

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will elaborate general descriptions about background of the research, research questions, research purposes, research significances, conceptual framework and previous researches that are being used, in order to enrich and amplify this research.

1.1 Background of the Research

Technology is one of the sectors that has significant role in human daily basis, undergoes rapid developments over the past few decades. Technology alters the ways of human work, communicate, access the information and transact drastically. The broad scope of technology has contributed in facilitating humans to operate numerous affairs. The communication process in contemporary times has shifted to modern digital system such as knowledge and information, not only accessible through the library, but also available in online system. The existence of digital devices for instance, smartphone and social media, creates communication procedure more efficient, despite of its skeptical nature. This point impacts people to switch to digital systems. As a result, the transition inflicts quite serious symptoms of human behaviours.

To illustrate, in the interaction context, humans tend to communicate through WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook, due to its convenience, time and energy savings compared to face-to-face meeting, even the people of northern part are able to exchange information with the people of southern part of the world. Similarly with the consumption range. The technology innovation drives the markets furthermore to shift from traditional marketing to digital marketing. The extent of that shift increasingly changing the human consumption patterns towards items and goods that become more prevalent, regardless of necessity or without considering the impacts. Enormous companies or simple franchises, one by one have transformed into digital era or commonly referred to as digital marketing. As highlighted by Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2016), digital marketing in simple

terms is defined as an endeavour of marketing objective attainments by applying technology and digital mediums.

The utilization of technology assists companies to reach out more extensive market target and enhances on more maximal results in accordance with the beforehand established market target. The endeavour is being optimized by implicating assorted forms of digital tools as technology advancement products. One of the digital forms from marketing strategies that is frequently used is advertisement. By means of advertisements, it is possible for various parties to promote their product or services with the most attractive packaging possible. From the perspective of Dunn and Barban (in Watie, 2012), advertisement is a form of non-personal communication activity delivered through media by paying for the space used to convey a persuasive message to consumers, by companies, non-commercial institutions, or interested individuals.

Hence, advertisement is regarded as a communication media that can not be detached in marketing strategy since it holds major contribution in shaping brand image, elevating brand awareness, and attracting public attention. The statement is supported by Wright (in Pratiwi, 2015) who elaborates further that advertisement is a significant communication process that plays a vital role in promoting products, providing services, and conveying ideas and concepts through various channels with convincing messages. Based on explanation above, it can be understood that advertisement's position in modern market (digital marketing) is strategically significant due to its ability that is able to build long run relation with customers through visualization and messages linked to it.

Since advertisement is a marketing strategy in the form of digital or more commonly known as digital marketing, there are five tremendous benefits for those who utilize the technology as stated by Kotler et al. (in Wijaya et al., 2022). First, digital marketing can be utilized by small or large businesses. Second, digital marketing is unlimited by advertising space and scope. Third, the information that is rapidly disseminated. Fourth, digital marketing has flexible characteristics in a way of viewed or visited by anyone, anywhere and anytime. Fifth, the shopping procedure that is able to carry out independently and in a

relatively short time. In addition, the parties that apply digital marketing features are capable of measuring its effectiveness and establishing market target in a more aligned and specific way which can not be approached by applying traditional marketing means.

In a market strategy transition using digital marketing, there are at least six major categories of digital marketing tools as highlighted by Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick. The first category is search marketing in the form of search engine optimisation (SEO) technique, paid search pay-per-click and paid for inclusion feeds. The second category is online public relation which involves publisher outreach, community participation, media alerting and brand protection. The third category is online partnerships which manifested as affiliate marketing, sponsorship, co-branding and link-building. The fourth category interactive ads in the form of site-specific media buys, ad networks, contra-deals, and behavioral targeting. The fifth category is opt-in emails include house list emails, cold (ranted list), co-branded, and ads in third party e-newsletters. The final categor is social media marketing in the form of audience participation, managing social presence, viral campaigns and customer feedback.

From the six digital marketing communication tools mentioned above, social media marketing is considered as the most significant type of tool that can be created by all parties, regardless of the credibility and size of the company, by involving communication or active participation from users through websites, blogs or social media such as Youtube, Instagram and Facebook from companies that advertise a particular product. The desire of consumers to engage in active communication is also due to the inherent persuasive nature of an advertisement where it has a unique ability to engage the imagination and emotions of costumers, so that costumers are influenced in their purchases to a much greater extent by the advertisement itself than they usually realize (Starch, 1915). In this case, the customer's decision to buy a product is not made fully consciously, because the persuasive nature of the advertisement changes the way potential customers view their needs or desires.

