

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Choosing the Subject

Language is a communication system consisting of a set of written sounds and symbols used by people from a particular country or region to speak or write. Language is a living system of meaning exchange, bound by context. According to Saussure cited Berger (2005: 6) that language is a sign system that expresses thoughts or ideas, and therefore can be compared with a writing system, an alphabetic system for deaf-mutes, symbolic rituals, politeness formulas, military signals, and others.

The science that studies a language is called linguistics. Strictly speaking, Kidalaksana (1983) states that linguistics is a science that studies, and examines the nature and intricacies of communication of languages, namely language, in general, that is owned by humans as a means of communication or linguistics is the science that investigates language scientifically.

Linguistics and language have the same main function, namely to convey information. The fields of linguistics in studying a language are divided into two, namely microlinguistics and macro linguistics. The scope of linguistics examines several objects, namely phonology, morphology, syntax, discourse analysis, and semantics. While the scope of macro linguistics examines objects including psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, forensic linguistics, lexicography, anthropolinguistics, neurolinguistics, and semiotics.

The study of signs is called semiotics. Semiotics according to Saussure is the study of signs in social life, including what these signs are and what laws govern the formation of signs. According to Saussure (1983: 65), semiotics is a science and a symbol that specifically communicates something verbally and unspoken. Semiotics in linguistics is the science of signs, the study of signs and everything related to them, how they function, their relationship with other signs, and their sending and receiving. It consists of a collection of theories about how a sign represents objects, ideas, circumstances, situations, feelings, and conditions. As the name implies, the scope of semiotics is discussing the application of semiotics itself to various fields or certain contexts. For example, those relating to communication, literature, advertising, film, social sign systems, and others.

One of the tools to communicate something is through an advertisement. According to Fatihudin and Firmansyah (2019: 164), advertising is a communication model that can reach a broad public. According to Leech

(1996: 25), advertisement means communication, which attempts to influence someone or advise someone of a certain product, job, or service, and it can take the form of notice, image, textual content, film, track, or mixture of all.

An advertisement served by a product certainly has a purpose. The aim and objective are not immediately conveyed, but through both visual and verbal signs with the aim of clarifying, beautifying, and of course shortening the message so that it is not too lengthy. Saussure divided signs into three components, namely: *sign* which includes aspects in the form of sound, letter, image, motion, and shape. While the *signifier* includes the material aspects of language, namely what is said or heard, and what is written or read.

According to Saussure (1857-1913), a sign is composed of the signifier (signifiant), and the signified (signifié). Saussure, in his 1916 Course in General Linguistics, divides the sign into two distinct components: the signifier ('sound-image') and the signified ('concept'). And these cannot be conceptualized as a separate entities but rather as a mapping from signifiant differences in sound to potential (correct) differential denotation. A sign is the main concept that is used as material for analysis whereas a sign in an advertisement has meaning as a form of interpretation of the intended message. In simple terms, signs tend to be in a visual or physical form that is captured by humans. Visual signs are images used to convey the message of the advertisement. While verbal signs are parts of advertisements that can be analyzed through text or in written form. An advertisement usually consists of text in the form of an advertising name or slogan, information about something, persuasive sentences, and or other forms of text. You can see examples of advertisements that contain elements like this, one of which is cosmetic advertisements.

In this study, the researcher focused on looking for the signs contained in the "*Somethinc*" advertisement. Both verbal and visual signs contained in the ad are then analyzed using semiotics and descriptive qualitative methods. The analysis uses the theory put forward by Saussure (1983: 65) to analyze and describe the verbal and visual signs of advertisements using the theory from Barthes (1967) about denotative and connotative meanings. Barthes (1964) describes denotation and connotation. Denotation is giving the meaning literally or first-order meaning, whereas connotation is the second meaning. The writer analyzes the connotation of the sign including the pictures, utterances, and body languages. While on the denotative meaning, this research analyzes the name of the product, the ingredients, and the function of the product.

