

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Research

The development of the technology's era makes information are easily known by the general public and it can be a hot topic to be discussed everywhere, especially through the internet and social media. Information distributed by the internet and social media is likely to gain more attention from the public. Remembering people in this 21st century uses the internet as a basic need to support their lives. Moreover, issues are easily got attention from the public when they are spread through mass media like newspapers or television. One of the media for spreading the issues is posters.

Posters are not only distributed directly in front of the public, they are also distributed through technology-based media, that is the internet. Posters that are distributed through the internet are called digital posters. There are some kinds of posters, one of them is posters that contained content about raising awareness over an issue. This kind of poster is known as a campaign poster. Campaign posters are aimed to make the general public know about what issues are truly happening in this world and it expects the public to aware of the issue and engage to contribute to making a change. It can be said that posters also have a function as a propaganda medium for the issues being campaigned through them. This opinion is supported by Seidman (2008) in his book posters, propaganda, and persuasion in election campaigns around the world through the history, he states that posters are a crucial medium for the propaganda of an opinion and an invitation to the public to agree with it.

Talked about issues, a lot of things have happened in the world in the last decade, especially in the environmental and social's fields. The small sample in 2020 was many important phenomena are happening in this world. According to data from The Spectator Index, in the first five days of 2020, nine events were quite shocking to the world, including in Indonesia the flood or natural disaster that occurred in

parts of the island of Java, the threat of World War III, the COVID-19 pandemic, racism against black people, and bushfires in Australia are also some of the major issues about environmental and social that changed the world in 2020. This does not include the environmental and social issues that previously and recently happened.



*Figure 1 Environmental Campaign Posters*

Source: [https://www.fotor.com/templates/tag\\_koala#koala](https://www.fotor.com/templates/tag_koala#koala)  
(Retrieved on July, 29th 2021)

These issues are being discussed and talked of the town because it was not only about internal issues in one country but also affects the global community life either directly or indirectly. This issue involves several countries, even in the case of the covid-19 pandemic, almost all countries in the world are experiencing a pandemic of coronavirus disease. In addition, the black lives matter event has also become the center of world attention for the incident that befell George Floyd, who was a black US citizen. The incident became a turning point for black people around the world to demand justice for their rights.



*Figure 2 Social Campaign Poster*

Source: <https://www.etsy.com/listing/765870447/no-justice-no-peace-poster-black>  
(Retrieved on July 29th 2021)

Posters are made with mixed images, color, and text in such a way as to attract public interest. Every part of a poster like images, color, and text is contributed in forming a unit about the theme of the issues that are being raised. Shortly, a poster is intended to make it everyone who sees the poster are easy to understand its contents, especially for knowing about the issues that are being discussed in the world at that time. A poster is one of the indirect communication media. The creator of the poster should be able to convey points effectively to the people who will see the poster and help them interact with the outline of the main theme raised in the poster (Hazelton, 2008). In short, when someone sees a poster at once, they will easily understand what points are the creator wants to convey.

The visual elements such as images, colors, and text that can be studied through the linguistic approach. Images and texts are included as a sign in the study of semiotics. Sign according to Sebeok (2001), is any physical form that is imagined or created to represent an object, event, feeling, etc. So it can be said that all elements in poster such as images and text are part of the sign. Furthermore, according to Piliang (2004), the text is a product of language, which is very possible to be analyzed through a semiotic approach. Semiotics is the science of signs and all things related to the sign itself. Peirce's semiotics emphasizes the meanings depend on the thoughts and the individual interpretation. In line with Peirce's statement regarding the definition of semiotics, logic is another name for semiotics (Totu, 2014). Peirce divides the sign into a triadic system that is interconnected, that is representamen, object, and interpretant. Representamen is an observable sign or the lookable sign. This sign refers to a person in some respect or capacity. The object is another reference of a sign. Then the interpretant is an idea or thought that appears in a person's mind when he sees a sign (Peirce, 1900).

Based on Peirce, he divided sign into three fundamental typology there are icon, index, and symbol. For the example in the figure one, the picture of kangaroo is an icon of the poster. Then the speculation that arises of the colour of the background and the pattern of kangaroo is an index. Meanwhile the text is part of the symbol in Peircean semiotics.

The main topic of this research based on the author's interest to the problem that people faced in this world. Moreover, the topic of environmental and social issues is based on the increasing number of issues in recent years. Environmental and social issues will always be an interesting topic nowadays because the world needs to make a change.

As the researcher has explained previously, in line with the purpose of the poster itself to make people know and aware about the issues being arises, unfortunately, there is a lot of small details in the poster often neglected. Even though the small part has its intention and meaning. The researcher is interested to find the signs, especially the icons, indexes, and symbols signs, and interpreting the meaning of each sign that contained in the environmental and social campaign posters.

This research can be said to be a novelty of existing research. This research also aims to enrich and add new views to the research that has been done previously. As previously described, the researchers took the objects from hot topics that have been discussed in the world nowadays. Through this research, the author hopes that many things will continue to be explored to be the object of research, especially in the realm of semiotics and linguistics.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

Based on the background of research, can be formulated into the research question as follows:

1. What are the representations or the signs of environmental and social issues in the campaign posters?
2. How are the interpretation of the representations or the signs of environmental and social issues in the campaign posters?

