


The construction and meaning of EasyJet airline 2016 advertisements

Konstruksi dan makna iklan maskapai EasyJet tahun 2016

Laurensius Nikolas Wibowo ^{a*}, Myrna Laksman-Huntley ^b 

^{a b} Universitas Indonesia, Indonesia

Submitted: March 9, 2023; Accepted: August 19, 2023; Published: August 31, 2023

KEYWORDS

EasyJet,
advertising,
poster,
word play,
semiotics

ABSTRACT

EasyJet, a UK low-cost airline service provider launched several attractive advertisements to attract consumers' interest, one of which is a series of posters issued in 2016. These posters are interesting because the words show complex morphological processes and implied meanings that can be extracted. Previous studies have mostly examined morphological formation or have conducted semiotic studies, but none have linked morphological processes and images on posters with a semiotic approach. Therefore, this study analyzes the word formation process in the 2016 EasyJet advertisement, which has undergone a derivation process, and finds out the meaning contained in the advertisement using a semiotic approach. This qualitative study examines the posters based on Lehmann and Berthet's (2018) theory of word formation and Barthes' (2013) semiotics theory. The result of this study indicates that in this advertising poster, EasyJet attracts people to use its services in several market segments or consumer groups according to their respective characteristics. The stratagem revealed through these posters is that EasyJet is an airline that wants to invite its prospective passengers to explore new activities.

KATA KUNCI

EasyJet,
iklan,
poster,
permainan
kata,
semiotika

ABSTRAK

EasyJet, salah satu perusahaan penyedia jasa penerbangan berbiaya rendah (LCC) asal Inggris yang menyediakan layanan penerbangan berbiaya rendah, meluncurkan beberapa iklan menarik untuk menarik minat konsumen, salah satunya adalah serangkaian poster yang diterbitkan pada tahun 2016. Poster-poster tersebut menarik karena kata-kata di dalamnya menunjukkan proses morfologi yang kompleks dan makna tersirat yang dapat digali. Penelitian-penelitian terdahulu sebagian besar mengkaji tentang pembentukan morfologi atau telah melakukan kajian semiotika, namun belum ada yang mengaitkan proses morfologi dan gambar pada poster dengan pendekatan semiotik. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini menganalisis proses pembentukan kata pada iklan EasyJet 2016 yang telah mengalami proses derivasi, dan mengetahui makna yang terkandung dalam iklan tersebut dengan menggunakan pendekatan semiotik. Penelitian kualitatif ini mengkaji poster-poster tersebut berdasarkan teori pembentukan kata Lehmann dan Berthet dan teori semiotika Barthes. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dalam poster iklan ini EasyJet menarik masyarakat untuk menggunakan layanannya di beberapa segmen pasar atau kelompok konsumen sesuai dengan karakteristiknya masing-masing. Gimik yang muncul berdasarkan poster-poster ini adalah EasyJet merupakan maskapai yang ingin mengajak calon penumpangnya menjelajahi aktivitas baru.

How to cite this article:

Wibowo, L, N, & Laksman-Huntley, M. (2023). The construction and meaning of EasyJet airline 2016 advertisements. *Bahasa dan Seni: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Seni, dan Pengajarannya*, 51(2), 300–311.
<https://dx.doi.org/10.17977/um015v51i22023p300>

* Corresponding author: laksman@ui.ac.id

Introduction

The number of tourists visiting Europe in 2018 reached all-time high (716.4 million), yet a fundamental problem in European tourism persists, namely the relatively expensive air travel. Therefore, Low-Cost Carriers (LCC) have emerged to address this problem (Manuell, 2017), which offer low fares by removing certain services (Scott, 2021). In Europe itself, there are several LCC airlines, but this article will examine just one of them, EasyJet.

Registered in the United Kingdom, EasyJet operates domestic and international services on more than 1,000 routes and in more than 30 countries within Europe and North Africa (Easyjet plc, 2022). Its average passengers come from millennials and gen-z and in order to promote their service to potential customers, EasyJet implements various marketing strategies, one of which is advertising, as they have done in France, one of the countries where EasyJet operates.

Kotler (2005) defines advertising as non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, or services by a particular sponsor that must be paid for. Advertising involves several media categories, namely television, radio, telephone, internet, newspapers, direct mail, magazines, outdoor billboards, periodical news, brochures and posters. Particularly, EasyJet uses posters as one of their advertising media.

