, dramas, films, to beauty standards, has a very strong appeal among young Indonesians.

To gain a deeper understanding of this visual communication strategy, this study employs Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic framework. Semiotics is understood as the study of signs and how signs function in conveying meaning. Peirce proposed a triadic model that divides signs into three main components: Representamen, which is the form of a sign that is present and can be captured by the five senses; Object, which is the reality or concept referred to by the sign; and Interpretant, which is the meaning or understanding that arises in the audience's mind as a result of the relationship between the representamen and the object.

A previous study titled "The Influence of Brand Ambassador Oh Sehun on Brand Image and Whitelab Product Purchasing Behavior" showed that the use of Oh Sehun as Whitelab's Brand Ambassador had a positive effect on Brand Image and consumer purchasing behavior[4]. This study used a quantitative research method with the aim of analyzing the relationship between one variable and another.

Previous studies have revealed that in order to successfully attract consumers to buy a product, it is usually necessary to apply a promotional strategy that is different from that of competing products. One such strategy is to use a brand ambassador to

attract consumer attention. This previous study represents the semiotic theory used in Oh Sehun's Brand Ambassador Representation for Whitelab Products on Instagram

advertisements for Korean Spicy Chicken Noodle products, using the theories of Peirce and Van Leeuwen to differentiate between icons, indices, and symbols found in advertisements[5]. This study shows that the icon in this advertising video is Choi Siwon, a famous celebrity in Korea, thus signifying the authenticity of the Korean spicy chicken flavor variant of the advertised product. The symbol that stands out in the advertisement is the Hangeul letters, which signify the relationship between the Korean spicy chicken variant and Korean culture as a distinctive feature. The advertisement effectively conveys the unique characteristics of Korean flavors while representing an authentic Indonesian product.

Previous studies show that the #ScientistGanteng campaign was created by Whitelab with the aim of introducing a celebrity named Oh Sehun, who is originally from Korea,[6] as a brand ambassador. In addition, this campaign also aims to launch Whitelab's latest product, A Dose+ Glowing Serum. This study aims to assess the extent to which this campaign affects brand awareness of Whitelab skin care products. This study uses public relations campaign theory, which includes cognitive, affective, and conative aspects, as well as brand awareness theory, which includes brand ignorance, brand recognition, brand memory, and peak attention. This study used a quantitative approach which showed that there was a moderate influence between the #ScientistGanteng campaign and Whitelab's brand awareness, with a result of 0.542 or 54.2%. This shows that brand awareness is influenced by 54.2% of these public relations activities, while the rest is influenced by other factors that were not explored in this study.

Other studies show that many companies compete in choosing Brand Ambassadors as a marketing strategy through social media, especially Instagram. One example is the Indonesian skincare product, Whitelab, which collaborated with K-pop idol Sehun from EXO, who has many fans[7]. This study uses the Brand Ambassador theory with four indicators: Visibility, Credibility, Attractiveness, and Strength. The methods used include validity and reliability tests, as well as analysis using Spearman's Rank Correlation Test and T-test. The results show that the Spearman's Rank Correlation coefficient between Brand Ambassador Sehun EXO and consumer purchase interest is 0.613.

Meanwhile, research in 2020 revealed that companies have products or services that can build a corporate image, which in turn generates a brand image in society[8]. Currently, many companies choose celebrities as brand ambassadors to strengthen their brand image[9]. These celebrities play a role in increasing appeal and introducing the company's products or services to consumers. One example is Meccanism, an online store that appointed Zaskia Adya Mecca as its Brand Ambassador. This study aims to examine the extent of Zaskia Adya Mecca's influence as a Brand Ambassador on Meccanism's official Instagram shop on brand image. The results of this study indicate that the presence of celebrity Zaskia Adya Mecca as a Brand Ambassador has a strong and positive impact on Meccanism's brand image.

