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ENTREPRENEURSHIP BOOK COVERS: A BARTHES SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Semiotics, or the science of signs, is based on a set of assumptions that allow for the systematic analysis of symbolic elements. Roland Barthes is regarded as one of the most influential figures in the field of semiotics. According to Barthes, a semiotic sign consists of two components: the signifier and the signified. The level of signifiers corresponds to the plane of expression, whereas the level of signifieds constitutes the plane of content. The signified is not a design or a physical object; rather, it refers to what is expressible – that is, the meaning understood by the user of the sign. The fundamental distinction between the signifier and the signified lies in the fact that the signifier functions as a mediating instrument. In this study, drawing on Barthes's semiotic framework, 10 entrepreneurship books that appeared in the "best sellers" category on a popular online book sales platform over the past year were analyzed through the classification of sign, signifier, and signified. Subsequently, the book covers were examined through denotative and connotative analyses. The findings reveal that the covers emphasize themes such as the entrepreneur, the distinction between the entrepreneur and other business actors, the rise of the entrepreneur, and the entrepreneur's global outlook. Although the literature includes semiotic analyses of book covers from various disciplines, the absence of studies focusing specifically on the covers of entrepreneurship books indicates that this research carries original value.

KEYWORDS: Semiotic Analysis, Entrepreneurship, Book, Book Cover Analysis, Roland Barthes, Sign, Signifier, Signified.

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of entrepreneurship has gained meaning and evolved through its intellectual actors. Before addressing these intellectual actors, it is necessary to clarify the meaning of the term itself. According to the *Oxford Learner's Dictionary*, entrepreneurship is defined as the activity and ability to generate profit through establishing and managing businesses by assuming financial risk (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, 2026). Prior to its incorporation into the English lexicon, the concept of entrepreneurship was expressed through terms such as *adventurer*, *contractor*, and *speculator* (Jonsson, 2017). The earliest formal definitions of entrepreneurship were articulated by Cantillon and Say. Cantillon conceptualized entrepreneurship as the ability to manage risk under conditions of uncertainty (Carland et al., 1984) and emphasized that entrepreneurship is fundamentally based on arbitrage (Hebert & Link, 2006). Say, by contrast, associated entrepreneurship with the organization of other factors of production and argued that the owner of a business does not necessarily bear the responsibility of being an entrepreneur (Landström & Benner, 2010). In other words, Say viewed entrepreneurial activity as a structure grounded in the production of innovation—one that transforms existing conditions and operates radically under uncertainty (Jonsson, 2014). The intellectual actors of entrepreneurship have been shaped through distinct schools of thought. In this context, the major schools of entrepreneurship include the German School, the Chicago School, the Austrian School, and the British School. The German School, which includes Joseph Schumpeter as one of its most prominent figures, is among the most frequently cited traditions in entrepreneurship research. Schumpeter is recognized as the originator of the concept of *creative destruction*, a foundational idea in entrepreneurship studies. Within the framework of equilibrium and disequilibrium in the economy, the German School emphasizes risk-taking and innovation as central to entrepreneurship. While it conceptualizes risk-taking descriptively, it places particular emphasis on innovation as an integral component of entrepreneurial action (Schumpeter, 1947). By linking innovation with risk-taking, Schumpeter characterized the entrepreneur as a distinctive individual “who seeks to found a private kingdom” (Schumpeter, 1934). The Chicago School, on the other hand, focuses on the entrepreneur’s decision-making mechanism, emphasizing the perception of risk and uncertainty and action based on this perception. Frank H. Knight, the most influential representative

of this school, regarded entrepreneurship and the entrepreneur as the central actors of the economic system. The entrepreneur’s primary function, according to Knight, is to recognize and respond to risk and uncertainty (Landström & Benner, 2010). Carl Menger, considered the founding figure of the Austrian School, approached entrepreneurship at a methodological level. This school conceptualizes the entrepreneur as the producer of entrepreneurship and as an agent of change. As a change agent, the entrepreneur acts by creating awareness in response to evolving circumstances (Landström & Benner, 2010). Finally, the British School defines entrepreneurship within the context of risk-taking by distinguishing between the entrepreneur and the manager. Accordingly, entrepreneurial activity is framed as a rational, abstract mechanism grounded in self-interest and utility maximization (Kaplan & Turak Kaplan, 2021).

The selection of books is significantly influenced by the interaction between the visual perception created by book covers and the meanings attributed to them by readers. Both the choice of colors and the use of objects, symbols, shapes, or human figures can enhance a book’s attractiveness. In this context, in order for a book to generate a desire to be perceived as “worth reading,” it is essential that its cover—considered its external packaging—receives at least as much care and attention as its content. This generalization applies not only to books in general but also specifically to entrepreneurship books.

Entrepreneurship, in its broadest and simplest sense, involves creating new goods or services to meet human needs while assuming controlled risks and deriving satisfaction from this process. Selecting a book cover that is consistent with this general definition and that can be meaningfully interpreted by a broad audience constitutes a responsibility of authors or editors. However, it is also a well-established reality that what one person perceives when looking at an image may differ from another’s interpretation. This phenomenon can be explained through the fundamental principles of semiotics. Semiotics, in its most concise form, is an analytical approach that interprets and examines visible elements such as objects, symbols, signs, shapes, and similar components.