### **1.3 Research Objective**

Based on the research question above, the following are the objectives of this research:

1. To explore the representations or the signs of environmental and social issues that appeared in the campaign posters.
2. To analyze the meaning of the representations or the signs of environmental and social issues in campaign posters by interpreting it.

### **1.4 Research Significances**

This research intended to be contribute both for theoretically and practically benefits, there are:

1. Theoretically, since this research was conducted in the semiotics way, especially in the theory of Charles Sanders Peirce. This research is expected to be a contributor to novelty in the linguistic major which is the main basis of this research. This research exists to fill the gap between the previous research in semiotics that has been done with another previous researcher and enriches studies in semiotics.
2. Practically, this research is expected to provide benefits for both the researcher and the reader, especially those who study in the linguistic major. Through this research, both of the researcher and the reader will gained new knowledge and insights, especially about the environmental and social issues that happened to this world. To the reader from the linguistic major could learn about semiotic and this research could be the reference for future research.

### **1.5 Previous Research**

The research is based on three kinds of research with the same subject, but with a different focus on the object that had been done before. The first research is a thesis by Dillasari (2019), the title is Semiotic Analysis of Ruang Guru Application Advertisements. This research used Charles Sanders Peirce's theory and focused on the relations between icon, index, and symbol. In her research, Dilla was collecting five data from Ruang Guru's advertisement and she took it all as a sample of her research. The data was a digital pamphlet that contained semiotic signs. For the

result of her research, she focused to explained what type of sign is found in the advertisement and classified it in accordance to sign as an icon, index, and symbol into table form. Then she interpreted its meaning for each sign. Although the model of Dilla's research was slightly almost the same as this research, the way the data was presented is different from this research. The topic of the previous research and this research are different. Dilla's research is focused on advertisement posters, meanwhile, the topic for this research is campaign posters about environmental and social issues.

The second research was a thesis by Maburr(2018), the title is Semiotic Analysis of War Bond Posters Issued by The United States of America in World War II. This study used a semiotic theory approach from Roland Barthes, that is the dyadic model denotative and connotative. Maburr used total sampling from 10 data in his research population. The researcher analyzed the meaning of the sign in the form of visual images and text in the posters of World War II. Through this research, it can be concluded that the meaning of the sign elements contained in the posters is an indirect invitation to the general public to form bonds in the United States war. This previous research and this research almost have the same topic, which is about the poster that raises a theme about an issue. Even though the focus of its topic is different from this research, this research is in the same semiotic study, but Maburr uses Roland Barthes's theory to analyze the data. Meanwhile, this research uses the theory of Charles Sanders Peirce.

The third research that forms the basis of this research is a thesis by Lestari (2016), the title is A Semiosis Process Analysis on KFC Advertisement Posters Using C.S Peirce's Theory. She used 15 different advertisement posters of KFC and took all of them as total sampling. As the title suggests, this research uses the triadic theory promoted by Peirce. In the first step, Lestari analyzed the semiosis of the poster in general through the triadic R-O-I approach, then analyzed the relationship between the icon and the symbol in the poster. Although this previous research and this research almost have the same thing to analyze which is the semiosis process of the posters, this research has a specialty to fulfill the gap in the previous research,

which is the model of data analysis was quite different from this research. In the previous research, the researcher explained about two types of signs, which are the iconic and symbolic processes. Meanwhile, in this research, the researcher analyze the icons, indexes, and symbols and it will be done one by one based on the signs that the researcher found in the posters.

### **1.6 Definitions of Key Terms**

The following are some definitions of the terms used in this research:

#### **1. Signs**

Signs are anything like image, sound, motions, words, etc that has meaning and is related to the signifier and its signified. The sign is divided into two, which are nature signs and conventional signs. Nature sign is the sign that is found in nature, meanwhile, a conventional sign is a sign that has rules like in human language.

#### **2. Semiotics**

Semiotics is a study of signs. Based on Cobley (2003), semiotics is an analysis of signs by interpreting them to find their meaning. Everything can be said as a sign, so semiotics appeared to find the meaning. In semiotics, so many experts gave a big contribution to this branch of science, two of them are Ferdinand De Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce. Ferdinand De Saussure is well known as the father of semiotics. He found the concept of signifier and signified in semiotics. Meanwhile, Charles Sanders Peirce is well known for his contribution to finding the concept of the triadic model of semiotics. It included representamen or the imagery of the signs, objects, and interpretant.

#### **3. Icons**

Icons are signs or signifier that represents the signified. The icon can be said as imitations of something that exists in reality such as images of the tree, portrait, sound effect of rainfall, etc.

#### **4. Index**



An index is an interconnection between the signifier and the signified. Index focused on the causality relations in one sign and its meaning.

#### 5. Symbols

Symbols are signs that have conventional rules that have been agreed upon by the community. Symbols have formal rules in them. A symbol can be found in human language, remembering human language are arbitrary but it needed community agreement to be approved as a language.