Previous studies have only discussed the influence of brand ambassadors on brand image and purchasing behavior, without paying close attention to how visual elements such as photos, text, and colors in social media content can build brand image, particularly using Peirce's semiotic approach. Therefore, this study takes steps to fill this

gap by analyzing the relationship between representamen, object, and interpretant in the context of product promotion on Instagram.

Furthermore, although several studies have examined the relationship between brand ambassadors and consumer purchase interest, the quantitative approaches used in these studies tend to be limited in exploring the emotional aspects formed by visual elements on social media. This study, with its qualitative approach, provides deeper insights into how the interaction between visual elements in Instagram content can influence audience perception, particularly in the context of emotional relationships built by brand ambassadors.

The collaboration between local brands and global Brand Ambassadors is also an area that has not been widely researched. This study discusses Whitelab products, as a local brand, utilizing the popularity of Oh Sehun from EXO, a global figure, to enhance their brand image in the Indonesian market. This study discusses the influence of popular culture globalization, particularly the Korean Wave (Hallyu), in local product branding, a gap that has not been widely explored.

This study focuses on the semiotic analysis of Whitelab's Instagram content featuring Oh Sehun as a Brand Ambassador. The research question is how the meaning of these visual signs is constructed and understood by the audience using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic framework.

The purpose of this study is to analyze and explain the meaning of visual signs in Whitelab's Instagram content featuring Oh Sehun as Brand Ambassador using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics theory. This study is expected to contribute to the study of visual communication, particularly in the context of utilizing global figures to build the brand image of local products.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a focus on semiotic analysis. A qualitative approach was chosen because it is in line with the research objective, which is to understand the meaning of visual signs in Whitelab's Instagram content featuring Oh Sehun as a brand ambassador. Through this approach, the study not only seeks to explain what is visible on the surface but also to interpret the hidden messages in the posts.

The research object is posts on Whitelab's official Instagram account (@whitelab_id) that specifically feature Oh Sehun[10]. It consists of 6 pieces of content from February 14, 2022, to September 22, 2022, in the form of photos and videos used in promotional campaigns, complete with supporting elements such as the use of hashtags and visual symbols in the form of logos and color designs.

All data was collected through documentation, namely by observing, recording, and saving screenshots of relevant posts. The selection of content was based on the criteria that the posts directly featured Oh Sehun, contained Whitelab products, and included promotional narratives intended for the audience.

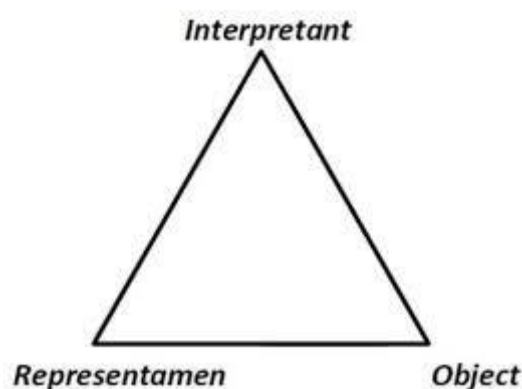


Figure 2. Peirce's triangle.

The analysis was conducted using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory. In Peirce's framework, signs are analyzed through a triadic relationship consisting of a representamen, an object, and an interpretant (Sobur). Peirce developed a very broad and flexible semiotic theory by dividing signs into various categories. The first trichotomy (icon, index, symbol) provides guidance for understanding the type of relationship between a sign and its object. The second trichotomy (qualisign, sinsign, legisign) explains the types of signs based on their nature, actuality, and existing social agreements. The third trichotomy (rheme, dicent sign, argument) explains how signs can be interpreted and used to provide meaning or reasoning.

Representamen is understood as the form of the sign that is present, for example, the visual of Oh Sehun, the dominant colors of white and blue, the Whitelab logo, and the promotional text used. The object is the reality or concept referred to by the sign, for example, the image of Whitelab products as scientific, safe, and global quality skincare. Meanwhile, the interpretant is the meaning that arises in the audience's mind as a result of the interaction between the representamen and the object, for example, the perception that Whitelab is a modern, trusted product synonymous with the healthy K-Beauty lifestyle.