According to Barthes, each sign is capable of generating different and new meanings depending on the interpreter. From this perspective, semiotic analysis can be said to provide an interpretive space that both opens up and liberates the researcher. Barthes argues that analyses should be conducted along the axis of sign-signifier-signified.

Accordingly, when entrepreneurship book covers are analyzed on the basis of Barthes' semiotic approach, remaining faithful to the sign-signifier-signified framework and maintaining awareness of key concepts related to entrepreneurship may result in more rational and accurate interpretations. By analogy, just as it would be unreasonable to expect someone who has never flown in an airplane to make accurate and realistic judgments about aircraft interiors, flight regulations, or air travel, a lack of foundational knowledge regarding entrepreneurship or the subject of semiotic analysis may cause the analysis to fall short of its intended rigor and validity.

2. THE CONCEPT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship is not merely an instrument for economic growth; it is also a significant social phenomenon capable of shaping cultural and intellectual values. The historical and theoretical foundations of the concept of entrepreneurship date back to the eighteenth-century French economist Richard Cantillon, who is recognized as the first scholar to introduce the concept into the academic literature (Ishakova & Assel, 2025). Entrepreneurship constitutes an autonomous field that is able to operate independently while also adapting to interdisciplinary approaches. In its most concise form, entrepreneurship may be defined as an activity that systematically and independently replaces established habits with new ones (Diandra & Azimi, 2020).

Entrepreneurship plays a vital role not only in the establishment and growth of firms but also in the development and prosperity of regions and nations. Entrepreneurial opportunities may be defined as situations in which new goods, services, raw materials, or organizational methods can be introduced to the market at prices exceeding their production costs. For instance, an entrepreneur may create a new market by introducing an existing product to a different market, develop a new product for an existing market, or simultaneously develop a new product or service while creating a new market. The common denominator in all these cases is that the opportunity created by the entrepreneur necessarily represents an element of novelty.

However, the recognition, evaluation, and exploitation of such possibilities as opportunities require the presence of an entrepreneurial individual or a group of entrepreneurial actors. Entrepreneurship, therefore, inherently requires action. Entrepreneurs act upon situations they perceive as opportunities. Yet, because opportunities exist under conditions of high uncertainty—or

generate uncertainty—entrepreneurs must rely on their judgment when deciding whether to act. Doubt, in this context, may weaken entrepreneurial action. Accordingly, entrepreneurial action can be understood as an individual's willingness to bear the level of uncertainty surrounding a potential opportunity. While prior knowledge may reduce perceived uncertainty, motivation increases an individual's willingness to assume it (Hisrich et al., 2017).

The "gap-filling" characteristic attributed to entrepreneurs stems from their capacity to search for and discover economic opportunities. Core entrepreneurial functions include identifying and evaluating opportunities; mobilizing the financial resources required for new ventures; determining the appropriate timing for action; assuming ultimate responsibility for management; bearing uncertainty and/or risk; establishing and sustaining motivational systems within the organization; seeking and discovering new economic knowledge; transforming new knowledge into new markets, technologies, and products; and leading work groups in an inspiring manner by departing from routine practices and adopting Schumpeterian forms of innovation (Leibenstein, 1968; Baumol, 1968).

A comprehensive definition of the entrepreneur may thus be articulated as follows: entrepreneurs are creative and unconventional individuals who continuously learn in order to recognize opportunities with innovative potential; generate value through innovation; possess the ability to identify developmental opportunities; formulate and implement visions that incorporate elements of differentiation; establish organizations or enterprises based on the recognition and development of risky opportunities with innovative potential; undertake measured and controlled risks to achieve innovation; act innovatively to develop products or services by evaluating opportunities; use resources efficiently to design innovative offerings that provide differentiation-based competitive advantage; and focus on identifying risky opportunities with innovative potential in order to meet market needs (Filion, 2011).

3. METHODOLOGY

The concept of "knowledge" has a complex structure and has long been the subject of philosophical debate concerning the nature and status of experience, a debate that continues to this day. Is knowledge objective or subjective? Do we perceive the world as it truly is, or are our perceptions shaped by our senses and intentions, and

if so, to what extent? Different approaches to knowledge tend to emphasize either its objective or its subjective dimension. In this context, knowledge is regarded either as objectively true and independent of subjective intervention, or as a phenomenon conditioned by perception, dependent on experience, and therefore situated and conceptual in nature. From a semiotic perspective, however, knowledge objects are understood as signs that possess both interpretive (epistemological) and objective (ontological) characteristics (Thellefsen et al., 2017).

The term *semiotics* derives from the Greek word *semeion*, meaning “sign,” and also carries the meaning of “interpreter of signs.” Semiotics is concerned with signs, symbols, meaning, and communication processes, and it places at its center meaning-bearing signs found in images, texts, films, and similar representational forms (Putri et al., 2022). Semiotics, or the science of signs, provides a set of assumptions that enable the systematic analysis of symbolic elements. The Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913) is regarded as the founding figure of semiotics. Although semiotics is fundamentally language-based, language constitutes only one of many sign systems that vary in terms of unity, applicability, and complexity. Morse code, etiquette, mathematics, music, and even traffic signs may all be considered semiotic systems.