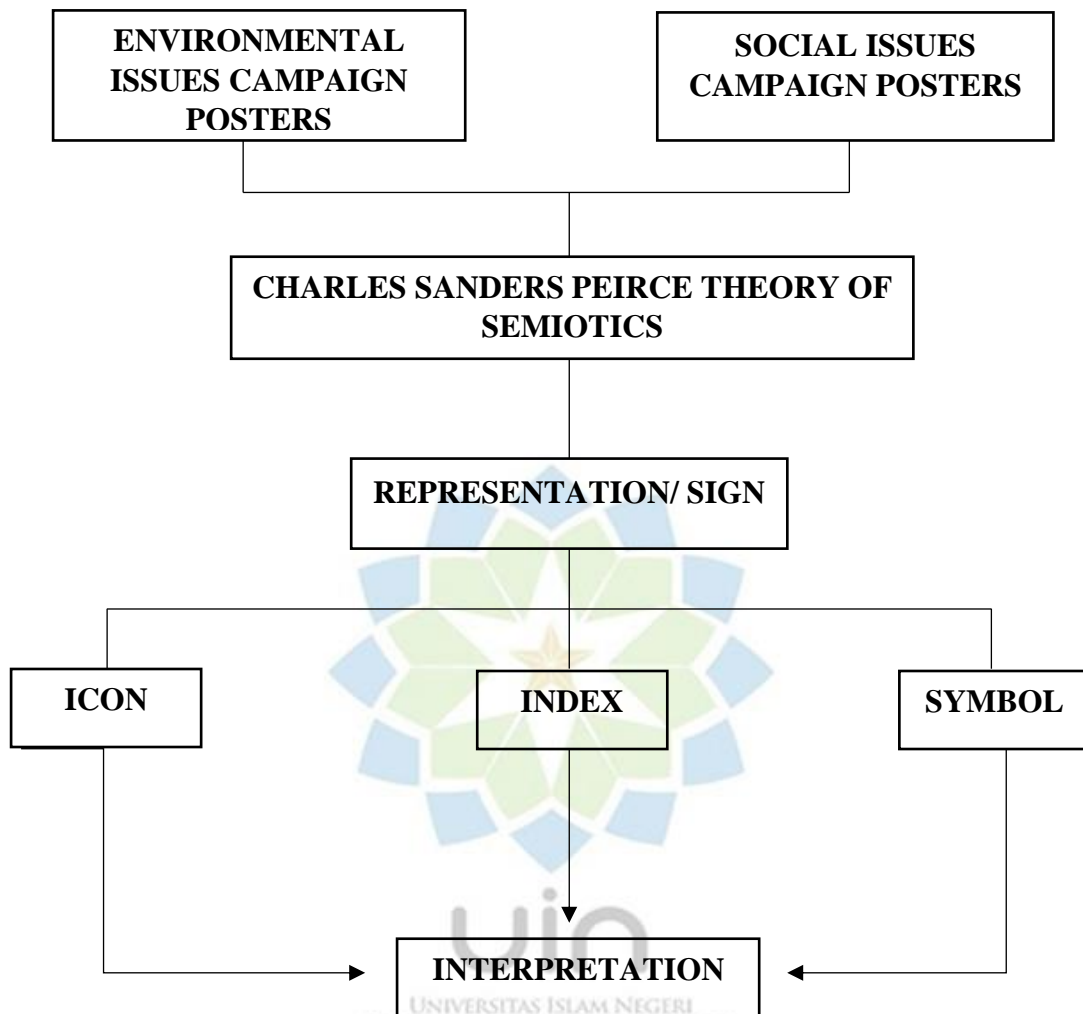
#### 6. Campaign Poster

A campaign poster is a poster that has content to raise awareness and invite people to make a change about some issues.

### **1.7 Conceptual Framework**

In this research, the main topic which the base of research analysis is environmental and social issues campaign posters. Every poster contains elements that can be said as signs of semiotics. The elements in the poster are solid and sustainable. The selection of elements or signs in a poster has its purpose, remembering every sign has its meaning. For analyzing the poster, the researcher used Charles Sanders Peirce's theory of semiotics. Peircean's semiotics is focused on the triadic model and he divided objects into three types, which are icon, index, and symbol. These are signs that the researcher has to find in a poster. After finding the icon, index, and symbol, the researcher interprets each of them. The model of interpreting in Peircean's semiotics is the meaning depends on interpreters, except the symbol. The symbol's meaning has conventional rules to be interpreted. Below is the framework of this research.





*Figure 3 Framework of Thinking*

The explanation of the thinking framework above is, first, the researcher took and categorize the campaign posters based on the theme raised. Posters with the theme of environmental issues and social issues are both used in this research. Both environmental issue posters or social issue posters has its own representations to depict the issues raised. Representation is the same as sign semiotic but only different naming. The form of representations in the poster like images, color, text, etc. The researcher categorize the representation/sign based on the type of the sign by theory of Charles Sanders Peirce, which the type are icon, index, and symbol.

After categorized the sign, the the sign will be interpreted according to the type of the sign itself.