Data analysis was conducted in stages. First, each piece of content was identified by its representamen by examining the visual and textual aspects displayed. Second, the representamen was linked to the referenced object, namely Whitelab products and the brand values to be built. Third, the relationship between the two was interpreted to obtain an interpretant that described the audience's meaning. The results of the analysis are then presented in the form of descriptive tables and explanatory descriptions to show the form of representation of brand ambassador Oh Sehun on Whitelab products.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The researcher selected several posts from Whitelab's Instagram account featuring Oh Sehun as a brand ambassador to study using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic methodology[11]. The selection of posts in this study was based on their relevance to the research objective, which was to study how verbal and visual signs in social media content can describe brand image and build consumer appeal. The three main components of Peirce's semiotics, consisting of representamen, object, and interpretant,

were used to conduct the analysis. These components allowed the researcher to explain the form of the sign, its relationship to the reality it represents, and the meaning interpreted by the audience.

No.	Post	Description Representative - Object - Interpretation
1.	Post Analysis: February 14, 2022  With #SCIENTIST GANTENG https://www.instagram.com/p/CZx-xULFbyy/	Representative: A visual depiction of Oh Sehun wearing a gray suit with a white turtleneck, posing with his hand on his chin against a glowing light effect background. His skin appears glowing and healthy. The screen displays the Whitelab serum product, Sehun's signature, and the text "Maximum Radiance Without Limits." Object: The Whitelab serum product is positioned as a premium skincare product with a scientific formulation. The white outfit and light effects represent cleanliness, professionalism, and scientific credibility. Interpretation: The audience perceives Whitelab as a modern, trustworthy skincare brand on par with global products. Sehun is seen as a symbol of ideal healthy skin, reinforcing the belief that Whitelab can deliver real results.

Discussion:

In the representamen section, the image shows Oh Sehun wearing a gray suit and white turtleneck, posing with his chin raised and his face slightly bowed. The chosen

background features a glowing light effect, which not only adds aesthetic appeal but also enhances the modern and premium feel. Sehun's skin looks glowing and healthy, reinforcing the visual message that the product used has a positive effect on the skin. In addition, the Whitelab serum product is also clearly visible on the screen, with the striking text "Maximum Brightness". This text further emphasizes the main benefit of the product, which is to brighten the skin to the maximum, which is the main promise of the Whitelab brand.

The object represented in this image is the Whitelab serum product itself, which is depicted as a premium skincare product with a reliable scientific formula. The white outfit worn by Sehun, along with the lighting effects, serves as a symbol of cleanliness and freshness, as well as emphasizing an image of professionalism and credibility. Visually, these clothes and background not only support Sehun's image as a healthy and well-groomed public figure, but also give the impression that Whitelab products are science-based, formulated to provide real and effective results for users.

The interpretive section describes how the audience interprets and makes sense of the images and text displayed. In this case, the audience not only sees Sehun as a celebrity wearing skincare products, but they also associate the use of Whitelab products with symbols of modern, reliable, and high-quality skincare, on par with global products. Sehun, known for his healthy and glowing skin, is considered a representation of the results that can be achieved by using Whitelab. The audience, especially Sehun's followers, tend to see this product as the right choice for achieving healthy and bright skin, as shown by Sehun in the photo. This further strengthens the audience's belief that Whitelab is an effective choice that can produce real results in skin care.

Overall, this analysis illustrates how each element in this Instagram post interacts to build a strong message about the quality and credibility of Whitelab products. Visual elements, such as Sehun's pose, lighting effects, and choice of clothing, work together with supporting text to communicate that this product is the right choice for those who want to care for their skin in a modern, science-based way. By using Sehun as a public figure, this post not only highlights the product but also builds an emotional connection with the audience who idolize Sehun, which in turn influences their perception of the product he promotes.