A sign is something that represents or stands for something else in the mind of an individual. It consists primarily of an expression (such as a word, sound, or symbol) and a content, understood as that which completes the meaning of the expression. For example, smoke may be associated with cigarettes and cancer. A sign is incomplete without an interpreter, and when the interpreter changes, the meaning of the sign also changes (Manning & Swan, 1994). Individuals interpret signs as entities that “stand for something.” As Peirce (1894) argued, “nothing is a sign unless it is interpreted as a sign.” This interpretive process occurs through the association of a sign with familiar systems of conventions, thereby integrating it into an organized community of interaction, outside of which it cannot exist. Signs function as codes among individuals, activating and structuring prior experiences. In this sense, humans operate as *homo significans*—producers of meaning who use signs to acquire, understand, and communicate knowledge (Tsotra et al., 2004).

Chandler has emphasized that semiotics is not limited to the study of signs alone, but is applicable to anything that represents something else. At the

core of semiotic inquiry may be signs, words, images, sounds, gestures, or objects. According to Jakobson, semiotics is concerned both with the general principles that determine the structure of all signs and their modes of use within messages, as well as with the specific characteristics of various sign systems and the messages constructed through them (Rachman et al., 2019).

Charles Sanders Peirce, regarded as the second founding figure of semiotics, produced extensive and systematic theoretical work in the field. His triadic classification of signs, known as the trichotomy, is of central importance to semiotic theory. According to Peirce, there are three types of signs: icons, indices, and symbols. Icons signify through resemblance, indices through causal or existential relationships, and symbols through convention or social agreement (Berger, 2014).

Roland Barthes, the French philosopher and literary critic, is one of the most distinctive figures in the field of semiotics. Barthes further developed the structuralist linguistic approach of Ferdinand de Saussure in the context of textual semiotics (Siregar, 2022). His work *Mythologies*, first published in French in 1957 and later in English in 1972, is regarded as one of the most influential and foundational texts of applied semiotic analysis. The book is divided into two sections—“Mythologies” and “Myth”—and offers a theoretical examination of semiotics and politics (Berger, 2014). According to Barthes, semiotics does not teach us which meaning should definitively be attributed to a work, nor does it provide or discover meaning; rather, it describes the logic through which meanings are produced (Dweich et al., 2020).

Barthes is particularly well known for his work on connotative semiotics. His theory of “two orders of signification” begins with the relationship between the signifier (expression) and the signified (content) within a sign and its relation to external reality; this constitutes the first level of meaning, known as denotation. The second level, connotation, explains the interaction between the sign and the reader’s emotions, feelings, and cultural values. In other words, while denotation refers to what a sign objectively represents, connotation accounts for how it is interpreted and imbued with cultural and emotional meanings. For instance, at the denotative level, a visual may depict people, animals, trees, or houses in red, yellow, blue, or white, involving only the transmission of data. Connotative meaning, by contrast, encompasses the associations between colors, emotions, cultural values, and collective perspectives. A smiling face, for example, may be

interpreted as an expression of happiness or irony (Rachman et al., 2019).

In this respect, every sign is capable of producing different and new meanings depending on its interpreter. Barthes' semiotic framework opens an interpretive space in which analysts may attribute new meanings to signs. The meanings that emerge are generally influenced by the interpreter's educational background and sociocultural structure. According to Barthes, a change in the meaning of a sign occurs through the process of unifying the signifier and the signified, resulting in the formation of the sign itself (Adiansyah, 2023). Barthes did not significantly depart from Saussure's understanding of the sign and its two fundamental components; for him, a semiotic sign consists of a signifier and a signified (Bouzida, 2014). The concept of the sign competes with terms such as signal, index, icon, symbol, and allegory (Barthes, 1977). In linguistics, the term sign refers to the unit formed by the association of a signifier or sound image with a signified or concept; more generally, it denotes any element that stands for something other than itself. The plane of signifiers constitutes the plane of expression, while the plane of signifieds forms the plane of content. The signified is not a design or an object but that which is expressible; it is what the user

of the sign understands from it. The signified is one of the two relational components of the sign, and what distinguishes it from the signifier is the latter's mediating function (Barthes, 1979).

The sample of the study consists of ten entrepreneurship books that were identified as bestsellers on a popular online book retail website. Photographs of the book covers and the corresponding information related to signs, signifiers, and signifieds were classified in accordance with Barthes' analytical schema, and each book cover was analyzed in terms of its denotative and connotative meanings.

3.1. Findings

This section presents the findings derived from the analysis of entrepreneurship book covers, whose denotative and connotative meanings were examined on the basis of Roland Barthes' semiotic theory.

3.1.1. Design And Semiotic Analysis Of The Book Cover "Zero To Launch: Small Business Edition: A Beginner's Guide To Turning Simple Ideas Into Real Income Without Stress, Confusion, Or Startup Experience"

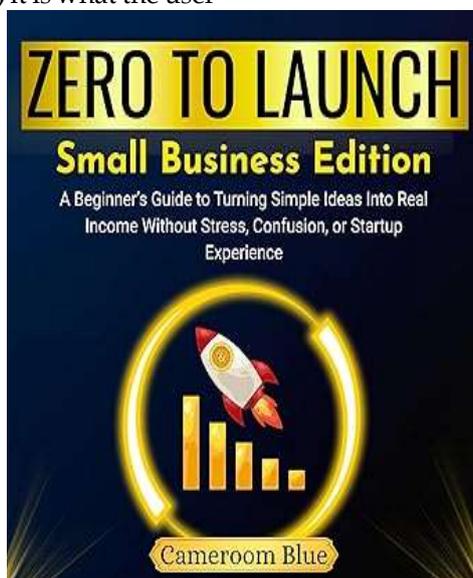


Figure 1: Book Cover Of "Zero To Launch: Small Business Edition: A Beginner's Guide To Turning Simple Ideas Into Real Income Without Stress, Confusion, Or Startup Experience".