In 2016 EasyJet produced a unique advertising campaign using posters. There were 3 different posters launched to 5 destinations: Catania (Italy) and Faro (Portugal), Marrakech (Morocco), and Barcelona (Spain) and Marseille (France). These posters use words that do not actually exist in French vocabulary. However, when each component contained in the word is examined further, it is found that each has a respective meaning which can be analyzed using morphological analysis. Consequently, this study analyzes the word formation process in the 2016 EasyJet advertisement that has undergone a derivation process and finds the meaning contained in the advertisement using a semiotic approach.

Lehmann and Berthet (2018) stated that in morphological study, the objective is to explain the forms of words based on their origin and understand the information they contain. When viewed from the aspect of word formation, there are three morphological processes that exist in French, as described by Polguère (2016), namely inflection, derivation, and composition. This research focuses on the derivation process.

Polguère (2016) goes on to explain that derivation is a process of combining root words with an affix (*affixes dérivationnels*), which divides into three parts, namely *dérivation préfixale*, *dérivation suffixale* and *parasyntétique dérivation* (Polguère, 2016). However, Lehmann and Berthet (2018), added 10 more types of derivation according to word class change and the classification based on word integrity: *dérivation typique* or *dérivation propre* and *dérivation impropre*. A typical or proper derivation is a process of adding a suffix after a word, e.g., *maisonette* (small pavilion), comes from *maison* (house), while an improper derivation occurs when there is a grammatical class change without any affixation. Based on the explanation and comparison of these theories of morphological process, this research uses Lehmann and Berthet's approach (2018) to derivation examination, researching a 2016 EasyJet advertisement.

The three EasyJet posters also contain various components such as images, words, and the flight destinations on each poster. These components are interrelated and give rise to various hidden messages that can be studied by semiotic examination. In general, semiotics is the study of signs (*signe*), the function of signs, and thereby the production of meaning. The “sign” in this context is something that can be observed or made and observed and is not limited to objects or language. These various signs include the absence of signs, along with the structure, and habitual use. The concept of semiotics was described by de Saussure (1996) who with his followers introduced the concepts of signifier and signified. The signifier (*signifiant*) is the physical form of the sign, and the signified (*signifié*) is the concept of the sign. The concept of semiotics was then supplemented by Roland Barthes (2013). Additional to using the concept of signifier and signified, Barthes (2013) also introduced semiotics, which are divided into two levels of signification, namely denotative and connotative. Denotative is the actual meaning of a sign and occupies the first level of signification, while connotative is a sign that already has a new meaning and occupies the second level of signification. After the *signe-signifiant-signifié* system is formed, these signs occupy the second level of signification and form a new sign, while the denotative meaning that existed in the previous stages, develops into connotative meaning, so that the denotative meaning develops into myth. Roland Barthes (2013) introduced myth which is a concept as a communication system in which it has or gives rise to a certain meaning. The concept of myth, connotation, and denotation are things that complement the concept of semiotics introduced by Saussure (1996) who made the concept of semiotics easier to understand by introducing a semiotic map. Barthes’ semiotic theory is used to analyze Easy Jet’s (2016) advertisement which is the corpus of this research.

Research focusing on morphological processes is not a novelty to linguistics. Hamans (2021) conducted research on processes of non-morphemic word formation when Widi-asri and Sofyan (2021) studied nominalization morphological process verbs and adjectives in French; Rosa and Budiman (2023) analyzed English loan-words formation in French magazines, while Rosiana et al (2023) studied the morphological formation of a Korean beauty product brand name in French.

There have been several studies that examine advertising using a semiotic approach, among other are Firdaus (2018), Yücel (2019), Ardianto and Son (2019), Wong (2019), and Del Saz-Rubio (2019). Focusing on French advertisements, Syahdini (2019) studied the connotation in a video advertisement by L’Oreal Paris; while Fatma (2021) analyzed various images in telephone operators’ advertisements in Tunisia, and Yasmine (2021) focused on the existence of hidden meanings in the advertisements of the most widely used products during the Covid-19 pandemic in France.

Previous studies have mostly examined morphological formation or have conducted semiotic studies, but none have linked morphological processes and images on posters with a semiotic approach to find the myth of the advertisement, as is the aim in this research.

Method

The research method used was qualitative. This method was used (Williams, 1998) so that researchers could dig deeper into the data provided by three photos of 2016

EasyJet advertisements obtained from the link (LaReclame, 2016). After that, to find the meaning component of each word in the advertisement poster, the *Larousse online dictionary* is used, which can be accessed via <https://www.larousse.fr/>. The data was then collected using library research technique and further analyzed using the word formation theory according to Lehmann and Berthet (2018) to determine the derivation formation process of the words, and the semiotic theory according to Barthes (2013) to examine the advertisement from a semiotic perspective. The scope of this research is the words that have undergone a derivation process and the images for their semiotic content.

