

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains general information about this research, which includes background, statement of problem, research objective, research significance, and definitions of key terms. This explanation aims to provide a clear depiction of the context, reasons and focus of the research carried out, as well as introducing the main concepts that used in the analysis. Through this chapter, it is hoped that readers can understand the basis and importance of research that examines metanarratives in L'Oréal advertising.

1.1 Background of Research

The cosmetics industry has become one of the fastest growing industries in the last few decades. Intense competition between cosmetic brands to attract consumer attention and win market share has encouraged cosmetic companies to develop innovative and effective marketing strategies. In this context, advertising has become one of the main tools used by cosmetic companies to promote their products.

L'Oréal, as one of the world's leading cosmetic brands, has played a significant role in influencing global beauty trends and standards. Since its founding in 1909, L'Oréal has been known for its innovative products and strong and influential marketing campaigns. One important aspect of L'Oréal's marketing strategy is the use of creative and attractive advertising to create a positive and attractive brand image for consumers.

In the cosmetics industry, advertising is not just a means of promoting products, but also a forum for conveying messages about beauty, fashion and lifestyle to consumers. According to Cook (in Kaur et al., 2013), advertising can inform,

persuade, remind, influence and also create awareness, build attitudes and identity. Advertising is also said to be the most influential socialization media in modern society (Jhally, 1959) L'Oréal advertisements not only describe their cosmetic products, but also create a complex narrative about the concept of ideal beauty, the latest fashion trends, and the lifestyle desired by consumers. Therefore, an in-depth analysis of the text structure in L'Oréal advertisements can provide valuable insights into how metanarratives about fashion and style were presented to audiences in different decades.

Beside that, changes in the representation of trends, fashion and style in fashion advertisements which are a reflection of cultural and social evolution occur from time to time. Each decade has unique characteristics and trends that are reflected in the way L'Oréal advertising depicts beauty and fashion. This change can be seen in terms of the language style used, model selection, visual layout, and the messages conveyed.

Changes in the representation of trends, fashion and style in L'Oréal advertising also reflect changes in consumer preferences and values. By analyzing advertising from different decades, we can see how the concept of beauty and fashion has evolved over time, as well as how this is reflected in L'Oréal advertising.

This research digs deeper into these changes and how they impact consumers understanding and perception of beauty and fashion. By understanding the evolution of the representation of trends, fashion and style in L'Oréal advertising, greater insight can be gained into how cultural and social changes are affecting the cosmetics industry and how brands like L'Oréal are responding to them.

In this research process, the approach used comes from a linguistic approach. The linguistic approach itself offers a rich and detailed perspective for analyzing advertising texts, making it possible to understand how language is used strategically in conveying certain messages to readers or viewers. In the context of the ever-growing cosmetics industry, linguistic studies are becoming increasingly relevant because cosmetic advertising often relies on images conveyed through

language. By utilizing linguistic analysis tools, such as discourse analysis and semiotics, language codes hidden in advertising texts can be resolved and communication strategies used to influence consumer perceptions and behavior can be revealed.

Discourse analysis makes it possible to investigate the structure of advertising text, the choice of vocabulary, and the language style used to build a narrative about a product or brand. The aim of discourse analysis is to help understand language in its use because language is used as a tool in implementing power strategies (Khasanah, 2021). By analyzing these elements, the messages conveyed through advertising, as well as how these messages are interpreted by the audience can be identified. On the other hand, semiotic analysis helps us understand the meaning of a sign in the context of advertising.

The importance of linguistic approaches in the analysis of advertising texts in the cosmetics industry cannot be ignored. As an industry that relies heavily on images and messages conveyed through advertising, a deep understanding of language and communication is key to understanding market dynamics and consumer behavior. Therefore, research in this area not only helps us understand how language is used in advertising, but also provides valuable insights into the relationship between language, communication and the cosmetics industry.

In addition, in L'Oréal advertising there are discursive practices (discourse) which refer to the way in which messages about beauty, fashion and lifestyle are presented and interpreted in advertising texts. In this context, discourse refers to communicative practices that involve the use of language, images, symbols and other visual representations to form narratives or stories about products and brands.

In L'Oréal advertising, discursive practices interpret and strengthen metanarratives about fashion and style in various decades. This is done through the use of careful marketing strategies and the selection of language and images that match the trends and consumer preferences of the time. For example, in an older decade, L'Oréal ads might use more classic and elegant language and imagery to

highlight their products, while in a newer decade, they might use more modern, bold language and imagery to attract attention young generation.

