

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

The chapter consists of the research background, research problem, research purpose, and research significance. This chapter also includes the definition of key terms.

### 1.1 Research Background

Semiotics is cross-disciplinary, just like philosophy and logic. Experts study signs concerning aspects of social life. Thus, the signs studied by experts can be analyzed using a semiotics approach. One of them is the figure of Charles Sanders Peirce (1834-1914). Charles Sanders Peirce also represents signs based on objects through three signs icons, indexes, and symbols.

According to Pradopo (2012), semiotics is a sign or symbol in spoken or written language with meaning. Semiotics can also be used to find the meaning in advertisements pamphlet, such as in a product advertisement can find out the function of the product advertised. Interpreting a message is sometimes different from one to another. Sometimes the meaning of the message in the advertisement was made so unique as a form of creativity and customer attraction. Advertisement analysis can be interpreted used semiotics theory and methods. By analyzed advertisements used semiotics, many messages were conveyed. Semiotics is the study of systems, norms, and conventions that enable these signals to convey meaning (Jabrohim, 2014: 90).

Based on this research theory about icons, indexes, and symbols. According to Chandler, “The traditional basis of iconic sign-object relations lies in resemblance. Pictures are widely cited as prime examples of icons, and it is a necessary feature of a representational picture (such as a portrait) that it is perceived as looking sufficiently like what it depicts for that object to be recognized. The resemblance has been generally regarded as the ‘natural’ basis of depiction in contrast to the conventionality of words.” (Chandler, 2022: 20) Icons are not just simplified images but each image that represents the object represented. Icons are

generally a simplification of the original object. There is no need for mutual agreement in reading an icon because the audience already understands the form that is conveyed. Designer creativity and originality are tested by creating attractive icon styles, but still understandable.

The second is about the index; according to Chandler, “The index sign category in Peirce's semiotics includes what has been recognized as a natural sign. Like signs in words or pictures as natural signs regardless of any intention or desire to use them as signs, for example, the presence of smoke indicates the presence of fire” (Chandler, 2022:21). In essence, the index is a cause-and-effect relationship related to the object it represents. There are three types of indexes; spatial index, temporal index, and persona index”. The index is a sign that has a causal relationship with what it represents or also called a sign as evidence. The index is a description of an event. The spatial index refers to the location or space of an object, creature, or event for the user of the sign. Examples of the spatial index are arrows which can be interpreted as explanatory words that show something, like here or there. Temporal index, this index connects objects in terms of time. A time graph with before and after captions is an example of a temporal index. Persona index, this index connects the parties who take part in a situation. Personal pronouns are an example of a persona index.

While the third is a symbol; according to Berger, "The natural environment inspires humans to develop themselves through the search for a meaning as in their experience, that meaning was learned and can even become a symbol that has an emotional influence on individuals and the others" (Berger, 2010:28). That symbolic meaning is inherited to build communication and develop human knowledge about life and attitudes towards life. So, a symbol unites or combines a facet of human experience (a symbol can be a word or an action or an image, or a drama). Symbols are related to human life not only individually but also humans in the sense of society.

Semiotics is also found in advertisements that contain a sign that appears and produces the meaning of the message in the advertisement. Advertisement is a medium of communication to deliver products or services to the public. The purpose of an advertisement is to provide information and persuade consumers to try or follow what is in the advertisement, which can be in the form of consuming the products and services offered (Antonius, 2016: 16). Each part of the advertisement is a semiotic representation of the advertisement in which there are signs in the form of images, colors, gestures, sounds, words, or objects. It functions to convey messages to consumers which are disseminated or advertised in the media". By promoting through social media such as TikTok or Instagram, consumers are more connected with attitudes and thoughts. Therefore, advertisement through social media is expected to be able to increase awareness of products and brands that can motivate consumers to encourage a sense of interest in buying the product itself. Semiotics is also found in several advertisements for skincare products, one of which is the "SOME BY MI" product.