This research uses advertisements from the *Somethinc* brand as an object because the brand is one of the local brands that are on the rise and is claimed to have a quality that is no less competitive with brands from abroad. *Somethinc* is a beauty brand from Indonesia that was released in 2019 under the auspices of *PT. Beaute Haul Indonesia*.

Even though *Somethinc* is still relatively a new brand, its achievements from year to year have earned the brand awards. In 2019, *Somethinc* won as *Best Newcomer Local Brand Award 2019* by Female Daily and Sociolla. In 2020, *Somethinc* started its debut to go international by opening its own website and providing free shipping to all countries, and made it into the top 50 Indonesian brands along with other big brands, based on a survey conducted by Katadata and found reviews on all its product lines and also a high repurchase rate.

In 2021 it was recorded that *Somethinc* succeeded in occupying the third level out of five local skincare brands with sales reaching 22.45 billion. Apart from that, the brand won recognition as *Local Brand of The Year by Female Daily Awards 2021*. Then on December 9 2021 the Indonesian – World Achievement Institute (LEPRID) gave an award to PT. Royal Pesona Indonesia which is PT from the *Somethinc* brand for its achievements. These records include '*Company with the Fastest Registration, 1 Month 8 Days*' with achievement number 707, and '*Company with the Most Trademark Registrations in 123 Countries*' with achievement number 708, with the product specification *somethinc@beautyhaul* which is a product beauty (skincare). Then in 2022, *Somethinc* has been able to attract the interest of global *venture capitalists*, namely by raising US\$ 10 million in Series B funding from Sequoia Capital and Prosus Ventures.

In the *Somethinc* advertisement, there are several signs and uniqueness in promoting its new product, namely with advertisements entitled 1) *Somethinc x Lifni Sanders 2020*, and 2) *Meet the 12 Super Idol Blurry Soft Lip Matte*. In general, these two advertisements invite us to be ourselves, love ourselves by taking care of it and expressing what we want, supported by verbal signs in the form of utterances supported with hashtags and words written in each scene, and also visual signs in the form of unique pictures supported with body languages.

By writing this research, it is hoped that it can help in the field of linguistics, for example, to explore the semiotic field of analyzing advertisements to find verbal signs and visual signs to find deeper meanings and meanings about advertisements for *Somethinc* products.

B. Problem Formulation

1. What are the verbal and visual signs found in *Somethinc* advertisement?
2. What Indonesian beauty representation found in *Somethinc* advertisement?

C. Objective of the Study

1. To find the verbal and visual signs found in *Something* advertisement.
2. To find Indonesian beauty representation found in *Something* advertisement.

D. Review of Related Studies

In conducting this research, the researcher has also learned from previous research and conducted a brief review. To strengthen the research, the researcher uses several previous studies as a reference. The first research is the journal from *Elysian Journal* entitled *A Semiotic Analysis in Downy Collection Advertisement* written by Dewa Ayu Nada Darma Pratami, Dewa Ayu Devi Maharani Santika, and Ni Made Verayanti Utami (2022). This journal examines the semiotics of *Downy's* product advertisements. The research was conducted by observation method to obtain detailed information. This journal uses 3 data sources, namely *Downy Sports Advertisement*, *Downy Premium Perfume*, and *Downy Garden Bloom*. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method using Saussure's theory (1983: 65) to analyze and describe verbal and visual signs and to analyze the meaning of verbal and visual signs from advertisements using the theory of Barthes (1967). Through analysis, the researcher found 72 verbal and visual data signs with 38 connotative meanings and 34 denotative meanings. The result of the discussion of the journal is that it can be concluded that the *Downy Collection advertisement* consists of 20 pieces of data which are divided into 9 verbal signs and 11 visual signs from three *Downy Collection advertisements*. The connotative meaning in this study consists of the model's facial expressions and advertising images. While the denotative meaning consists of statements in advertisements in the form of product names and also product functions. The connotative meaning that appears can be found in the main part of the ad which functions to make the ad look more mysterious to the audience and make them perceive the meaning of the ad when they buy the product. This is also one of *Downy's* marketing tricks in product offerings through advertisements.