Customer decisions are basically affected by internal and external factors. Internal aspects that influence consumer behavior or decisions are triggered by three factors (Dr. Suwitho, 2022). First, psychological factors include basic customer needs such as eating, drinking and comfort. Second, attitude factors involve cognitive, affective and behavioral components. The cognitive component includes customer trust in a product. The affective component influences the customer's emotions and feelings towards a product, and the behavioral component involves real actions taken by consumers as a result of their beliefs and emotions by purchasing or not purchasing a product based on a combination of cognitive and affective components.

In contrast, external aspects that influence the final customer decision are influenced by 7 factors according to Swashta and Irawan (in Richadinata & Surya Astitiani, 2021). First, product type. This aspect refers to customer choice in determining whether the type of product is needed or can be postponed because it is not too urgent. Second, product form. This aspect refers to the variation of a product model that suits each preference. This aspect is important because the same product from different companies can come in various forms and this aspect influences the final customer decision. Third, brand aspect. This aspect refers to the product image that has been built. Each brand offers its own uniqueness in terms of quality and price. Their selection can be based on previous experience or recommendations from others which are the result of their experience.

Fourth, place of purchase. This aspect involves a place that influences the comfort factor, price and service received by the customer. Customers must determine where they will buy the product, either in a store directly or through the product's official website. Fifth, number of products. This aspect focuses on how many products will be purchased according to needs, budget and available promotions. Sixth, purchase time related to when the customer will make a purchase. Choosing the right time can provide more benefits such as discounts or promotional offers. Finally, the payment method. This aspect requires consumers to choose the payment method to be used. Customers can choose to pay in cash, via credit card or installment method. This selection is important because it will affect the convenience of transactions and the customer's final decision, because

cancellation of a purchase transaction can occur if the payment system is complicated. In addition to the seven aspects above, cultural factors also have significance on customer decisions. With the culture or norms that apply in a particular society, it can shape the mindset or behavior of individuals in choosing the products they need, because each culture has unique views or habits regarding lifestyle, food and clothing and different needs.

In addition to the internal and external factors above, advertising media also plays a crucial role in determining how persuasive the advertisement is and ultimately influences customer decisions because it functions as the main means of conveying advertising messages to the target market. The wider the reach of the media used, the more the advertisement is seen by many people and it is possible that the persuasive influence of the advertisement also has an effect on potential customers. In addition, the use of media with a wide reach will also reach various segments of society, from different age groups and interests to varying socio-economic backgrounds. Thus, advertising messages can create a wider impact, because they are able to reach a more heterogeneous audience. Wide media also provides an opportunity for advertisements to continue to appear in consumers' daily lives so that they slowly increase awareness and influence public perception consistently.

One of the digital marketing advertising media that is considered to have a very wide reach is YouTube. YouTube is a service that presents various types of videos that are entertaining and flexible because they can be accessed by anyone from various ages, anywhere and anytime only through the internet network of their handheld devices. In January 2023, there were 2.51 billion YouTube users worldwide (Pasaribu et al., 2024). This significant number illustrates the potential and great opportunity for advertisers to reach the digital market in a very large scope. At first glance, Youtube is indeed a place to fantasize and seek entertainment for most people, but now, Youtube has become an official page for brand owners to promote their brands or services by creating advertisements and uploading them on the channels they have created.

On the other hand, advertising features on Youtube also have several other forms. There are at least 5 forms of ad displays on Youtube, namely display ads, overlay ads, skippable ads, non-skippable ads and sponsored cards ads (Pratama, 2019). Display ads are a type of ad that appears on the right side of the video being watched on YouTube, usually above the list of related videos. This form of advertising consists of images or text that can be clicked to direct users to the advertiser's website. Overlay ads are semi-transparent and usually appear at the bottom of a YouTube video while the user is watching it. Users usually have the option to close the ad, so this form of advertising does not completely force users to see it. Skippable ads are a type of ad that appears at the beginning, middle or towards the end of a YouTube video playback by giving users the option to skip the ad after 5 seconds or not, so it seems more flexible. Usually this type of ad lasts 30 seconds and the first 5 seconds determine the audience's interest in the advertised product. Non-skippable ads are the opposite of skippable ads. This type of ad cannot be skipped by users when they want to watch a video and usually lasts between 15-30 seconds, so it seems to force users to watch the ad in full. Therefore, non-skippable ads ensure that the entire advertising message is conveyed to the audience. Finally, sponsored card ads are a type of ad that displays small cards containing relevant products or services in the video being watched by the user.