Results and Discussion

Derivation as a means of formation of new meaning

In this section, the derivation formation process of the words according to Lehmann and Berthet (2018) is reported to explain a new meaning in the advertisement. The first EasyJet poster is an advertisement for one-way flights to Catania in Italy and Faro in Portugal for 45 Euros (or equivalent to Rp.662,502.00 according to the EUR to IDR exchange rate in 2016).



Figure 1. *Vadrouillophille* Poster

The word *vadrouillophille* on the first poster of this EasyJet poster undergoes a *dérivation suffixale* process with the addition of a suffix. The process of forming the derivation of the word *vadrouillophille* can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. *Vadrouillophille* word derivation process

Base words (<i>mot du base</i>):	<i>Vadrouille</i> (derived from Latin)
The meaning of the basic word (<i>mot du base</i>):	A road that has no specific purpose
Word class from root:	<i>feminine noun</i>
<i>Experiencing a derivation process by adding the suffix “-phile”, which serves to show a fondness for something.</i>	
The root word after undergoing the suffixation process “phile”:	<i>Vadrouillophille</i>
The meaning of the word that undergoes the suffixation process:	Someone who has a penchant for walking around without having a specific purpose.
Word class that undergoes suffixation process:	Feminine noun (no change in word class)
Types of derivation based on changes to the word class:	<i>Noms dérivés de nom</i> (Nouns derived from noun)
Types of derivation based on the integrity of the word:	<i>La dérivation typique</i> (typical derivation) or <i>La dérivation propre</i> (proper derivation)

The word *vadrouillophille* is a type of person who has a fondness for walking around without having a clear goal. From that wordplay, EasyJet wants to persuade potential tourists to visit Catania and Faro by using their airline service. People love to walk tirelessly in both cities because they can enjoy the landscape full of buildings with authentic *Baroque* architecture, and local shops that they can visit (Citymap, 2008).

The second word on the EasyJet advertising poster that underwent a derivation process was *Coolologiste*. This second Easyjet poster advertises one-way flights to Marrakech in Morocco for 37 Euros (Or equivalent to Rp.544,723.00 according to EUR-IDR 2016 exchange rates).



Figure 2. *Coolologiste* poster

Coolologiste in the first poster of this EasyJet poster undergoes a *suffixale derivation process* which adds a suffix to the end of the word. The process of forming the derivation of the word *Coolologiste* can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. *Coolologiste* word derivation process

Base words (<i>mot du base</i>):	Cool (derived from English)
The meaning of the root word (<i>mot du base</i>):	Something good, positive, cool, or fun
Word class from root:	adjective
<i>Experiencing a derivation process by adding the suffix "iste", which serves to indicate followers of a lifestyle</i>	
The basic words after undergoing the suffixation process "iste":	Coolologiste
The meaning of the word that undergoes the suffixation process:	Specialist or someone who is good at something cool
Word class that undergoes suffixation process:	Feminine noun (there is a change in word class)
Types of derivation based on class changes it says:	<i>Noms dérivés d'adjective</i> (Nouns derived from adjectives)
Types of derivation based on the integrity of the word:	<i>La dérivation typique</i> (typical derivation) or <i>La dérivation propre</i> (proper derivation)

After undergoing a derivation process, the word *Coolologiste* means specialist or someone who is an expert in something cool. Through this wordplay, EasyJet wants to attract potential customers by saying that one can become an expert in something cool if one goes to Marrakech city by using their airline.

The last word on the EasyJet poster that underwent a derivation process was *Bikiniste*. This poster advertises one-way flights to Barcelona in Spain and Marseille in

France for 42 Euros (or equivalent to Rp618,335.00 according to EUR-IDR rates in 2016).



