

A PEIRCEAN SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF THE INDONESIAN EDITION COVER OF AS LONG AS THE LEMON TREES GROW

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ABSTRACT This study examines the Indonesian edition book cover of *As Long As the Lemon Trees Grow*, illustrated by Nadya Zahwa Noor, using Charles Sanders Peirce's triadic semiotic framework. As book covers function as multimodal paratexts that shape reader expectations, analyzing their semiotic components allows a deeper understanding of how visual signs convey cultural, emotional, and narrative meanings. Employing a qualitative descriptive design, the study analyzes eight selected visual signs identified based on their visual salience, narrative relevance, and cultural symbolic significance within the cover composition. Each sign is examined through the relationship between representamen, object, and interpretant, and categorized as icon, index, or symbol. The findings reveal that the ornamental Middle Eastern-inspired frame, dominant blue and green color composition, lemon imagery and lemon trees, the silhouetted male and female figures, and their spatial arrangement collectively construct a layered visual discourse of hope, identity, conflict, and resilience. These elements simultaneously index Syrian cultural aesthetics and generate new symbolic meanings within the Indonesian interpretive context. The study demonstrates that the localized cover operates as a culturally adaptive semiotic artifact, illustrating how visual design mediates between global narrative identity and local readership. Through this analysis, the research contributes to broader discussions on visual semiotics, multimodality, and cultural adaptation in global publishing practices.

Keywords: semiotics, Peirce, book cover, visual meaning, multimodality

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary publishing industry, visual communication functions as a strategic medium that shapes how readers perceive, categorize, and emotionally engage with a literary work before reading a single page. Book covers serve not merely as decorative surfaces but as multimodal texts that combine images, colors, typography, composition, and symbolic motifs to convey meaning. Contemporary multimodal discourse analysis emphasizes the interaction of visual, spatial, and symbolic resources in constructing meaning across media contexts (Lam et al., 2025). Within publishing practices, these multimodal elements operate as entry points into narrative, signaling genre, setting, emotion, and thematic orientation. As such, book covers can be regarded as semiotic objects rich with cultural, symbolic, and aesthetic significance.

Semiotics, the study of signs and meaning-making processes, provides a powerful analytical framework for examining such visual texts. Charles Sanders Peirce proposed a triadic model of the sign, consisting of the representamen, the object, and the interpretant, to explain how meaning emerges through relationships rather than isolated symbols (Peirce, 1931-1958). Peirce further introduced his well-known trichotomy of sign types: icons, which resemble their objects; indices, which are physically or causally connected to their objects; and symbols, which derive meaning through convention or cultural agreement. Recent applications of Peircean semiotics in visual analysis demonstrate the continued relevance of this triadic framework in interpreting contemporary visual media, including digital and print artifacts (Fadhillah et al., 2026). This model enables researchers to examine visual media not only in terms of what they depict but also how those depictions operate within culturally informed interpretive processes (Chandler, 2022).

The novel *As Long As the Lemon Trees Grow*, written by Zoulfa Katouh, portrays the emotional and political struggles of Salama, a young Syrian woman experiencing the turbulence of the Syrian civil war. The book cover visually encodes central themes of the narrative, hope, memory, cultural identity, and survival, through its symbolic design elements.

Dominant lemon tree imagery references both the title and the broader symbolism of lemons in Syrian cultural imagination, representing resilience and attachment to homeland (Katouh, 2022).

Beyond its narrative significance, *As Long As the Lemon Trees Grow* has achieved notable global recognition. Since its publication in 2022, the novel has been translated and distributed across numerous countries, reaching a diverse international readership. Its themes of war, resilience, and hope have resonated widely, allowing the novel to circulate in both Western and non-Western literary markets. Among these international editions, Indonesia is one of the countries that has published its own localized version of the book. The Indonesian edition, released by Penerbit Mizan, features a distinct cover design created specifically for Indonesian readers.

The Indonesian cover was designed by Nadya Zahwa Noor, a visual artist whose work adapts the novel's thematic essence into a culturally and aesthetically distinctive visual form. Her interpretation differs from the original international cover in terms of imagery, color palette, spatial composition, and symbolic emphasis. These visual modifications are not merely stylistic choices; they reflect broader processes of cultural adaptation and visual translation within publishing industries. Recent scholarship on cultural representation in visual educational and media texts highlights how visual signs shift meaning when circulated across different sociocultural environments (Derakhshan, 2021). In this sense, the Indonesian cover becomes an important semiotic artifact that invites analysis of how meaning is constructed, transformed, and recontextualized through localized visual design.