No.	Post	Description Representative - Object - Interpretation
1.	Post Analysis: June 15, 2022  Mugwort Pore Clarifying Mask	Representative: Oh Sehun is shown holding a Whitelab mask product, with illustrations of the active ingredients mugwort, green tea, and niacinamide. Green dominates the design. The tagline used is "Sehun's Champion for #Poriporiminimalis".

<https://www.instagram.com/p/Cez4sCgvVpY/>

Object:

Whitelab mask products designed to minimize pores and promote healthy skin. Natural ingredients are highlighted to emphasize skin health benefits.

Interpretation:

The audience understands that this product is effective in addressing large pores and providing natural freshness. Sehun's presence gives an impression of exclusivity, so the product is perceived as not only functional but also aspirational.

Discussion:

In the representamen section, it is explained that celebrity Oh Sehun is holding a Whitelab mask product with an illustration background depicting natural ingredients, such as mugwort (mugwort leaves), green tea, and niacinamide. This illustration not only highlights the product's active ingredients but also creates a natural and refreshing image. The dominant green color in the ad design reinforces the natural and fresh impression that the brand wants to convey to the audience. The tagline "Support Sehun for #Poriporiniminimalis" is an important element in attracting the attention of Sehun's fans and potential consumers who may be more interested in buying the product because of its association with their idol.

Furthermore, the object section explains that the product is a face mask formulated to shrink large pores and provide other benefits for the skin, such as nourishment and refreshment. This product, with its natural ingredients, is positioned to target consumers who care about skin health by using safe and natural ingredients. This product focuses on deep and healthy skin care results, with claims to reduce the size of large pores, which is often a complaint for many people with oily or combination skin types.

In the interpretant section, it is explained that the audience perceives this product not only as a functional solution for skin care, but also as a symbol of status and aspiration. This product is seen as effective in overcoming the problem of large pores and providing natural freshness to the skin, so that the audience feels that by using this product, they are not only caring for their skin, but also feeling closer to public figures such as Sehun. Sehun's presence as a brand ambassador adds a layer of exclusivity to the product, allowing the audience to feel connected to their idol while enjoying the benefits of the product. The audience also feels that using this product gives them access to

something "more," not just skin care, but also an aspirational statement that involves their idol's lifestyle.

No.	Post	Description Representative - Object - Interpretation
1.	Post Analysis: September 22, 2022 "Sehun's Favorite"  https://www.instagram.com/p/Ci zxvvsPKmL/	Representative: Sehun appears with glowing skin while holding a Whitelab product labeled "Sehun's Favorite." Claims such as "48-hour moisture lock" and "nourishes the skin barrier" are featured in the promotional text. The blue background gives a calm and fresh feel. Object: Whitelab moisturizing products positioned as trusted skincare with clinically tested scientific claims. The "Sehun's Favorite" label is intended to provide exclusivity and personal connection with the idol. Interpretation: The audience interprets that this product is high quality, safe, and scientifically proven. The presence of Sehun's favorite label strengthens consumer emotional loyalty, especially among K-pop fans, making them feel closer to their idol through the use of the product.

Discussion:

In the representamen section, Sehun appears with glowing skin while holding a Whitelab product labeled "Sehun's Favorite." In this promotion, benefit claims such as "48-hour moisture lock" and "skin barrier care" are also visible. The blue background gives a calm and fresh impression, which serves to add visual appeal and create a refreshing atmosphere for the audience.

Furthermore, the object in this promotion is the Whitelab moisturizer, which is positioned as a trusted skincare product. This product has clinically tested scientific claims, providing a sense of safety and assurance for consumers. The "Sehun's Favorite" label on this product not only emphasizes its quality but also gives an impression of

exclusivity and personal closeness to Sehun, who is a famous idol. This adds value to the promoted product.