Figure 3. *Bikiniste* poster

The *bikiniste* in this EasyJet poster undergoes a *suffixale derivation process* by adding a suffix at the end of the word. The process of forming the derivation of the word *Bikiniste* can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. The process of derivation of the word *Bikiniste*

Base word (<i>mot du base</i>):	<i>Bikini</i> (derived from English)
The meaning of the root word (<i>mot du base</i>):	Two-piece swimsuit for women in a very small size
Word class from root:	masculine noun
<i>Experiencing a derivation process by adding the suffix "iste", which serves to indicate followers of a lifestyle</i>	
The root word after undergoing the suffixation process "iste":	<i>Bikini</i>
The meaning of the word that undergoes the suffixation process:	A person who practices the use of bikini clothing.
Word class that undergoes suffixation process:	Feminine noun (no change in word class)
Types of derivation based on class changes it says:	<i>Noms dérivés de nom</i> (Nouns derived from nouns)
Types of derivation based on the integrity of the word:	<i>La dérivation typique</i> (typical derivation) or <i>La dérivation propre</i> (proper derivation)


The word *Bikiniste* means someone who practices the use of a *bikini* or other beach wear. Through this derivation process, EasyJet wants to attract people who have a penchant for wearing *bikinis* or other beach clothes to go and enjoy the beaches in Barcelona and Marseille by using their airline.

Semiotics as implied meaning

In addition to analyzing the word formation process in the EasyJet advertisements, this study also dissects them using a semiotic approach. This is done to find out the implied messages contained in the posters.

The first EasyJet poster advertising flights to Catania in Spain and Faro in Portugal, features one female and two male tourists driving a convertible and looking ecstatic while exploring Catania or Faro. The creator of this ad also includes the phrase “*VADROUILLOPHILE, QUI MET UN PIED DANS TOUTES LES VILLES D'EUROPE*” in the poster. Through these components, the advertisement is analyzed semiotically using the semiotic as described in Table 4.

Table 4. *Vadrouillophile* poster semiotic map

Marker (<i>signifiant</i>)	<i>(signifié)</i>
	Poster 1 showing two male and female tourists driving an open vehicle and looking happy in Catania or Faro.
The words “ <i>VADROUILLOPHILE, QUI MET UN PIED DANS TOUTES LES VILLES D'EUROPE</i> ”	
Denotative sign (<i>signe dénotatif</i>)	
Two tourists who look happy because they are exploring a city or region with an open vehicle.	
<i>(signifiant connotatif)</i>	<i>(signifié connotatif)</i>
The two tourists with happy faces, who can be identified as a couple, as well as said <i>Vadrouillophile</i> .	A man and a woman looking for fun exploring European cities like Catania and Faro. This vacation by exploring the cities of Catania and Faro can be interpreted as a way for this couple to take a break and they can also be someone who loves to walk around aimlessly.
Connotative sign (<i>signe connotatif</i>)	
EasyJet provides a way happy couples to take a break from the various problems they have by selling air tickets to European cities such as Catania and Faro, so that they can find happiness by exploring these cities. They will also be someone who likes to walk aimlessly, because the city is famous for its <i>walking tours</i> (Frommers, n.d.).	

Through these markers, there are denotative signs in the poster, which are two tourists who look happy because they are exploring a city or area with inside a convertible. However, behind the mere happiness found in these people, there are much more things that are worth to analyze deeper. The two men and women can be identified as a couple who are indeed looking for pleasure by exploring cities in Europe such as Catania and Faro. Pleasure by means of vacation can be interpreted as a way for this group to take a break from the all problems they had during their relationship, because both of them must have their own problems that can make them feel tired.


Furthermore, through the word *Vadrouillophile* in the poster, it can also be interpreted that Catania and Faro can be a place for someone who loves to walk aimlessly, because Catania and Faro have numerous tourist destinations that can be visited on foot. Moreover, cities like Catania and Faro are famous for their *walking tours*. Many tourism activists have created routes where tourists can walk to various tourist attractions. Like in the City of Catania, there are *walking tours of historic Catania*, which is a 4.5-hour walking route visiting various historical sites in Catania [19]. On this route, tourists walk starting from Castello Ursino to the end of the Piazza Università. The same is true in Faro, where residents provide routes for a 2-hour *walking tour* around the historical places in Faro (Turismo de Portugal, 2018). Therefore, according to the word-play *Vadrouillophille* 's, Catania as well as Faro will be a paradise for someone who likes to walk and enjoy the various tourist attractions on offer.

Through this presentation, a denotative meaning emerges that EasyJet provides a way for couples to take a break from their problems by buying an air ticket to cities in Europe such as Catania and Faro, so that they can release stress by exploring the city. Further, the word *Vadrouilleophille* also conveys a denotative meaning as well that

someone who goes to Catania and Faro will be someone who likes to walk in order to explore these cities.