Although Peircean semiotic analysis has been applied to various forms of visual media, including textbook and literary covers, many studies remain primarily descriptive and focus on identifying sign types without examining how semiotic meanings evolve across cultural or publishing contexts. For instance, recent research applying Peirce's triadic model to English textbook covers in Indonesia demonstrates how visual signs communicate educational and cultural values (Swarniti et al., 2025), yet it does not extensively theorize these findings within localized publishing adaptation. Similarly, other contemporary semiotic analyses of book covers identify icon-index-symbol relations but rarely explore the broader implications of semiotic transformation within cross-cultural circulation (Lubis et al., 2025).

This indicates an underexplored area at the intersection of Peircean semiotics and localized visual adaptation in regional publishing markets. Therefore, this study examines the Indonesian edition book cover of *As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow* to investigate how representamen, object, and interpretant interact within a localized cultural context, contributing to a deeper understanding of semiotic transformation in Southeast Asian publishing practices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Semiotics and Visual Meaning-Making

Semiotics, as a discipline concerned with signs and processes of meaning-making, remains central in contemporary visual communication studies. Recent research demonstrates that semiotic analysis enables scholars to systematically interpret how visual elements function within broader socio-cultural frameworks (Halim & Sari, 2024). In their study published in *Communica: Journal of Communication*, visual artifacts such as digital memes are shown to operate as structured sign systems that convey identity, ideology, and cultural positioning. This reinforces the idea that visual texts are not merely aesthetic objects but socially embedded communicative practices shaped by cultural conventions and audience interpretation.

Furthermore, current semiotic studies emphasize that visual meaning emerges through the interaction of multiple design elements rather than isolated symbols. Research on textbook covers published in *Humanis* (Swarniti et al., 2025) demonstrates how color selection, layout organization, imagery, and typography collectively function as representational, indexical, and

symbolic signs within Peirce's framework. Their findings confirm that visual artifacts operate as coherent semiotic structures where meaning is constructed relationally across elements.

In addition, developments in multimodal semiotics further strengthen this perspective. A recent special issue of *Zeitschrift für Semiotik* (2023) highlights methodological innovations in analyzing multimodal visual texts, including comics and graphic narratives, emphasizing how spatial composition, framing, and symbolic layering guide interpretation. These studies suggest that visual communication must be examined as multimodal configurations in which different semiotic resources interact dynamically.

Similarly, visual semiotic research in educational media, such as the study published in *Mimbar Ilmu* (Pertiwi & Budiman, 2025), illustrates how visual signs in video-based learning materials construct meaning through icon, index, and symbol relations. Although applied to educational contexts, the analytical framework confirms the continued relevance of Peircean semiotics in examining contemporary visual artifacts.

More broadly, scholarship in visual communication, regularly featured in journals such as *Visual Communication*, positions visual texts as complex multimodal constructs embedded within cultural industries and mediated publics. This body of research provides a contemporary theoretical foundation for analyzing book covers as semiotic objects shaped by design strategies, cultural codes, and interpretive expectations.

Peircean Semiotics as an Analytical Framework

Charles Sanders Peirce's triadic model, representamen, object, and interpretant, offers a systematic analytical framework for examining how signs generate meaning through relational processes. Within this model, Peirce distinguishes three fundamental types of signs: icons, indices, and symbols. Icons signify through resemblance, indices through existential or causal connection, and symbols through culturally established conventions. Contemporary semiotic scholarship continues to reaffirm the analytical strength of this triadic structure in examining visual communication (Chandler, 2022).

Recent research further demonstrates that Peircean semiotics enables deeper interpretive engagement by tracing how viewers construct meaning through contextual association and cultural habit. As discussed in contemporary visual semiotic studies published in journals such as *Visual Communication*, Peirce's framework remains highly adaptable for analyzing multimodal artifacts embedded in media and design industries. Rather than treating visual elements as static representations, the triadic model highlights how meaning evolves through interpretive interaction between sign forms and cultural knowledge.