Finally, in the interpretant section, the audience will interpret this product as something that is of high quality and safe to use. In addition, the scientifically stated claims reinforce the impression of trust in the product. The presence of the "Sehun's Favorite" label is a factor that strengthens consumer loyalty, as they feel more connected to the product through their idol. Thus, this table shows how visual and narrative elements work together to build an emotional connection with the audience and influence their perceptions and purchasing decisions.

No.	Post	Description Representative - Object - Interpretation
1.	Post Analysis: September 1, 2022 Face Wash pH 5.5  https://www.instagram.com/p/Ch9D1UrFMX/	Representative: Visual Sehun holds a Whitelab face wash product with a pH balance claim (5.5). The tagline "Rawat Skin Barrier" (Care for Your Skin Barrier) is clearly displayed. Blue and white colors dominate, reflecting freshness and purity. Object: The Whitelab face wash product, positioned as a gentle, safe, and skin-friendly facial cleanser. Sehun's presence emphasizes that the product meets global standards. Interpretation: The audience interprets Whitelab face wash not just as an ordinary cleanser, but as a scientific skincare product safe for daily use. Sehun's presence reinforces the product's perception as exclusive, premium, and trustworthy.

Discussion:

The first part, Representamen, describes the visuals of the post, namely the image of Sehun holding the Whitelab Face Wash product. The text written on the image, such

as "Rawat Skin Barrier" and the pH 5.5 claim, emphasizes the impression of balance and safety of the product. The blue and white colors used in the design seem to be designed to emphasize freshness and purity, giving a clean and natural feel. All of these visual elements support the main message that the brand wants to convey, namely the freshness and effectiveness of the product.

Furthermore, in the Object section, it is explained that the product being promoted is Face Wash Whitelab, which is described as a gentle, safe facial cleanser that suits various healthy skin needs. The presence of Sehun as a model adds to the credibility of the product, as this public figure implies that the product meets global standards, which can strengthen the audience's confidence in its quality and safety.

Finally, in the Interpretant section, this table illustrates how the audience will interpret the message from the post. The audience is expected to understand that Face Wash Whitelab is more than just an ordinary facial cleanser. By introducing this product through Sehun, who has an image as a famous celebrity, the product is perceived as premium and exclusive skincare for everyday use. This creates the impression that the product is not only beneficial for facial hygiene, but also a status symbol desired by consumers.

No.	Post	Description Representative - Object - Interpretation
1.	Post Analysis: July 25, 2022 Intense Brightening Serum – bright in 2 weeks  https://www.instagram.com/p/CgLbFowvDyO/	Representative: The visual shows Oh Sehun wearing clean white clothes while holding Whitelab Intense Brightening Serum. At the top, there is large gold lettering that reads "Bright in 2 Weeks." At the bottom, there is information about the product's main ingredients (10% niacinamide, HyaluComplex-10, marine collagen). A gold badge that reads "Sehun's Favorite" is also displayed to reinforce the personalization. White dominates the background, evoking a clean and pure aesthetic. Object: The referenced object is the scientific claim and effectiveness of the Whitelab product, promising brighter skin in just two weeks. The white clothing worn by Sehun reinforces the image of purity and safety, while the text claiming the active ingredients serves as

scientific evidence that strengthens the product's credibility. The presence of the "*Sehun's Favorite*" badge is intended to add exclusive value and emotional closeness to the brand ambassador.

Interpretation:

The audience interprets Whitelab as a scientific skincare product that can deliver fast and visible results. The presence of Oh Sehun reinforces the message that bright results can be achieved by using this product. The use of gold in the text conveys luxury, prestige, and optimal results, while Sehun's white clothing adds a sense of safety and trustworthiness. The interpretation that emerges is that Whitelab not only sells products but also offers a premium experience associated with global quality.