Table 1: Semiotic Table of the Book Cover Presented In Figure 1.

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Text	Zero to Launch: Small Business Edition: A Beginner's Guide to Turning Simple Ideas Into Real Income Without Stress, Confusion, or Startup Experience	Book Title
Text	Cameroon Blue	Author

Object	Rocket	Entrepreneur
Symbol	Dollar Sign	Entrepreneurial Income
Object	Step	Advancement / Upward Progress
Object	Light	Differentiation / Creating Distinction
Setting	Background	Dark Blue

The denotative meaning of the book cover consists of the author’s first and last name, the book title with the main title emphasized in a larger font size, a rocket, a dollar symbol, steps, and light elements. The background color of the cover is dark blue.

The connotative meaning of the book cover is constructed through the main title “Zero to Launch,” which is written in large font and signifies starting from zero, thereby directly referencing entrepreneurship. In addition, the gold color used on the cover evokes associations with money and financial value. The upward-moving rocket symbolizes an entrepreneur who begins a venture from scratch. The dollar symbol positioned on the rocket represents the magnitude of the financial

gains that entrepreneurship can provide when pursued successfully. The steps signify the entrepreneur’s gradual development and progression, while the light beams surrounding and bordering the rocket indicate the entrepreneur’s contribution to the economy in a broader sense. Finally, the dark blue background color of the cover symbolizes the entrepreneur’s success, authority, and professionalism.

3.1.2. Design And Semiotic Analysis Of The Book Cover “Starting A Business Quickstart Guide: The Simplified Beginner's Guide To Launching A Successful Small Business, Turning Your Vision Into Reality, And Achieving Your Entrepreneurial Dream”

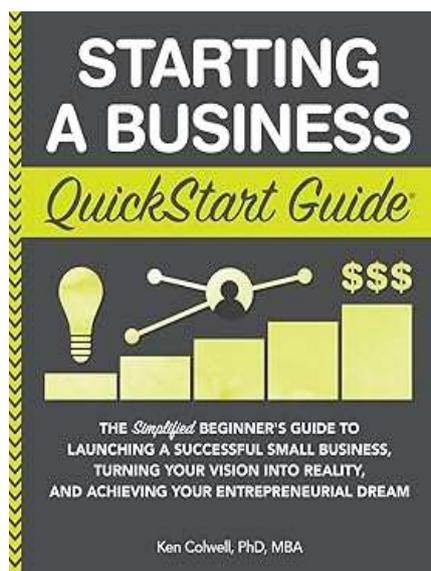


Figure 2: Book Cover Of “Starting A Business Quickstart Guide: The Simplified Beginner's Guide To Launching A Successful Small Business, Turning Your Vision Into Reality, And Achieving Your Entrepreneurial Dream”

Table 2: Semiotic Table Of The Book Cover Presented In Figure 2.

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Text	Starting a Business QuickStart Guide: The Simplified Beginner's Guide to Launching a Successful Small Business, Turning Your Vision into Reality, and Achieving Your Entrepreneurial Dream	Book Title
Text	<u>Ken Colwell PhD MBA</u>	Author’s Name and Academic Credentials
Text	Expanded 2nd Edition	Edition Number

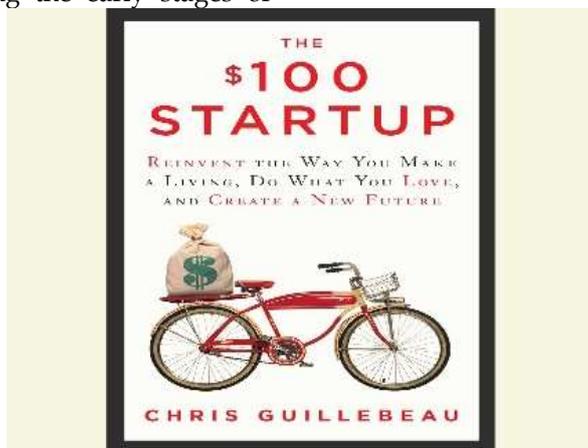
Object	Step	Upward Movement / Progress
Object	Light bulb	Business Idea
Symbol	Dollar Sign	Entrepreneurial Income
Shape	Connecting lines	Workload / Business Processes
Human	Human Silhouette	Entrepreneur
Setting	Background	Gray

The denotative meaning of the book cover consists of the author’s name, the book title with the main heading emphasized in a large font, steps, a human silhouette, connecting lines, a dollar symbol, and a light bulb. Gray is used as the background color of the cover.