Moreover, current studies applying Peirce's theory to digital and visual media indicate that the icon–index–symbol classification continues to provide conceptual clarity in examining layered symbolic systems (Fadhillah et al., 2026). Its flexibility allows researchers to identify not only literal visual references but also affective, ideological, and culturally mediated meanings. For this reason, Peircean semiotics remains particularly suitable for analyzing book cover design, where imagery, typography, and color function simultaneously as representational, indexical, and symbolic signs (Fadhillah et al., 2026).

Book Covers as Multimodal and Cultural Artifacts

Contemporary multimodal discourse analysis emphasizes the interaction of visual, spatial, and symbolic resources in constructing meaning (Lam et al., 2025). Within publishing contexts, these multimodal resources converge most visibly in book covers, which are widely recognized as strategic paratextual elements that actively shape how literary works are framed and interpreted. Rather than functioning merely as decorative packaging, covers operate as interpretive interfaces that guide reader expectations prior to textual engagement. Gray (2010) argues that paratexts serve as interpretive gateways that influence how audiences approach, categorize, and emotionally position a text within cultural and commercial contexts. From this

perspective, the book cover plays a decisive role in constructing a work's public identity and shaping preliminary meaning before the narrative itself is encountered.

Beyond their framing function, book covers also operate as multimodal artifacts that integrate various semiotic resources, imagery, typography, color schemes, spatial composition, and symbolic motifs, into a cohesive visual structure. These elements interact to signal genre, tone, thematic orientation, and cultural resonance. As Gray (2010) emphasizes, paratexts do not simply accompany texts; they participate in the production of meaning by pre-structuring interpretation and shaping audience anticipation.

In the context of global and translated publishing, the cultural dimension of book covers becomes even more significant. Batchelor (2018) highlights that paratexts in translated works often undergo adaptation to align with the aesthetic preferences, cultural frameworks, and market expectations of new readerships. This process demonstrates that book covers are not neutral reproductions of narrative content but culturally situated reinterpretations. Through localization and redesign, covers become sites of negotiation between original textual identity and the interpretive habits of a different audience.

Therefore, book covers can be understood as multimodal and cultural artifacts that mediate between text, market, and reader. They actively participate in the circulation of literary meaning, functioning not only as visual representations of narrative themes but also as culturally embedded constructs shaped by publishing strategy and audience reception.

Previous Studies on Semiotic Analysis of Book Covers

Several studies have applied semiotic frameworks, particularly Peircean semiotics, to analyze how visual signs in book covers construct meaning. These works consistently demonstrate that book covers operate as multimodal semiotic artifacts that communicate narrative elements, genre expectations, and cultural orientation.

One relevant study is by Mariana et al. (2024) who analyzed the cover of *House of Hunger* by Alexis Henderson using Peirce's triadic model. Their research identified ten visual signs consisting of icons, indices, and symbols, demonstrating that each sign corresponds directly to narrative elements such as character identity, setting, conflict, and mood. Their findings emphasize that book covers function as visual representations of story content and rely heavily on symbolic and indexical cues to evoke emotional tone and thematic direction. This study confirms that Peirce's categories offer a systematic approach for analyzing visual-verbal interaction on book covers.

Another relevant work is by Isnaini et al. (2019) in their article "*A Visual Semiotic Analysis of Multicultural Values in an Indonesian English Textbook*," which examined visual elements in a junior high school textbook using Peirce's semiotics. Their analysis revealed how icons, indices, and symbols encode messages of multiculturalism, diversity, and national identity. They argue that visual semiotics is essential for clarifying how educational materials transmit cultural values through images. Although the study focuses on textbooks rather than book covers, it demonstrates the applicability of Peirce's triadic model in Indonesian visual media analysis.

A third study is the thesis "Semiotics Analysis on the Novel *Night on the Galactic Railroad* by Miyazawa Kenji Using Charles Sanders Peirce's Triadic Model" (Wiyogo & Kumala, 2023). This research identified 24 signs, 17 indices, 5 symbols, and 2 icons, showing that indexical signs dominate the novel's narrative interpretation. The thesis demonstrates that Peircean semiotics is effective in interpreting both visual and textual signs, reinforcing the model's flexibility in literary analysis.

Collectively, these studies confirm that Peirce's sign categories, icon, index, and symbol, provide a strong analytical foundation for interpreting visual meaning in literature, textbooks, and narrative media.