Discussion:

The representation in this image is a visual showing Oh Sehun wearing clean white clothes while holding the Whitelab Intense Brightening Serum product. The text written on the image, "Bright in 2 Weeks," as well as the product description of ingredients such as Niacinamide 10%, HyaluComplex-10, and Marine Collagen, further reinforce the impression that the product is effective for brightening the skin in a short time. The "Sehun's Favorite" badge is added to give a personal touch, implying that this product is Sehun's choice, which adds to its credibility and appeal. The dominant white color in the image gives a clean, fresh, and natural impression, emphasizing a pure and understated look.

The object of analysis is the scientific claim made by Whitelab products, which promise brighter skin in just two weeks. The white clothes worn by Sehun are intended to convey an image of purity and safety. Meanwhile, the claim about the active ingredients contained in the product also serves as scientific evidence that reinforces the product's credibility. The "Sehun's Favorite" badge here is not only a promotional element, but also adds emotional value by emphasizing the closeness of public figures to the product, which influences the audience to trust the product more.

The interpretant in this analysis is how the audience interprets the message conveyed by the visuals and text. The audience is likely to associate Whitelab products

with scientific skincare quality that can deliver fast and scientifically proven results. Sehun's presence as a brand ambassador reinforces the impression that this product is the best choice, as he is a figure trusted by many people. Overall, the audience may feel that using this product will deliver optimal results, in line with the clean, safe, and effective image portrayed in the advertisement.

No.	Post	Description Representative - Object - Interpretation
1.	Post Analysis: February 28, 2022 Powerful Arbutin Serum – bright, radiant skin.  https://www.instagram.com/p/CaYohwbF4yN/	Representative: The visual features Oh Sehun with a friendly expression while holding the Whitelab serum product. The large gold text "Radiant Bright Skin" dominates the top. Beside Sehun are two clearly displayed product bottles, accompanied by the caption "Powerful Arbutin Serum -- A-Dose+ Glowing Serum." The white color of Sehun's clothing and the gray background emphasize a clean, elegant, and modern feel. Object: The object referred to is the image of Whitelab as a powerful and effective skin brightening serum. The emphasis on the words "Powerful" and "Radiant" highlights the product's claim to deliver significant results. The presence of Sehun, a K-pop idol, symbolizes international quality while reinforcing the product's positioning as premium scientific skincare. Interpretation: The audience interprets Whitelab as skincare that can deliver real results in the form of bright and glowing skin. The gold-colored text gives a luxurious and prestigious impression, while Sehun's figure reinforces the

product's exclusivity. The interpretation that emerges is that Whitelab is seen as a local brand that meets global standards, with a modern, elegant, and trustworthy image.

Discussion:

The representamen in the content includes a visual image of Sehun wearing an expression that shows seriousness in holding the product. Next to him, there is a clearly visible bottle of the product with prominent product information. This gives the impression that the product is very effective in providing good results, indicating premium quality.

The object refers to the main message that wants to be conveyed to the audience. In this case, the object in question is the image of the Whitelab product as a skin whitening serum that serves to brighten and improve skin quality. The inclusion of the word "Powerful" emphasizes the product's effectiveness claim, while the word "Radiant" indicates bright and glowing results, adding to the product's credibility. The presence of Sehun as the model representing this product reinforces the association that this serum is suitable for individuals who want bright and healthy skin, with quality that is on par with international products.

Interpretation, detailing how the audience will interpret this visual. Audiences who see this image may associate Whitelab products with high quality and the ability to provide bright skin, based on the portrayal of Sehun as a famous and influential idol. This interpretation deepens the meaning that Whitelab products are the right choice for people who want healthy and bright skin, creating an image that these products are premium and effective skincare.

Overall, the table illustrates how semiotics in the form of images and text are used to reinforce the marketing message of Whitelab products through advertisements featuring public figures. Each visual element and word chosen has a specific purpose to attract the audience's attention and build associations with high quality and status.