From a connotative perspective, the main title “Starting a Business” is presented in large font, thereby foregrounding the concept of entrepreneurship. The steps symbolize the entrepreneur’s upward trajectory, while the human silhouette positioned on the central step represents the entrepreneur. The light bulb symbolizes the entrepreneur’s business idea or invention. The two connecting lines extending from the entrepreneurial silhouette toward the initial steps indicate the heavy workload encountered during the early stages of

business formation. In contrast, the connecting line directed toward the fourth and fifth steps suggests that the entrepreneur’s business has reached a more structured and stabilized phase, resulting in a reduced workload compared to the initial stage. The dollar symbol located on the final step represents the financial reward the entrepreneur gains as a result of sustained effort. Gray, as a heavy and neutral color, may have been deliberately selected as the background to convey the seriousness and responsibility inherent in entrepreneurial activity.

3.1.3. Design And Semiotic Analysis Of The Book Cover “The \$100 Startup: Reinvent The Way You Make A Living, Do What You Love, And Create A New Future”



Fotograf 3: Book Cover Of “The \$100 Startup Reinvent The Way You Make A Living, Do What You Love, And Create A New Future”.

Table 3: Semiotic Table Of The Book Cover Presented In Figure 3.

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Text	The \$100 Startup Reinvent The Way You Make A Living, Do What You Love, And Create A New Future	Book Title
Text	Chris Guillebeau	Author
Object	Bicycle	Entrepreneur
Object	Bag of Money	Entrepreneurial Income
Setting	Background	White

The denotative meaning of the book cover includes the author’s name, the book title, a bicycle,

and a bag of money. White is used as the background color of the cover.

From a connotative perspective, the bicycle symbolizes the entrepreneur and the entrepreneurial journey or progression. The bag of money positioned behind the bicycle signifies the financial gains obtained as a result of the distance traveled and the effort invested by the entrepreneur. On the book cover, the main title “The \$100 Startup” is emphasized in a large font to enhance visual salience and is presented in the same color as the bicycle – red –

against a white background. The preference for red in these elements may be interpreted as symbolizing speed, dynamism, and the rapid pace associated with entrepreneurial activity.

3.1.4. Design And Semiotic Analysis Of The Book Cover “UNSCRIPTED: Life, Liberty, And The Pursuit Of Entrepreneurship”

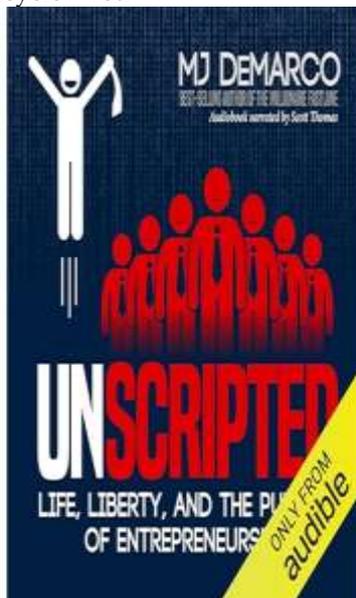


Figure 4: Book Cover Of “UNSCRIPTED: Life, Liberty, And The Pursuit Of Entrepreneurship”.

Table 4: Semiotic Table Of The Book Cover Presented In Figure 4.

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Text	UNSCRIPTED: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Entrepreneurship	Book Title
Text	MJ DeMarco International best-selling author of the millionaire fastlane	Author
Text	Student Loans	Economic Concept
Text	Get A Job	Economic Concept
Text	Debt	Economic Concept
Text	Consume	Economic Concept
Text	Trade Time	Economic Concept
Text	Television	Economic Concept
Text	Mediocrity	Economic Concept
Text	Mortgage	Economic Concept
Text	9to5	Economic Concept
Text	Save	Economic Concept
Text	Credit Cards	Economic Concept
Human	Seven Human Figures	Business Operators
Human	White Human Figure	Entrepreneur
Number	Complex Numbers	Technology
Shape	Three Vertical Lines	Upward Mobility / Advancement
Setting	Background	Dark Blue

Within the scope of the denotative meaning, the book cover includes the author’s full name, a

descriptor highlighting the author’s status, the book title, seven human figures, and a differently colored human figure positioned apart from the others with three vertical lines beneath it. In addition, complex numerical elements and subtly presented economic concepts are featured. Dark blue is used as the background color of the cover.

From a connotative perspective, the inclusion of economic concepts—although not highly prominent—serves to allude to the entrepreneur’s economic relationships and the economic value generated through entrepreneurial activity. The main title “*Unscripted*” is written in a large font, emphasizing entrepreneurs’ desire for autonomy and freedom from structured, conventional work patterns. The seven human figures wearing ties symbolize traditional businesses that are distant

from innovation, whereas the separately positioned, white-colored figure without a tie represents the entrepreneur. The three vertical lines beneath the entrepreneur signify upward mobility and growth. The faintly depicted, flowing complex numbers on the cover suggest the crucial role of technology in the success of contemporary entrepreneurs. Finally, the choice of dark blue as the background color reinforces connotations of authority, professionalism, and success attributed to the entrepreneur.

3.1.5. Design And Semiotic Analysis Of The Book Cover “The Lean Startup: How Today’s Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation To Create Radically Successful Businesses”

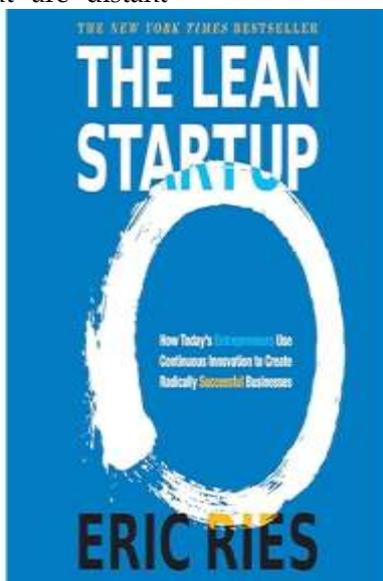


Figure 5: Book Cover Of “The Lean Startup: How Today’s Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation To Create Radically Successful Businesses”.