Although previous studies have successfully applied Peircean semiotics to analyze visual media, including international book covers, educational textbooks, and literary narratives, there remains a significant gap in the examination of localized book cover designs. Existing research typically focuses on original covers of internationally published novels or analyzes visual signs within educational materials, but no study has explored how semiotic meaning is transformed when a global literary work is visually adapted for a specific national market. Moreover, there is currently no research that analyzes the Indonesian edition of *As Long As the Lemon Trees Grow*, nor any study that investigates Nadya Zahwa Noor's localized cover design through Peirce's triadic framework. This absence indicates a clear research gap that the present study seeks to address by examining how icons, indices, and symbols operate within the Indonesian cover and how these signs construct culturally embedded meanings for Indonesian readers. This gap is theoretically significant because it limits our understanding of how semiotic processes operate within transnational publishing flows, where meaning is not merely reproduced but recontextualized across cultural systems.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research design, using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory as the primary analytical framework. Qualitative research is appropriate for this study because the objective is to interpret visual signs and uncover the meanings embedded within the Indonesian edition of the book cover *As Long As the Lemon Trees Grow*. Rather than measuring variables numerically, this approach allows for an in-depth interpretation of visual sign through the relationship between representamen, object, and interpretant within a specific cultural context. As Creswell and Creswell (2017) explain, qualitative research emphasizes interpretive understanding and contextual meaning-making, making it particularly suitable for semiotic inquiry.

The data of this research consist of the visual elements presented on the Indonesian book cover designed by Nadya Zahwa Noor, including imagery, color palette, typography, spatial arrangement, and symbolic motifs. Using purposive sampling, the cover was selected because it represents a localized visual adaptation of an internationally published novel. From the cover, eight visual signs were identified as primary data. A visual element was classified as a sign when it met at least one of the following criteria: (1) it occupied a visually dominant or salient position in the composition; (2) it directly referenced narrative elements such as character, setting, or theme; or (3) it carried identifiable cultural or symbolic associations relevant to the novel's context. The selection was limited to eight signs to ensure analytical depth, interpretive focus, and coherence within the Peircean framework.

Data were collected through documentation techniques. A high-resolution digital image of the book cover was examined, and each visual element functioning as a sign was systematically identified. A coding sheet was employed as the research instrument to classify each sign according to Peirce's triadic categories of icon, index, and symbol, while also noting the representamen, object, and interpretant of each sign. Such systematic categorization aligns with contemporary qualitative content analysis procedures that emphasize structured interpretive coding (Schreier, 2012).

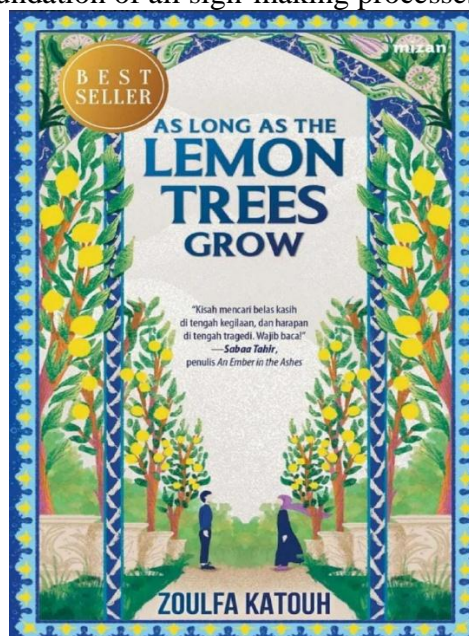
The data analysis followed an iterative analytical process based on Peirce's triadic semiotic model. First, all visual signs appearing on the cover were identified. Second, each sign was categorized as an icon, index, or symbol according to its mode of representation. Third, the relationship between representamen, object, and interpretant was analyzed repeatedly to refine interpretation and ensure analytical consistency. The analysis also considered narrative and cultural contexts to explain how the localized cover communicates themes of identity, conflict, and hope to Indonesian readers.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the analysis, this study applied theoretical triangulation by drawing primarily on Peircean semiotics while also engaging multimodal visual analysis