Discussion

Sehun's presence allows Whitelab to associate its products with scientific value, modernity, and global prestige, while also capitalizing on the Korean pop culture trend (Hallyu) that is very popular among young consumers in Indonesia[12]. The results of the discussion show that the use of Oh Sehun as a brand ambassador in Whitelab's Instagram campaign has succeeded in strengthening the brand image of the product through consistent visual elements and supporting narratives.

Using a descriptive qualitative approach with Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic analysis[13], the analysis was conducted on Whitelab's official Instagram posts featuring Oh Sehun, both in the form of photos and videos. Data was collected through documentation of posts, then analyzed by mapping Peirce's three main components of semiotics: representamen (signs displayed visually or verbally), object (the reality or

concept referred to by the sign), and interpretant (the meaning understood by the audience from the relationship between the representamen and the object).

Each piece of content featuring Sehun, whether in photos or videos, was designed to communicate the quality and effectiveness of the product. Visuals that highlighted Sehun's healthy and glowing skin, coupled with a design dominated by colors such as white, blue, and gold, created an impression of luxury, cleanliness, and the scientific credibility of the product. Well-integrated promotional text, such as the claims "Unlimited Maximum Brightness" or "Radiant Skin," adds to the visual appeal and communicates the tangible benefits of the product.

The content also mentions that the active ingredients used in several Whitelab products, such as mugwort, niacinamide, and arbutin, also promote the natural and healthy image desired by consumers. Sehun's presence as a brand ambassador adds an emotional dimension to this campaign, with the audience, especially K-pop fans, feeling closer to the product because of its connection to their idol. In this case, Sehun not only serves as a public figure representative, but also as a symbol of the quality and lifestyle desired by consumers, which is directly related to the perception that using Whitelab products will bring them closer to global standards in skin care.

The results and discussion of the study show that all Whitelab posts display a consistent pattern of representation. The intended object is Whitelab's image as a scientific, safe, and premium skincare brand, reinforced by claims of active ingredients (niacinamide, arbutin, marine collagen), as well as references to clinical test results. The interpretant formed in the minds of the audience is the perception that Whitelab is not just a local brand, but also a modern skincare brand that can provide optimal, prestigious results comparable to global brands. Sehun's presence reinforces the emotional value of the product, as K-pop fans are not only buying skincare but also identifying with and feeling close to their idol.

Overall, Whitelab's content successfully created a strong emotional connection with its audience and reinforced Whitelab's brand image as a modern, effective, and trusted premium skincare product[14]. The use of visual semiotics proved effective in increasing brand awareness, creating a perception of premium quality, and building consumer loyalty[15]. This discussion also shows how choosing the right global brand ambassador can help local brands compete in a wider market by creating a positive perception of product quality and credibility.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding: The results of this study show that the use of Oh Sehun as Whitelab's brand ambassador on the Instagram platform has successfully built a positive image and credibility for the product through strong visuals. Through Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic approach, analysis of visual representations shows that elements such as poses, clothing, colors, and text used in Whitelab's Instagram posts can influence audience interpretation. Sehun, who is known for his healthy skin, has become a symbol of the results that can be achieved by using Whitelab products, while also reinforcing the product's image as a modern, scientific, and premium skincare choice. **Implication :** This shows that every visual and textual element in Whitelab's Instagram content plays an important role in reinforcing the message they want to convey to their audience. Sehun's

presence as a brand ambassador enriches the emotional narrative that links the product to an aspirational lifestyle, especially for K-pop fans. **Limitation** : Thus, Whitelab has successfully created the perception that its products are effective, reliable, and on par with global standards through well-structured and in-depth visual communication, yet the findings remain limited to the context of Instagram content featuring a single brand ambassador and may not fully capture other factors that influence consumer trust and brand perception. **Future Research** : Further research is recommended to expand the analysis to multiple digital platforms, diverse consumer groups, and comparative studies with other brand ambassadors, so that a more comprehensive understanding can be gained regarding the effectiveness of visual communication strategies in building brand credibility and aspirational value.

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