Table 5: Semiotic Table Of The Book Cover Presented In Figure 5.

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Text	The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses	Book Title
Text	The New Yorks Time Bestseller	Commercial Success of the Book
Text	Eric Ries	Author
Shape	Incomplete Circle	Failed Entrepreneurial Attempts
Setting	Background	Dark Blue

When the denotative meaning of the book cover is considered, it includes the author’s name, the book title, and an incomplete circle that transitions from thick to thin. Dark blue is used as the background color.

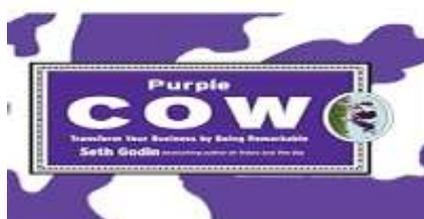
From a connotative perspective, the main title “*The Lean Startup*” is emphasized in a very large font

to foreground the concept of entrepreneurship. The white, incomplete circle on the cover, which gradually evolves from thick to thin, represents entrepreneurs in general at its thicker segment, while the thinning of the circle toward its end signifies that not all entrepreneurial ventures achieve success. The circle is deliberately left incomplete in order to avoid

visually merging successful and unsuccessful ventures, thereby reinforcing the distinction between them. Finally, the use of dark blue as the background color symbolizes successful entrepreneurs, conveying connotations of authority, reliability, and

achievement.

3.1.6. Design And Semiotic Analysis Of The Book Cover "Purple Cow: Transform Your Business By Being Remarkable"



Fotoğraf 6: Book Cover Of "Purple Cow Transform Your Business By Being Remarkable"

Table 6: Semiotic Table Of The Book Cover Presented In Figure 6.

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Text	Purple Cow Transform Your Business by Being Remarkable	Book Title
Text	Seth Godin Author Of Permission Marketing	Author
Animal	Purple Cow	Entrepreneur
Setting	Background	Purple & White

According to the denotative meaning, the book cover features the book title, the author’s name, descriptive information about the author, and a purple cow. Purple and white are used as the background colors of the cover.

From a connotative perspective, the purple cow depicted on the cover functions not only as a visual reference to the book’s title but also as a representation of the entrepreneur. The purple cow signifies that the entrepreneur does not look at the world in the same way as others and does not perceive reality conventionally; in short, it symbolizes differentiation and distinctiveness. Instead of the commonly expected black-and-white

cow pattern, the use of a purple-and-white design emphasizes deviation from the norm. The preference for the color purple in both the book title and the cover background is associated with its connotations of imagination and creativity. Since imagination constitutes one of the entrepreneur’s most valuable assets, the use of purple on the cover underscores the idea that entrepreneurs’ imaginative capacities are boundless.

3.1.7. Design And Semiotic Analysis Of The Book Cover "Disciplined Entrepreneurship: Startup Tactics—15 Tactics To Turn Your Business Plan Into A Business"

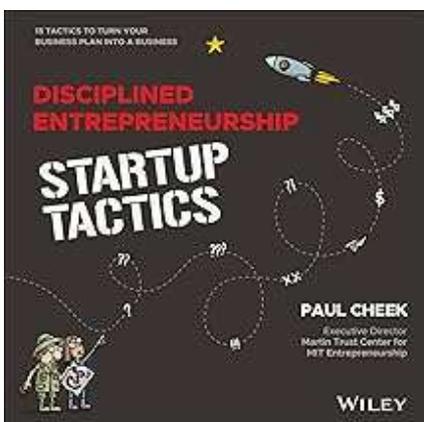


Figure 7: Book Cover Of "Disciplined Entrepreneurship Startup Tactics: 15 Tactics To Turn Your Business Plan Into A Business".

Table 7: Semiotic Table Of The Book Cover Presented In Figure 7.

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Text	Disciplined Entrepreneurship Startup Tactics: 15 Tactics to Turn Your Business Plan into a Business	Book Title
Text	Paul Cheek Executive Director Martin Trust Center For MIT Entrepreneurship	Author
Text	Wiley	Publisher
Human	Female Figure	Business Operator
Human	Male Figure	Business Operator
Object	Map	Business Operators' Activities
Object	Rocket	Entrepreneur
Shape	Complex Lines	Entrepreneurial Activities
Sign	Question Mark	Entrepreneurial Risks
Sign	Exclamation Mark	Entrepreneurial Mistakes
Sign	X Symbol	Entrepreneurial Venture
Object	Paper Airplane	Growth
Symbol	Dollar Sign	Entrepreneurial Income
Shape	Star	Entrepreneurial Success
Setting	Background	Gray

The denotative meaning of the book cover includes the author's name, the book title, and the publisher. The background color of the cover is gray. The cover also features two human figures—one female and one male—a rocket, a star, a paper airplane, complex lines, a question mark, an exclamation mark, an "X" symbol, and a dollar sign. From a connotative perspective, the main title "*Disciplined Entrepreneurship*" is made more visually prominent than the other textual elements, thereby emphasizing the concept of entrepreneurship. The female and male figures represent businesses operating within the labor market. The upward-moving, complex lines symbolize the entrepreneur's activities. Within these activities, entrepreneurial risks are represented by the question mark, mistakes from which the entrepreneur learns are indicated by the exclamation mark, and re-entering the entrepreneurial process is symbolized by the "X."