perspectives. Theoretical triangulation strengthens interpretive validity and helps reduce subjective bias in meaning-making (Flick, 2018). Through these procedures, the study aims to present a systematic and credible semiotic analysis of the Indonesian book cover.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Indonesian edition cover of *As Long As the Lemon Trees Grow*, illustrated by Nadya Zahwa Noor, is a visually rich semiotic landscape whose interpretive possibilities expand significantly when examined through Charles Sanders Peirce's triadic model. As a semiotic object, the cover does not merely "represent" the narrative thematically but actively constructs layers of meaning through the orchestrated interplay of color, shape, cultural pattern, symbolic imagery, and spatial organization. In this sense, the cover does not function as a passive ornament but, rather, as a multimodal text whose communicative potential operates within the realms of the iconic, the indexical, and the symbolic simultaneously, which (Peirce, 1931–1958) identifies as the foundation of all sign-making processes.



Understanding this cover as a multimodal semiotic field is further supported by Kress and Leeuwen (2006) argument that visual design functions like a grammar, each component contributing to the overall syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic message of the text. The cover, therefore, should be read not merely as an assemblage of images but as a deliberately structured communicative event. Genette (1997) notion of the paratext further positions the cover as a threshold element, shaping the reader's engagement before the narrative even begins. In the case of this cover, the paratext performs an additional cultural function: it signals the novel's connection to Syria through visual idioms that resonate with Middle Eastern artistic traditions.

The Ornamental Frame as Icon, Index, and Symbol

The foundation of this semiotic reading lies in the ornamental frame, a dominant visual feature that simultaneously functions iconically, indexically, and symbolically. The floral motifs and geometric configurations strongly evoke Middle Eastern manuscript traditions and decorative arts, creating an iconic resemblance to Syrian visual aesthetics. This resemblance develops into indexicality when interpreted within the narrative context of the novel, which is set in Syria. Within Peirce's framework, the patterns operate indexically by pointing to the geographical and cultural setting of the story. Contemporary semiotic scholarship explains that indices derive their meaning from existential or contextual connections to reality; in visual artifacts, such connections often operate through historically and culturally embedded

associations (Chandler, 2022). In this case, the ornamental design carries cultural references that reinforce the representation of Syria, extending beyond mere decorative stylization.

The symbolic dimension of these patterns becomes more complex when considered within the Indonesian cultural context. In Indonesia's visual landscape, symmetrical floral and geometric motifs are frequently associated with religious materials such as Iqro' books or prayer mats (sajadah). This association demonstrates that symbolic meaning is not fixed but shaped by collective experience and interpretive habits. Recent visual semiotic studies confirm that interpretants emerge through culturally shared frameworks that guide how signs are understood within specific communities (Halim & Sari, 2024). Thus, while the patterns are indexically linked to Syria within the narrative frame, they may function symbolically as representations of religiosity in the Indonesian interpretive context. As contemporary semiotic theory suggests, when visual signs circulate across cultural settings, they generate expanded or shifted interpretants depending on local symbolic conventions (Bateman et al., 2022). The Indonesian cover, therefore, illustrates a process of semiotic transformation in which icon, index, and symbol intersect across transnational cultural spaces.

Color Semiotics: Blue and Green as Emotional and Cultural Signs

Color deepens these semiotic dynamics. The dominant blue that frames the design carries a multiplicity of interpretive possibilities. Iconically, it resembles the deep blues of Middle Eastern tiles and mosaics. Indexically, it points to Syrian aesthetic traditions that frequently incorporate cobalt blue in architectural ornamentation. Symbolically, blue signifies serenity, spirituality, and endurance, qualities closely aligned with Salama's emotional journey throughout the novel. Contemporary research in visual communication suggests that color functions as a semiotic resource whose meaning emerges through cultural convention and contextual framing rather than fixed psychological universality (Aiello & Parry, 2019). In this context, the expansive blue border generates an atmosphere of contemplative stillness, reinforcing the emotional tone of memory, distance, and resilience embedded in the narrative.

Green, the second most prominent color, enhances the semiotic density of the composition. Iconically, it represents the lush environment of the lemon groves. Indexically, it connects to the Syrian domestic landscapes described in the novel, where gardens and courtyards hold cultural and familial significance. Symbolically, green conveys hope, renewal, and continuity, echoing the novel's central metaphor that hope persists "as long as the lemon trees grow." Recent studies in multimodal semiotics emphasize that color operates relationally within the overall visual composition, guiding affective interpretation through contrast, dominance, and saturation (Bateman et al., 2022). The balanced interplay between blue and green on the cover, therefore, not only reflects narrative imagery but also constructs an emotional architecture that aligns visual representation with thematic endurance and survival.