On the contrary, with various types of Youtube ad displays that are diverse as one of the advertising media, the most important and most important thing that must be considered before publishing an advertisement is the elements that build the advertisement. Advertisements basically involve a sign system as an important component in forming advertising results, which consist of symbols, both verbal and non-verbal (Pujiati, 2015). Verbal symbols emerge from forms of communication that use words in a language, both spoken and written. While non-verbal symbols are related to the process of producing meaning without involving verbal communication. In other words, all symbols produced other than spoken or written language through words are included in the non-verbal category, such as body movements, tone of voice, loudness of voice, speed of speech, and time used when speaking.

In addition, environmental depictions such as the colors used and the layout of items also make a significant contribution to non-verbal communication (Lamichhane, 2016). In the context of advertising, these verbal and non-verbal symbols then work together to create a more holistic and persuasive message. Advertisements often combine verbal components such as clear and attention-grabbing words with strong non-verbal components including images, colors and sounds to demonstrate the message to reach the audience. The movements and expressions of the people in the advertisement, such as a warm smile, can create a positive atmosphere that sticks in the minds of the audience. The tone of voice chosen is also very important; a cheerful and enthusiastic voice can increase demand for the product.

Furthermore, the layout of items in a room also determines how the intended message can be received; advertisements that are arranged with a good layout will be easier for the audience to understand and remember. Therefore, a deep understanding of the combination of verbal and non-verbal symbols is very important for advertisers to create effective and memorable advertisements, which not only attract attention but also influence the actions of the audience. In addition, the combination of verbal and non-verbal symbols also leads to the formation of a sign system by forming more complex meanings.

Before the formation of a sign system, it is necessary to first understand the simple definition of the sign itself. According to Pierce, a sign is something that represents someone or something else in various ways and functions. A sign can only be assumed as a sign if it is understood, and this can only be done by the human mind. This statement is in accordance with Saussure's understanding of signs where signs are used to express ideas, where the ideas in question are related to mental process activities that only occur in the human mind. Therefore, signs are also understood as a means of communication used by two people to convey something. On the other hand, signs can only build this representational relationship if bridged by an interpretant, so that signs function as intermediaries between objects and interpretants because signs can help interpretants understand the object.

Regarding the examination of sign systems, there is a field of study known as semiotics that analyzes signs and symbols. Pierce (in Zoest, 1993) defines semiotics as the study of signs and everything related to them, including how they function, their relationship to other signs, their transmission, and reception by those who use them. From the explanation above, there is a close connection between advertising and semiotic analysis because advertising always uses signs, symbols, and visual messages through verbal and non-verbal symbols to communicate with its audience. In this context, semiotics will help in a more comprehensive understanding of all the symbols and signs present in advertisements.

Through this semiotic approach, analysis can be conducted to understand how Youtube ads use these symbols to convey their persuasive messages. One type of product that is interesting to analyze is a product like fabric softener. Fabric softener products have become an important part of the laundry process around the world, playing a crucial role in improving the quality and comfort of clothes after washing. The use of fabric softener is not only limited to the basic function of softening fabrics, but also offers a number of other additional benefits. In this highly competitive market, especially after the shift to digital form, there are various brands that offer a variety of products, including a variety of scents and colors designed to meet different consumer preferences. Each brand usually has its own uniqueness, both in terms of formula, scent strength, and product packaging, thus creating a wider choice for consumers. One brand that caught the attention of researcher is Downy. Downy not only often appears on YouTube globally, but also in Indonesian advertising. It is not without reason that researcher chose Downy as the object of research. The identity of Downy which always uses its soft sky blue color, the inclusion of baby models, parents, elements of family, warmth, and familiarity in Downy advertisements provide a distinctive touch that makes researcher moved to make Downy an object of research. The usage of these elements certainly contains meaning and reasoning that can only be revealed through the application of the right analysis theory, because each advertising scene has the potential to influence the interest of potential consumers to buy the products offered.