The paper airplane positioned along the same trajectory represents the success or upward momentum of the entrepreneurial venture. In parallel with this upward movement, the entrepreneur's financial gains are represented by the dollar sign. The entrepreneur is symbolized by the rocket, which escapes the complexity of the lines and moves toward the star, representing ultimate success. In this context, the cover emphasizes that the entrepreneur differs from others, learns from mistakes, regains motivation, and ultimately achieves success. Finally, the choice of gray as the background color is interpreted as reflecting the seriousness and discipline required in entrepreneurial activity.

3.1.8. Design And Semiotic Analysis Of The Book Cover "*Entrepreneurship: Choice And Strategy*"

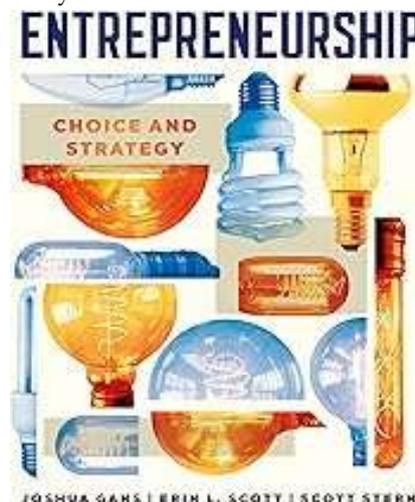


Figure 8. Book Cover Of "Entrepreneurship: Choice And Strategy"

Table 8: Semiotic Table Of The Book Cover Presented In Figure 8.

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Text	Entrepreneurship: Choice and Strategy	Book Title
Text	Joshua Gans Scott Stern Erin L Scott	Authors
Object	Light Bulbs in Different Forms	Innovative Ideas
Setting	Backgrounds	White

According to the denotative analysis, the book cover features the book title in large font, the authors' names, and light bulbs in various forms placed on a white background.

From a connotative perspective, the white background—commonly associated with simplicity and clarity—serves to foreground the book title, which is presented in large capital letters and bold typography. The wide variety of differently shaped light bulbs depicted on the cover emphasizes that innovation lies at the core of entrepreneurial activity,

distinguishing entrepreneurs from business operators. In this respect, the visual elements highlight the innovative mindset as a defining characteristic of entrepreneurship.

3.1.9. Design And Semiotic Analysis Of The Book Cover "Entrepreneurship 101: Essential Skills For Launching Your Business, Market Effective Strategies, Cultivate A Winning Mindset, And Networking Success"

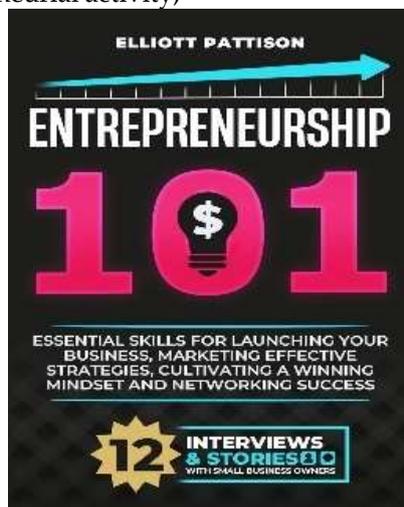


Figure 9. Book Cover Of "Entrepreneurship 101: Essential Skills For Launching Your Business, Market Effective Strategies, Cultivate A Winning Mindset, And Networking Success"

Table 9: Semiotic Table Of The Book Cover Presented In Figure 9.

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Text	Entrepreneurship 101: Essential Skills for Launching your Business, Market Effective Strategies, Cultivate a Winning Mindset and Networking success	Book Title
Text	Elliot Pattison	Author
Text	12 Interviews & Stories With Small Business Owners	Book Description
Object	Light Bulb	Entrepreneurial Business Idea
Sign	Dollar Sign	Entrepreneurial Income
Shape	Graph	Entrepreneurial Process
Shape	Upward Arrow	Entrepreneurial Growth
Setting	Background	Black

According to the denotative meaning, the book cover includes the book title, the author's name, a

brief description of the book, a light bulb, a dollar sign, a graph, and an arrow. Black is used as the background color of the cover.

From a connotative perspective, within the numeral “101” in the book title, a light bulb and a dollar sign are positioned inside the zero. The light bulb represents the entrepreneur’s innovative business ideas, while the dollar sign signifies entrepreneurial income. The upward-pointing arrow on the graph illustrates the entrepreneur’s upward trajectory throughout the entrepreneurial process. In this context, the cover emphasizes that entrepreneurs

can achieve growth and financial gain through innovative ideas. The choice of black as the background color may be associated with the ambition and passion commonly attributed to entrepreneurs.