Skincare is a series of activities from the application of skincare that supports the health and beauty of the skin that functions well for the face, body, and hair. Some By Mi originates from Korea. Some By Mi is a combination of the words "Something By a Miracle." This product focuses on the benefits of each containing natural ingredients. Some By Mi became popular in Indonesia around 2016 until now. Some By Mi products are quite well-known in Indonesia thanks to one of their products, namely Some By Mi AHA-BHA-PHA Miracle Toner, which is known as the first product with identical green leaf packaging. Some By Mi believe that the magic for healthier skin comes from nature. Therefore, the reason they create products made from natural ingredients that are free from harmful chemicals. In terms of performance, Some By Mi managed to sell 3.7 thousand of its products on Tokopedia during August 2022. The brand adopted the tagline "Miracle of my skin with good ingredients." Indonesia is one of the countries known for Korean fever. Therefore, this is an attractive market opportunity for Korean skincare brand businesses. And it has been proven to be the center of attention for Korean lovers to buy Korean skincare products.

Based on the background of this study, the aim is to carry out a semiotics analysis of advertisements using a semiotics approach to find meaning and find out the meaning of advertisements on Some By Mi products. Therefore, with semiotics analysis, the meaning and message to be conveyed by an advertisement will be more visible because semiotics is a science or method of analysis that aims to study signs. Therefore, researcher are interested in researching advertising semiotics. The product to be analyzed is a skincare product from Korea, namely the Some By Mi product. Therefore, the reason for conducting research on advertising semiotics on Some By Mi products is because of the semiotic nature of being able to convey messages in the meaning of the advertisements displayed and being able to find meaning from the three representations of Charles Sanders Peirce namely icons, indexes and symbols.

The reasons the Some By Mi were chosen as the object of the study are the product has a unique, beautiful, elegant appeal and fulfills the three representations in which there are icons, indexes, and symbols. In addition, the display of Some By Mi advertising products can make it easier to analyze. All types of Some By Mi products have their characteristics as a differentiator and are easy to recognize. Therefore, researcher are interested in Some By Mi products as research objects. Some By Mi, which is famous for having natural ingredients as the main ingredients in the product, make it safe to use without parabens and artificial coloring. Therefore, researcher choose research objects with good, reliable, and safe products.

Based on the object of research, the reason for choosing the object of advertisement is because, in the advertisement, there is a lot that must be analyzed so as not to misunderstand the meaning of the advertisement and not be influenced by the advertisement without knowing the true intent. In general, advertising is a form of communication to interpret product ideas and service quality based on consumer needs and activities. Advertising offers a product to the public through a medium. The purpose of advertisement is to identify the product well and show its differences and advantages from other products so that consumers can choose the product. In addition, in advertisements, signs or symbols are often used when

presenting a product. Therefore the researcher is interested in the analysis of advertisements.

Previous studies are a collection of research that the researcher discovered. Researcher found several similar studies, which will be used as references in this research process. The first research was from (Provianto, 2013). This thesis was entitled *Analisis Semiotik Pada Iklan Mobil Di Surat Kabar Harian Suara Merdeka Edisi September-Desember*. This study aims to identify advertisements by finding several types of signs on objects and the meanings of icons, indexes, and symbols in car advertisements. So, in this case, the three types of signs can describe the meanings and provide information about the intention of the advertisement in this study, which was analyzed using the semiotic method.

The second was conducted (Willianto, 2018) this thesis was entitled *Analisis Semiotika Iklan Air Mineral VIT Versi Skripsi Di Televisi*. This thesis found several signs, objects, and interpretations given by the advertisement. In addition, there was some information about different points of view of a product advertisement and also the moral message. That is, not being passive spectator who accepted whatever was presented by the advertisement given to us but was more critical in assessing the actual message that the producer wanted to convey to the product so that we are not easily influenced by an advertisement.

The third was from (Midalaila, 2019) this thesis was entitled *The Icon, Index, and Symbol of The Casts Style in the Hunger Games Movie*. This study aims to identify films and find several types of signs on objects and the meanings of icons, indexes, and symbols from the appearance of actors' clothing styles in the hunger games film. In this case, semiotics plays a very broad role and can help research and convey the message implied in the meaning or sign of the clothing style.