The second poster, advertising flights toto Marrakech, Morocco shows a photo of two women playing with soap bubbles in the middle of the city. The phrase “Coolologiste, QUI EXPLORE DES VILLES AUSSI COOL QUE MARRAKECH” is also included in this poster. Based on this, the semiotic analysis of the poster can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5. *Coolologiste* poster semiotic map

Marker (<i>signifiant</i>)	(<i>signifié</i>)
	Poster 2 showing a photo of two women playing with soap bubbles in the middle of the city.
Denotative sign (<i>signe dénotatif</i>)	
Two women who look happy as they play with soap bubbles in the middle of the city area.	
(<i>signifiant connotatif</i>)	(<i>signifié connotatif</i>)
The two women who are adults and the happiness they have, as well as said <i>Coolologiste</i> .	The happiness they have by playing with bubbles can be interpreted as an attempt by these two adults to reminisce about their childhood. Therefore, the activities they do in Marrakech are a form of their childhood nostalgia, which can be interpreted as the two women's steps to temporarily escape from their complicated adult life. Marrakech is cool because it's a place where ancient and contemporary components mix in one city.
Connotative sign (<i>signe connotatif</i>)	
By purchasing an EasyJet flight ticket to Marrakech, one can find happiness there by exploring the city while doing things related to childhood nostalgia to provide entertainment to the quirky adulthood. They can also be cool people because Marrakech is one of those cities that has a very diverse culture and is a place where ancient and contemporary components mix in one city.	

Through these markers, the denotative meaning of the advertisement emerges, namely two women who look happy because they are playing with soap bubbles in the middle of the city. However, because the model in this advertisement are adults who are playing with soap bubbles, which is normally an activity carried out by children, the poster suggests that the happiness these two women have today is a nostalgic experience from their childhood.

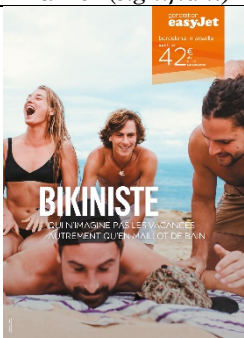
Marrakech itself is associated with the word *cool* in this ad because the city has its own charm when compared to other countries. The city, which was built almost a thousand years ago, is a meeting place for various cultures in the world. Precisely, it is a place where European, African, and Middle Eastern cultures mingle and complement each other (Hardy, 2021). The city that was once a European trading center is also a place where the past merges with the present. There are many locations that are very thick with historical elements (William, 2017). Additionally, in Marrakech there are *Riads* or traditional houses and palaces displaying ancient Moroccan architecture. Many of these buildings that have existed for hundreds of years have been transformed

into contemporary-styled hotels and restaurants. This is interesting because while being modernized, the people of Morocco still maintain their uniqueness and style in their cultural heritage. These factors made EasyJet associates Marrakech as a *cool* or cool city in its advertisements.

Through this, a connotative meaning emerges from this poster that with an EasyJet flight ticket to Marrakech, people can find happiness by exploring the city while doing things provoking childhood nostalgia, all of which provides entertainment and distraction to complicated adult life. In other words, EasyJet offers the chance for adults to ‘escape’ by selling tickets to Marrakech. Further, the word *Coologiste* also presents denotative meaning that the tourists who come to Marrakech will become someone who are experts in cool things. This is because Marrakech is a city that has a very diverse culture and is a place where ancient and modern culture mix.

The third poster of EasyJet advertising flights to Barcelona in Spain and Marseille in France, features four friends in beach clothes having fun on the beaches of Barcelona or Marseille. Through these components, semiotic analysis was carried out using the semiotic map contained in Table 6.

Table 6. Map of *Bikiniste* poster semiotics

Marker (<i>signifiant</i>)	(<i>signifié</i>)
	Poster 3 shows four friends in beach clothes having fun on the beaches of Barcelona or Marseille.
The words “ <i>BIKINISTE, QUI N'IMAGINE PAS LES VACANCES AUTREMENT QU'EN MAILLOT DE BAIN</i> ”	
<i>Denotative sign (signe dénotatif)</i>	
Four people who look happy because they are having fun on a beach in the Barcelona or Marseille area.	
<i>(signifiant connotatif)</i>	<i>(signifié connotatif)</i>
The beaches in Barcelona and Marseille are associated with the happiness of these four friends.	The beaches in Barcelona and Marseille are not popular tourist destinations. Therefore, these four friends are happy because they have succeeded in exploring <i>hidden gems</i> .
<i>Connotative sign (connotative sign)</i>	
EasyJet is an airline that provides flight destinations to places that not many people know about, such as in this case the beach destinations in Barcelona and Marseille, so someone who buys flight tickets to Barcelona and Marseille will get happiness because they can visit <i>hidden gems</i> or places that are not known to many people.	