Lemon Imagery and the Symbolism of Hope and Memory

Symbolically, however, lemons become the most semantically dense element on the cover. In Syrian cultural imagination, fruit-bearing trees often signify continuity, rootedness, and resilience, while lemons in particular are associated with renewal and vitality. Their presence on the cover transforms them into more than botanical representations; they operate as mnemonic signs that condense memory and longing into a single visual form. Contemporary visual semiotic research emphasizes that salient elements in an image guide affective interpretation by directing viewers' attention and structuring emotional response (Aiello & Parry, 2021). The bright yellow hue of the lemons contrasts sharply with the surrounding blue tones, producing visual prominence that intensifies their symbolic force.

Rather than functioning as mere decorative accents, the lemons serve as emotional focal points within the visual hierarchy. Studies in multimodal visual analysis demonstrate that contrast, color intensity, and spatial positioning generate interpretive emphasis within visual

compositions (Bateman et al., 2022). In this case, the luminous yellow contrasts sharply with the surrounding blue, visually reinforcing the thematic tension between trauma and hope. The lemons, therefore, symbolize endurance and survival, embodying the novel's central assertion that hope persists even amid the erasure and displacement caused by war.

Human Figures and Spatial Composition as Indexes of Relationship and Conflict

At the compositional center, the human figures further anchor the semiotic reading. Rendered in silhouette-like minimalism, they operate iconically as representations of Salama and Kenan. Their spatial arrangement, standing apart yet oriented toward each other, indexes emotional tension, longing, and the relational dynamics that shape their journey. In contemporary visual analysis, spatial positioning and bodily orientation are understood as meaningful semiotic resources that construct interpersonal relationships within an image (Machin, 2021). The subtle direction of their bodies, therefore, guides interpretive attention toward both emotional distance and connection.

Symbolically, their placement beneath the towering lemon trees evokes vulnerability within forces larger than themselves, history, war, memory, and fate. The contrast in scale between the small human figures and the expansive natural elements visually encodes fragility and endurance. Rather than functioning as neutral decorative elements, scale and composition work relationally to structure meaning within the visual field. The interplay between distance, orientation, and vertical hierarchy reinforces the emotional tension central to the narrative, aligning the visual composition with themes of love, survival, and conflict.

Symmetry and Cultural Aesthetics in Visual Meaning-Making

The role of symmetry is equally important in the visual construction of meaning. Islamic and Middle Eastern visual traditions frequently employ geometric and bilateral symmetry to evoke harmony, balance, and spiritual order. In this cover, symmetry operates iconically as a visual reflection of that aesthetic tradition and indexically as a reference to the cultural framework associated with the novel's Syrian setting. The structured repetition of patterns reinforces the impression of cultural rootedness and artistic continuity.

Symbolically, however, symmetry generates a deeper layer of meaning. Contemporary visual design studies note that compositional balance often conveys stability and coherence within an image (Machin, 2021). In this context, the ordered arrangement of ornamental elements contrasts sharply with the narrative reality of war, displacement, and emotional fragmentation depicted in the novel. The cover thus visually performs a paradox: outward harmony and inner turbulence. The symmetrical structure suggests serenity and control, while the story beneath it unfolds through conflict and instability. Through this contrast, the design encodes the emotional duality at the heart of the narrative, beauty framing trauma, and order containing chaos.

Designer's Interpretation and the Dynamic Interpretant

The existence of multiple cover versions, including the special edition redesign, introduces an additional interpretive dimension within Peirce's semiotic framework. The shift in visual composition between editions suggests an evolving interpretive engagement with the narrative text. In Peirce's theory, this process aligns with the concept of the dynamic interpretant, which refers to the meaning produced through ongoing interaction with the sign and its object. This demonstrates that paratextual design is not fixed but responsive to evolving interpretive engagements with the narrative, reflecting Peirce's notion that meaning is continuously generated rather than permanently stabilized.

Rather than treating the cover as a fixed representation, the redesign indicates that interpretation is not static but develops through deeper textual understanding and contextual reconsideration. The adjustments in visual emphasis and compositional structure demonstrate

how signs may be reconfigured as interpretive awareness expands. This supports Chandler's (2022) argument that semiotic meaning is recursive and continuously shaped through renewed encounters between representamen and object.