The difference with previous research lies in the object being analyzed. In the first study from Provianto, analyzing icons, indexes, and symbols on car advertisements, the difference is the type of advertisement being analyzed. Then, in the second study from Willianto, he analyzed the semiotics of mineral water advertisements and analyzed the differences in people's perspectives on these

product advertisements. What is different is the type of advertisement being analyzed, and this study does not analyze differences in people's perspectives on advertisements. Besides that, William's research does not include much about icons, indexes, and symbols. His research focuses on "people's perspective on the meaning of advertisements," which is analyzed using semiotics. The third research difference from Midalaila is a different research object. Midalaila analyzes films, while this study analyzes product advertisements. But the similarities are analyzing semiotics in studying signs and describing meanings to provide information about the intent of the advertisement or film that is delivered.

### **1.2 Research Problem**

In Some By Mi skincare products, the researcher found several aspects that can be studied and analyzed. Researcher will conduct a semiotic analysis between icons, indexes, and symbols. After studying the background, the researcher tries to formulate by designing the problem as follows:

1. What icons, indexes, and symbols of advertisements are found in the skincare products of *SOME BY MI*?
2. What functions of icons, indexes, and symbols of advertisements are found in the skincare products of *SOME BY MI*?

### **1.3 Research Purpose**

Based on the formulation of the problem above, this study has two objectives to be achieved by researcher as follows:

1. To find out the icons, indexes, and symbols of advertisements in skincare products of *SOME BY MI*.
2. To explore the functions of icons, indexes, and symbols of advertisements in skincare products of *SOME BY MI*.

### **1.4 Research Significance**

The significances of research are divided into two components. Those are theoretically and practically. The following points must be understood to determine it clearly

## **Theoretical Significance**

This study used the theory of Charles Sanders Peirce. This theory was based on Peirce's semiotics regarding three interrelated relationships and building meaning as well as values by using the icons, indexes, and symbols methods. The three relationships are part of Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics representation applied through the Some By Mi product advertisements. This research expands the researcher understanding of the semiotics regarding the signs contained in advertisements.

## **Practical Significance**

This research is mostly intended for those who have an interest in a related subject. This study is also intended for those who wish to have a deeper understanding of the topic to examine signs and gain new perspectives. This research will support researcher in expanding knowledge about advertising semiotics. This study will also serve as a source for other scholars who wish to analyze advertising semiotics using Charles Sanders Peirce's theory of icons, indexes, and symbols of advertisement in a product Skincare. Therefore, it can be used as reference material for students as material for consideration for those conducting research.

### **1.5 Definition of Key Terms**

Some of the terms that are very important to describe the research are related to the title Icons, indexes, and symbols of advertisements in the skincare products of *Some By Mi*.

#### **1.5.1 Icons, indexes, symbol**

##### **A. Icons**

The icon is a sign that represents a source of reference through some form of replication, simulation, imitation, or equation. A sign was designed to represent a reference source through a simulation or equation. An existing sign is made to be visually similar to its reference source.

## **B. Indexes**

The index is a sign that has a causal (cause and effect) relationship with what it represents or also called a sign as evidence. The index of a sign whose nature depends on the existence of a denotation.

## **C. Symbols**

The symbol is a sign that represents the object through agreement in a specific context. Meanings in a symbol are built through social agreements or several historical traditions.

### **1.5.2 Advertisements**

Advertisements are a means of informing and promoting a product or conveying a message that will be disseminated to an audience with quite varied and creative strategies and platforms. One of which can be reached through social media. The goal is to encourage the audience to make purchases of a product being marketed.

### **1.5.3 Skincare**

Skincare is a series of skin treatments that can treat skin health and beauty. Based on his understanding, the benefit of using skincare is that it can help maintain overall skin health as well as improve skin problems experienced, such as acne, acne scars, dark spots, and wrinkles.