Apart from that, discursive practices in L'Oréal advertising also involve interpretation of the messages conveyed by the advertisement. This involves analyzing how L'Oréal advertising contributed to the grand narrative of beauty, fashion and lifestyle that prevailed in a particular period. For example, does the ad promote unrealistic beauty standards or depict beauty in different shapes and colors? Thus, analysis of discursive practices in L'Oréal advertising can provide valuable insight into how metanarratives about fashion and style are interpreted and understood by consumers.

Then, the metanarrative, or story above the story to be analyzed, plays an important role in L'Oréal advertising. In the context of advertising, metanarrative not only creates a narrative about the product, but also shapes the brand image and values to be conveyed to consumers.

In L'Oréal advertising, the metanarrative about fashion, style and trends creates a narrative about the beauty that consumers want. This includes not only products, but also ideas about ideal beauty and desired lifestyle.

Understanding metanarratives in the context of L'Oréal advertising is important because advertising is often the main source of information about beauty and fashion for consumers. In addition, advertisements that advertise beauty products will influence women, where beauty has become a necessity so that it pressures them to do their best to maintain their beauty (Baudrillard, 2004). Therefore, this research explores how metanarratives about fashion and style are presented in L'Oréal advertisements, and their influence on consumer perceptions.

To understand the metanarrative in L'Oréal advertising, researchers chose Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis approach. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) developed by Norman Fairclough is a powerful approach to exploring the relationship between language, power, and ideology in social texts, including advertising. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) also combines text

analysis, analysis of production and consumption processes as well as cultural analysis of discursive practices (Fairclough, 2003). The aim of CDA is to explore the relationship between language, ideology, and power (Kaur et al., 2013). In the context of this research, CDA will be a useful framework for understanding how L'Oréal advertising shapes and disseminates metanarratives about fashion, style and trends.

Critical discourse analysis allows researchers to explore more than just the structure of the text and find out how power and ideology are reflected in the language and visual representations in advertising. With this approach, research will explore how L'Oréal advertising constructs narratives about ideal beauty, fashion standards and desired lifestyles.

Therefore, the use of Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis in this research will provide in-depth insight into how metanarratives about fashion, style and trends are presented in L'Oréal advertisements, as well as the implications of power and ideology in this process.

Many researchers have conducted in-depth research on discourse and advertising with critical discourse analysis as their approach, such as research entitled *"The Power behind Images: Advertisement Discourse in Focus"* by Vahid & Esmae'li (2012), which focuses on the discourse that is built by advertisers based on visual elements. He found that the visual discourse in an advertisement had a hidden ideological meaning, even through this advertisement public opinion could be swayed. However, different from this research, the researcher wants to dissect the discourse not only visually, but also from a textual perspective.

Another relevant research is *"A Critical Discourse Analysis of Beauty Product Advertisements on Web Site"* by Susiana (2017), which also uses Fairclough's discourse theory. This research focuses on linguistic features in beauty advertisements on websites, and how these strategies are used to manipulate women's beliefs. The difference with this research is that, apart from analyzing advertisers' strategies, this research also focuses on the discourse structure that

forms metanarratives regarding the representation of fashion, style and trends in advertisements from various decades.

A research entitled "*A Critical Discourse Analysis on Talent Cosmetics Advertisements*" by Alfarah (2022) found various linguistic features used in advertisements for Talent Cosmetics, a beauty product from Korea. This research also analyzes advertisers' strategies in building Muslim identity and halal products in accordance with Fairclough's discourse theory. In contrast to previous research, this research emphasizes how discourse in advertisements strengthens the metanarrative built by the advertisement.

Another research is "*Discourse Analysis of Rexona Advertising*" by Nashihah (2016), which focuses on the meaning of the text and cohesion in the text using Cook's discourse theory. The results of this research show that text and context have meaning and interact with each other to communicate advertising messages to consumers. As for the differences, this research uses a critical discourse analysis approach from Norman Fairclough and also analyzes visuals in advertising with the support of semiotic theory.

Through research using a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach by Norman Fairclough, researchers are interested in examining the metanarrative behind the discourse in L'Oréal advertisements as the focus of the research. This research will examine not only the advertising text directly, but also the social, political, and economic contexts in which the advertising is produced and consumed. With this approach, researchers will discover how L'Oréal advertising reflects and influences existing social norms and cultural values. Apart from that, this research will also use semiotic analysis to understand the meaning contained in the visual elements of advertising. Therefore, based on the explanation previously mentioned, this research is entitled "**The Metanarrative Behind L'Oréal Advertisement**".

1.2 Statement of Problem

Based on the background described previously, researcher found problems related to the object, namely L'Oréal advertisements from time to time, in which there are differences in the narrative delivery. This problem occurs because in the era of globalization and technological advances, advertising has become the dominant media in shaping consumer perceptions and trends. L'Oréal, as a leader in the beauty industry, uses advertising as the main tool to create narratives about beauty, fashion and lifestyle.