Through these markers as well as the signifiers, the denotative meaning of the whole advertisement emerges, namely that four people who look happy because they are having fun on a beach in the Barcelona or Marseille. However, if we look deeper, the beaches in Barcelona and Marseille are known to many people as their main beach destinations. Through this poster we can conclude that the people felt satisfied and enjoying their time because they have explored places that not many people know about. From this explanation, there is an implied meaning that EasyJet is the airline providing flights to destinations that are not widely known to people.

The city of Barcelona itself has several famous beaches, such as Barceloneta beach. Besides being able to sunbathe and enjoy stunning sea views, this beach is also famous for their seafood and *Tapas* on the beach. This is possible because Barceloneta Beach is in Barcelona's fishing area. In Marseille, there are also several beaches such as La Plage des Catalans. This beach is recommended to visitors since it offers spectacular views of the Friuli Islands and its unique backstory: the name of this beach comes from the Catalan fishermen who have lived in the coastal area since the 17th century.

From the three connotative signs that have been found previously on the three EasyJet posters, a stratagem arises that EasyJet is an airline that invites their potential customers to explore new activities that they have never done before in tourist destinations that they are offering. In the context of the three posters, EasyJet would like to invite its passengers to take a *walking tour* in a city with very iconic architecture such as in Catania and Faro, enjoy a vacation in a city that unites ancient elements as well as modern elements such as Marrakech, and relax on a beach that is not yet widely known. EasyJet can take them to try these new activities.

EasyJet's creative advertising with wordplay containing this stratagem has a positive impact in their sales. One indicator of the success of an advertisement campaign is the increase in revenue due to the success in attracting new customers (Bigevo, 2021). Therefore, using this indicator, the success of EasyJet advertising can be seen in the EasyJet revenue chart released by Statista (2021).

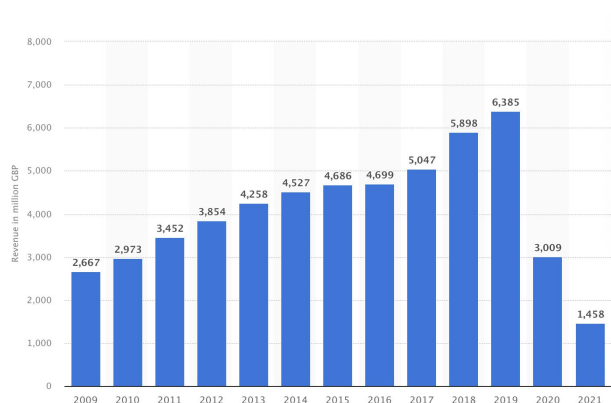


Figure 4. EasyJet Airline Revenue from 2009 to 2021; Source: Statista (2021)

In the Figure 4, from 2014 to 2016, EasyJet had very small revenue growth (4,527 million GBP in 2014, 4,686 GBP in 2015, and 4,699 million GBP in 2016) [24]. After EasyJet published its creative ads in 2016, it managed to increase its revenue significantly. Starting from 2017, EasyJet saw an increase in revenue of 5,047 million GBP, and then continued to 5,898 million GBP in 2018, peaking in 2019 at 6,385 million GBP (Statista, 2021). This proves that EasyJet's creative advertising is effective in attracting potential customers, especially in France, to use their airline services.

Conclusion

All three French EasyJet ads created in 2016 were created using suffix derivation in the wordplay. Through this wordplay, it can be concluded that EasyJet wants to attract people to use its services in several market segments or consumer groups according to their respective characteristics. The market segment targeted by EasyJet itself is consumers who come from the millennials and *gen-z* generations, while the characteristics of the consumers targeted by EasyJet in this advertisement are people who like to walk around in a city without directions, people who like to walk around in a city without directions, exploring *cool* cities, and people who feel adventurous by exploring hidden gems, particularly beaches. Through the semiotic presentation of the three French EasyJet posters, a stratagem was revealed that EasyJet is an airline that wants to invite its passengers to explore new activities that they have never done before. These three posters show that by using EasyJet airline services, they can enjoy a *walking tour* in Catania and Faro, explore cool cities like Marrakech where ancient and modern features meet, and they can explore beaches in Barcelona and Marseille that not many people know while also adding the uniqueness of the cities themselves. Creative marketing carried out by EasyJet in 2016 has proven to be successful in increasing EasyJet's revenue significantly until 2019

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