The Indonesian Cover as a Localized Semiotic Artifact

When viewed holistically, the Indonesian cover becomes a multilayered semiotic artifact whose meaning emerges from the interplay of Peircean sign categories, multimodal compositional choices, cultural aesthetics, and audience interpretation; each element. The ornamental patterns, the rich blues and greens, the luminous lemons, the poised figures, and the symmetrical framing contribute to a unified visual narrative that embodies the novel's emotional and cultural essence. The cover is not simply an aesthetic translation of textual content; it is a visual articulation of identity, memory, and hope, shaped by both Syrian artistic heritage and Indonesian cultural reception.

What ultimately makes this cover semiotically remarkable is its ability to function across multiple cultural and interpretive contexts without losing cohesion. It communicates Syrian visual identity through indexical patterning, conveys universal emotional themes through symbolic color and imagery, and engages Indonesian readers through culturally familiar interpretants. Through Peirce's lens, the cover reveals itself as a dynamic sign constellation, constantly generating meaning through its triadic relations. It is, in every sense, a visual counterpart to the novel's narrative: layered, emotional, rooted in homeland, touched by tragedy, yet illuminated by hope. This localization process illustrates how global literary products undergo semiotic negotiation, in which visual meaning is selectively retained, emphasized, or reconfigured to align with local cultural sensibilities.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Indonesian edition cover of *As Long As the Lemon Trees Grow* functions as a complex and multilayered semiotic construction in which meaning emerges through the interaction of icons, indices, and symbols within Peirce's triadic framework. The analysis identifies eight primary visual signs: (1) the ornamental Middle Eastern inspired frame, (2) the dominant blue color, (3) the green landscape elements, (4) the yellow lemons, (5) the lemon trees as natural structures, (6) the female figure representing Salama, (7) the male figure representing Kenan, and (8) the spatial arrangement and compositional symmetry that organize their relationship. Each of these elements operates simultaneously across Peirce's sign categories, generating layered interpretants shaped by narrative context and cultural reception.

The ornamental patterns function iconically through visual resemblance, indexically through their association with Syrian cultural aesthetics, and symbolically through culturally mediated interpretations within the Indonesian context. The blue and green color composition intensifies the emotional and thematic resonance of the cover, symbolizing introspection, hope, endurance, and renewal, while also indexing Middle Eastern visual (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006). The lemon imagery, both as fruit and as trees, anchors the design semiotically by referencing the novel's central metaphor of resilience and memory, transforming a natural object into a culturally and emotionally charged symbol. Meanwhile, the silhouetted human figures and their spatial positioning visually index relational tension, vulnerability, and longing, reinforcing the novel's core themes of love, conflict, and survival. The symmetrical framing further contributes to the semiotic structure by invoking harmony and order, which contrast with the internal turbulence of war depicted in the narrative.

Taken together, these eight signs demonstrate that the localized cover does not merely replicate the novel's themes but actively rearticulates them within a culturally adaptive visual language. In line with Gray's (2010) understanding of paratexts as interpretive gateways and Batchelor's (2018) argument regarding the cultural adaptation of translated paratexts, the

Indonesian cover operates as a multimodal artifact that mediates between Syrian narrative identity and Indonesian interpretive frameworks. Through Peirce's lens, the cover emerges as a dynamic constellation of signs whose meaning is continuously produced through the relationship between representamen, object, and interpretant.

The significance of this research lies in its contribution to the study of visual semiotics within localized publishing contexts, particularly in examining how global literary works undergo semiotic transformation when adapted for specific cultural markets. By foregrounding the interaction between Peircean semiotics and paratextual theory, this study expands the analytical scope of book cover research beyond descriptive sign identification toward a deeper understanding of cultural mediation in global publishing. By integrating Peircean semiotics with paratext theory, this study demonstrates that localized book cover design should be understood not as peripheral marketing material but as an active site of cultural meaning production within global publishing networks.

Nevertheless, this research is limited to a single localized edition and relies primarily on textual-visual interpretation without incorporating empirical audience reception data. Future studies may conduct comparative analyses between original and localized covers, integrate reader-response research, or examine broader patterns of semiotic adaptation across translated literary works in Southeast Asian publishing contexts.

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