This research aims to explore how L'Oréal advertisements form metanarratives about fashion, style or trends from various decades. Therefore, researchers have determined two problem formulations in this research, namely as follows:

- a) How does the discourse structure in L'Oréal advertising create and spread metanarratives about fashion and style in each decade?
- b) How do discursive practices in L'Oréal advertising interpret and reinforce metanarratives about fashion and style in various decades?
- c) How do social practices in L'Oréal advertising influence and reproduce societal norms about beauty through each decade?
- d) How do textual, visual, and social interactions in L'Oréal advertising contribute to building and reinforcing metanarratives about beauty from 1991 to 2023?

1.3 Research Objective

- a) To analyze the discourse structure used by L'Oréal advertisements from various decades to identify the elements that form metanarratives about fashion and style.
- b) To analyze the discursive practices used in L'Oréal advertising in understanding how the advertisement interprets and strengthens the existing metanarrative.

- c) To analyze the social practices in L'Oréal advertising that influence and reproduce social norms about beauty in each decade.
- d) To analyze the textual, visual, and social interactions in L'Oréal advertisements that contribute to the formation and reinforcement of metanarratives about beauty from 1991 to 2023.

1.4 Research Significance

This research not only has theoretical value in developing academic knowledge, but also has indirect practical implications that can be used in the context of the industrial world, especially marketing. The following are the benefits of this research, which are divided into two, namely theoretical and practical:

a) Theoretically

It is hoped that this research will make a new contribution to communication and linguistic studies, especially in understanding how language and images are used in advertising to create narratives about fashion and style. This research will enrich the literature on discourse analysis, semiotic theory, and visual communication theory.

In addition, through analyzing L'Oréal advertisements from various decades, this research is expected to provide deeper insight into the representation of trends, fashion and style in cultural and social contexts. This will enrich understanding of how media shapes and reflects cultural values and norms.

b) Practically

It is hoped that the results of this research will have practical implications for the cosmetics industry, especially for brands such as L'Oréal. By understanding how advertising is understood and received by consumers, brands can develop marketing strategies that are more effective and relevant to consumer trends and preferences.

Beside that, the findings from this research can be a guide for marketers and cosmetic companies in developing advertising that is more effective in achieving their marketing goals. By understanding how metanarratives about fashion and style are presented in L'Oréal advertising, they can optimize their messages to better reach their target market.

Finally, it is hoped that this research can become a reference for future researchers. Likewise, for researchers who already understand metanarratives and their relationship to advertising, it is hoped that this research can become an additional reference or a means of comparison for their research.

1.5 Definitions of Key Terms

Before entering into an in-depth analysis of L'Oréal advertising and metanarratives about fashion, style, and trends, it is important to have a clear understanding of the key terms that will be used in this research. These terms include:

1. Metanarrative

Metanarratives refer to narratives that transcend or involve other narratives, often with the aim of criticizing, modifying, or providing a new take on an existing narrative. In the context of this research, metanarrative refers to the narrative built in L'Oréal advertising, which not only includes product promotion but also creates a larger narrative about beauty, fashion and lifestyle.

2. Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is a research approach used to identify, analyze, and interpret the structure and meaning of texts, with a focus on the relationship between language, power, and ideology.

3. Fashion, trends and style

Fashion refers to trends in clothing, accessories, and clothing styles that are popular at a particular time. Style includes individual preferences in clothing

and appearance that reflect identity and self-expression. Trends are changes in preferences and styles that develop over a period of time, often influenced by cultural, social, and economic factors.

4. L'Oréal

L'Oréal is one of the leading cosmetics and beauty brands that has a global presence. The brand is known for a variety of cosmetic products, including skin care, hair and makeup products. As one of the leaders in the beauty industry, L'Oréal often uses advertising as the main tool to promote its products and create a strong brand image in the eyes of consumers. L'Oréal advertising often emphasizes the values of beauty, confidence and innovation, and often carries narratives related to fashion and lifestyle trends. Therefore, understanding the context of the L'Oréal brand is important in analyzing their advertisements and understanding how the brand contributes to the grand narrative of beauty and fashion in contemporary society.

5. Advertisement

Advertisements refer to promotional messages conveyed to audiences through certain media, with the aim of promoting certain products, brands or services.

6. Visual Representation and Semiotics

Visual representation refers to the use of images, symbols, and other visual elements in communication to convey certain messages to an audience. And Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols, as well as the way in which they are used to convey meaning in human communication.