The second research from the *Humains Journal of Arts and Humanities* entitled *Semiotic Analysis of Mentos Advertisement* written by Ni Putu Wina Damayanti, I Dewa Ayu Devi Maharani Santika, and Desak Putu Eka Pratiwi (2021). This study aims at analyzing the myth and conducted with verbal and non-verbal signs contained within the *Who Says No to Mentos* advertisement. The data of this study was taken from *Mentos NG* on the YouTube platform. The data were collected by documentation method with note-taking technique and analyzed by the qualitative method using the theory of Semiotic by Barthes (1972). The analysis is presented in an informal method. The results of this study show that both verbal and non-verbal signs have implied meaning to persuade and influence the audiences through visual illustration. The

meaning comes from the relation between the signifier and the signified. This has determined that the *Who Says No to Mentos* advertisement is concerned with sharing, caring, togetherness, happiness, and making friends with people in real life.

The third research from *Semiotic Analysis of L'oreal Paris Advertisement Thesis* was written by Ramy Zahra Syahdini (2019). This thesis analyzes the kind of sign is dominant to appear and why does the connotative meaning affect the concept of beauty in the *L'oreal Paris* advertisement. This analysis contains of 3 videos which are from 2013, 2014, and 2018. The writer categorizes the signs into 3 kinds. There are pictures, utterances, and body language. From this analysis, the writer finds that the connotation in this advertisement is affected by the concept of beauty in France. This thesis uses descriptive qualitative research by describing the collected signs.

Inspired by the three previous studies which discussed signs and signifiers, in the first study a general discussion of semiotic analysis of the *Downy* brand advertisement, in the second study the *Mentos* advertisement was related to the culture of a country, and in the third study it discussed the representation of beauty in a country which is found in the *L'oreal Paris* advertisement. So with previous research, this research wants to find out about verbal and visual signs along with their connotative and denotative meanings in *Something* advertisements, which is a beauty brand. As well as finding a representation of the beauty of the archipelago's skin which is marked by various verbal and visual signs in the advertisement.

E. Methods of Research

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method, which according to Saryono (2010: 49) argues that qualitative research is research that is used to investigate, describe, explain, and find qualities or features of social influence that cannot be explained, measured, or described through a quantitative approach. According to Boghdan & Biklen, qualitative research is a procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of speech or writing and the attitudes of the people being observed (1975). While developing this research using the theory put forward by Saussure (1983: 65) to analyze and describe verbal and visual signs from advertisements, and using the theory from Barthes (1967) about denotative and connotative meanings.

The reason the author uses this theory in this study is that the theory put forward is in accordance with what is contained in *Something* advertisement in accordance with the semiotic theory mentioned. Verbal and visual signs were found as in the theory put forward by Barthes (1967) regarding denotative and connotative meanings.

1. Data and Source of Data

The writer takes the primary data source from YouTube channel *Somethinc Official* that contains of *Somethinc* products advertisements. The first video entitled *Somethinc x Lifni Sanders 2020*. It was uploaded on December, 7, 2020. The second video entitled *Meet the 12 Super IDOL Blurry Soft Lip Matte*. It was uploaded on November, 30, 2022. The secondary data of this research are taken from journals and articles about the connotation.

2. Methods of Collecting the Data

The writer collects the data by doing some steps. The first step taken by the writer is to watch the advertisement on youtube *@somethincofficial* for *Somethinc x Lifni Sanders 2020*, and *Meet the 12 Super IDOL Blurry Soft Lip Matte*. Then the writer notes the information and data of verbal and visual signs contained in the ad which will then be analyzed then find out the connotative and denotative meanings of the verbal signs in the advertisements.

3. Methods of Analyzing Data

After collecting the data, the writer categorizes the signs as verbal signs and visual signs. After that, the signs are categorized them such as pictures, utterances, and body languages. Then the writer looks for the meaning contained and finds the meaning of verbal and visual signs that produce connotative and denotative meanings so that writer can find the beauty concept of *Somethinc* advertisement that related to Indonesian beauty concept and find conclusions contained in *Somethinc* advertisement.