3.1.10. Design And Semiotic Analysis Of The Book Cover “Teen Entrepreneur: Be Part Of The New Rich And Become A Teen Million/Billionaire Entrepreneur In Today’s Worldwide Economy”

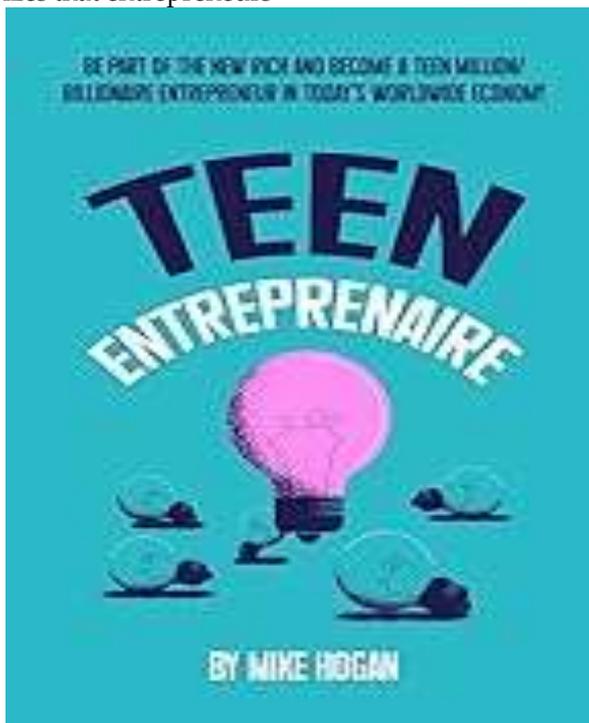


Figure 10: Book Cover Of “Teen Entrepreneur: Be Part Of The New Rich And Become A Teen Million/Billionaire Entrepreneur In Today’s Worldwide Economy”.

Table 10: Semiotic Table Of The Book Cover Presented In Figure 10.

Sign	Signifier	Signified
Text	Teen Entrepreneur: Be Part of the New Rich and Become a Teen Million/Billionaire Entrepreneur in Today's Worldwide Economy	Book Title
Text	By Mike Hogan	Author
Object	Five Blue Light Bulbs	Business Operators
Object	Pink Light Bulb	Entrepreneur
Setting	Background	Blue

Within the scope of the denotative meaning, the book cover includes the book title written in large font, the author’s name, five blue light bulbs, and one pink light bulb.

From a connotative perspective, the title “Teen Entrepreneur” is emphasized through large

typography, thereby foregrounding the concept of entrepreneurship. The identical blue light bulbs depicted on the cover represent conventional business operators, whereas the single pink light bulb positioned among them symbolizes the entrepreneur – an individual who thinks differently,

perceives differently, takes risks, and demonstrates innovative qualities. The use of blue and its shades, commonly associated with authority and continuity, may explain its selection as the background color. As illustrated on the cover, the pink light bulb is positioned as a figure of authority within the business environment.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Within the framework of Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, the covers of ten entrepreneurship books were analyzed through the classification of sign, signifier, and signified, leading to several noteworthy findings. The results offer insights into which elements may be incorporated into book cover designs by authors who aspire to write books on entrepreneurship. In order to provide reliable and valid guidance for authors, the study focused on bestselling entrepreneurship books from a popular online book retail platform.

According to the research findings, in 80% of the entrepreneurship book covers analyzed (8 out of 10 books), an object or human figure representing the entrepreneur was used. The elements employed to construct the entrepreneurial metaphor included upward-moving rockets, a human silhouette positioned on steps, a bicycle, a human silhouette depicted in a different color from others, a circle, and a purple cow.

It was observed that 50% of the book covers featured a dollar sign symbolizing entrepreneurial income. Accordingly, these covers convey the message that becoming an entrepreneur is associated with higher financial returns. In addition, 40% of the covers employed blue and its shades as dominant colors to symbolize the entrepreneur's authority and success. Black and gray tones were preferred in 30% of the covers to represent ambition and the seriousness of entrepreneurial activity. Although

various objects and shapes were used to create metaphors, 50% of the book covers visually represented the entrepreneur's upward progression. The metaphors used for this purpose included three vertical lines beneath the entrepreneur, steps on two book covers, an upward arrow on a graph, and a paper airplane.

To emphasize the distinction between entrepreneurs and other business operators, 40% of the book covers also included elements representing conventional businesses. These elements consisted of seven human figures depicted in different colors from the entrepreneur, the thicker segment of an incomplete circle, female and male figures observing the entrepreneur's rise, and blue light bulbs surrounding a pink light bulb representing the entrepreneur. Overall, the findings indicate that book covers frequently favor representations of the entrepreneur through objects or human silhouettes, symbols of upward mobility, dollar signs indicating financial gain, visual elements emphasizing differentiation from business operators, and colors highlighting authority and success.

Although the literature includes semiotic analyses of book covers in various fields, the absence of semiotic research specifically focusing on entrepreneurship book covers suggests that this study possesses original value. It is anticipated that the findings of this research will guide authors of entrepreneurship-related books in making informed cover design choices. Future researchers are encouraged to conduct further studies focusing on book covers from different disciplines, as well as to expand the sample size of entrepreneurship book covers to generate more comprehensive results. Additionally, future research may benefit from incorporating bestselling books from alternative sales platforms, rather than relying on a single retail website, in order to obtain broader and more robust findings.

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