Nevertheless, the use of semiotic analysis to reveal the meanings within Downy's advertisement scenes is highly appropriate, considering semiotics is a discipline that unveils the meanings of signs, whether they are present in images, text, or sound. The Downy advertisements for 2023, were chosen to be analyzed because there are complete signs in the scenes, as well as the text and gestures of the models contained in the videos. The meaning of a sign is not only seen in what is displayed, but there is also a meaning behind it which of course requires appropriate interpretation. To reveal the meanings contained in the 2023 Downy softener advertising scenes, the researcher used Roland Barthes' approach because his theory is related to exploring the meaning of denotation, connotation and myth in accordance with the researcher's main target. The concept of signs proposed by Barthes cannot be separated from the influence of Ferdinand de Saussure who is considered the founding father of modern semiotics with his monumental work "Course in General Linguistics".

Saussure's concepts of sign, signification, and code provide a solid foundation for semiotic thinking. He divides signs into two components: the "signifier" and the "signified". Barthes, on the other hand, broadened the understanding of semiotics by applying Saussure's principles to a broader analysis of culture and texts. Barthes highlighted the importance of structure in forming meaning, introduced concepts such as myth, and expanded the scope of semiotic analysis to various forms of cultural texts, such as advertisements, magazines, films, and even everyday objects. Although both approaches have different focuses, namely Saussure with language as text and Barthes with various cultural texts, their point of intersection is the use of basic semiotic concepts, such as signs, structure and meaning, in analyzing communication and representation processes in culture. As such, both play an important role in the development of semiotic theory, providing deep insight into the way language and signs operate in the formation of meaning in society.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

Based on the background of research above, here are several sub-discussions that can be described in the form of the following questions:

1. What are the denotations that are found in fabric softener advertisement on YouTube channel Downy 2023?
2. What are the connotations that are identified in fabric softener advertisement on YouTube channel Downy 2023?
3. What are the myths contained in fabric softener advertisement on YouTube channel Downy 2023?

1.3 The Purpose of the Research

Related to the statement of the problems, the purpose of the research to be achieved by researcher are:

1. To analyze the denotations in fabric softener advertisement on YouTube channel Downy 2023.
2. To identify the connotations in fabric softener advertisement on YouTube channel Downy 2023.
3. To understand the myths in fabric softener advertisement on YouTube channel Downy 2023.

1.4 Significance of the Research

Due to this research is related to the study of meaning which involves in-depth analysis, this research is expected can contribute to the application of semiotic theory as a branch of linguistics. Therefore this research has two significances, namely benefits in theory and practice.

1. Theoretically

This research is expected to be able to expand knowledge insight about library research, specifically in semiotic analysis Roland Barthes that can uncover both explicit and implicit meanings, whether conveyed through images, symbols, or text and as a reference to other researchers who are interested in semiotic analysis that contained in advertisements.

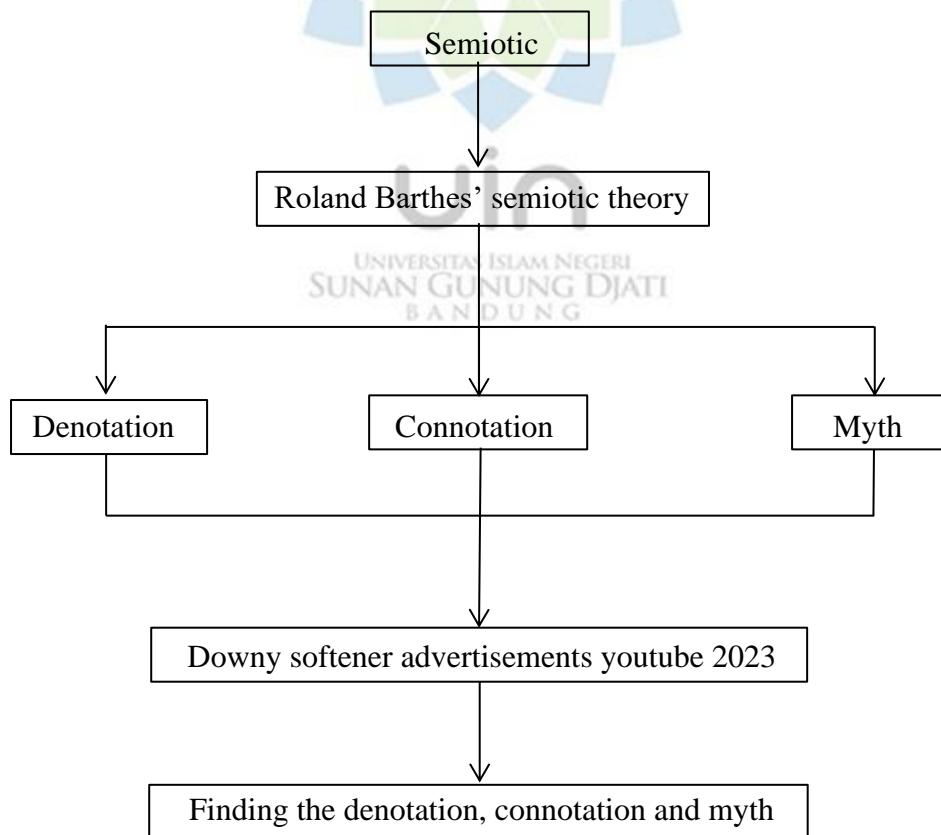
2. Practically

This research is expected to be helpful for those who decided to study linguistics especially in semiotic science. In addition, the result of this research

research can be used as a basis for comparison in determining the appropriate strategies and approaches in analyzing advertisements.

1.5 Conceptual Framework

This research aims to discover the meanings which are contained in the Downy advertisements scenes 2023 on Downy’s YouTube channel. Researcher used semiotic theory due to the fact that semiotic delves and discusses meanings profoundly. The meaning is not just visible, however it has a hidden meaning or arises from the beliefs of a society which is based on the knowledge and experience of that society. Therefore, the researcher used semiotic theory proposed by Roland Barthes because his theory is able to answer the research questions. This theory involves the process of exploring the meaning of denotation, connotation and myth. The following is a schematic of the analysis process for this research.



1.6 Previous Research

In completing this research entitled “*Roland Barthes’ Semiotic Analysis in Downy Softener Advertisement in YouTube 2023*”, the use of other references in the same discussion, that is semiotic analysis, is crucial. These references come from a thesis and two scientific journals that can contribute to this research. These references used include *Representation of Social Class in Film (Semiotic Analysis of Roland Barthes Film Parasite)* by Vicky Dianiya (2020). This paper examines social class representation through connotation, denotation and myths contained in the Parasite film scene. Based on this research conclusion, at the stage of representing social class markings in the film Parasite, it is found that there are at least five main points, namely: ease of life, fashion, boundaries, body odor, and color.

The second previous study is *Roland Barthes Semiotics Analysis on Ramadan Version of Pocari Sweat Advertisement 1442 H* by Lukman Hakim and Oktavia Monalisa (2022). The purpose of this research was to analyze the audio visuals of the Ramadan 1442 H version of the Pocari Sweat advertisement. The results of this study indicate that the Ramadan 1442 H version of the Pocari Sweat advertisement intends to improve the company’s image by using television advertising media and using rising actresses to become advertisement stars. In addition, this advertisement also intends to promote the product through advertising messages that the Pocari Sweat product is very useful for those who are fasting.

The last previous study is “*Denotative, Connotative and Myth in Fashion Advertisement on YouTube Channel GUCCI 2021-2022*” by Firda Wafa Aulia (2023). This study aims to analyze the semiotic signs contained in Gucci fashion advertisements, which analyzes the denotative, connotative, and myth signs. The number of advertisement that has been taken as research object is 21 advertisements, comprising 6 advertisements from 2021 and 15 advertisements from 2022.

The main key difference is in the research objects. The first previous study used Parasite film scenes as research material to uncover social class in that film.

Meanwhile the second previous study used Pocari Sweat Advertisement 1442 H which primary focus research is in the audio and advertisement scenes. The last previous study used fashion advertisement on youtube channel Gucci from 2021-2022.

