

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Globalization has had a significant impact on various aspects. One of them is on the aspect of communication. In this case, it certainly has a big impact on human lifestyle in language. Due to language is a vital tool used by human to communicate, Lyon (1970) in Olojede, *et al.* (2018) reveals that language as a primary system used for communication, which is used by certain groups, by certain communities in which they are the members. Siregar (2022) describes that language is an important tool with a variety of purposes that are interesting for people to investigate, discuss, and learn. With this urgency, research on language will continue to develop over time. Relating to the statement above, regarding language research, linguistics presents into branches of science can learned it in detail. Knodel (2023) explains linguistics is the study of how human may express themselves and arrange their thoughts utilizing a variety of instruments (hands for sign languages, vocal tracts for spoken languages) and varied tactile and abstract elements. To learn more about language, linguistics presents as the branch of science which contributed greatly in human development, including in people lives in the grip of globalization, the social media.

According to Daud (2021), globalization, especially technological developments, has affected people's culture, one of which is language. People are increasingly dependent on existing technologies, such as social media. The use of language on social media cannot be separated from the use of many signs. According to Payuk and Zakrimal (2020), each of social media signs, definitely, has a different function. The function is described as a reflection of the form of the symbol. With the use of such things, people can operate social media as a form of information, even if there is no written explanation. For example, the heart-shaped symbol interpreted as a sign of like, the cloud or bubble symbol interpreted as a

comment sign, and the arrow symbol shows the sign of sharing. Then it could be said if the language and signs are needed on social media.

Language and signs on social media, both of them can be explained by linguistics. The study of linguistics that discusses signs is Semiotics. According to Copley and Janz (2002) in Ruhiat (2022), semiotics is a branch of linguistics study that has a focus on the use of signs and symbols with their representational systems. One of the famous semioticians throughout the history of language science is Roland Barthes. According to Barthes (1972) in Urfan (2019), he argues that sign does not only have signifier and signified. More than that, there is a cultural value or something called myth. In this case, myth can certainly be generated from the identifying signs in content on social media. This is also strengthened by another Barthes' statement on his work entitled *Image, Music, Text*. According to Barthes (1977) in Urfan (2019), the semiotics theory of myth has an in-depth analysis of the engagement of linguistic messages with photographic and advertising objects. Photography and advertising objects are very easy to find on social media.

To find out the things that are contained in a photography and advertising object that is on social media, there is a method that is commonly used, which is supported by the theory of multimodality. According to Apriliyanti (2017), multimodal analysis is applied in various contexts such as advertising, verbal and visual texts, and even in the analysis of metaphysical language to understand ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions. This is because, in this research, the data sources come from several modes which are all contained in one entire advertising object. According to Apriliyanti (2017) as well, multimodal analysis emphasizes the importance of both verbal and nonverbal communication elements in conveying meaning and content effectively.

According to Hannah (2020), some values posted on social media can be researched also using the concept of hyperreality theory. Thus, it is said, Baudrillard's hyperreality theory has the concept that the cultural world today is no

longer considered reality, but virtual. The virtual things in question can take any form. Video is one of them.

Payuk and Zakrimal (2020) explain that in today's life, many virtual things circulate on social media which is part of the human need to socialize. Video is one of the virtual things that are no longer strangers to be discovered. Generally, many social media have additional features for accessing or even creating videos, such as the Instagram application. Instagram is a social media that has a fairly high number of users. Around 2017, as published in Tempo news (<https://en.tempo.co/read/894655/indonesia-is-asias-biggest-instagram-market-with-45mn-users>), Instagram users in Indonesia have reached no less than 45 million users. For this reason, many Instagram accounts exist. All of them are not only used for personal purposes, yet there are accounts that represent brand presence on social media. This has a function in product advertising activities. Not only that, according to Soewandi (2015) in Wijaya and Kusumawati (2018), social media can help companies or brands to engage with loyal consumers, can stimulate people's perceptions of their products, share information, and other things to understand their consumers further. With the existing Instagram algorithm, the video feature or what is usually called reels is considered the virtual media that is most chosen by Instagram users. One user who represents the existence of a brand with high reels popularity is *Mad For Makeup*.

Soewandi (2015) in Wijaya & Kusumawati (2018), tells social media is one of digital marketing tools that could potentially help companies to develop their brand. The strategy mentioned by Soewandi is used by a beauty brand, namely *Mad For Makeup*. *Mad For Makeup* is a local Indonesian brand that has recently started to be recognized by many people. This happened because the achievements of making great videos. This is also supported by the quality of the products those have been launched. Some of their products have won awards on well-known Indonesian beauty platforms. One of them won in the "best makeup tools category" at the FDA 2018, and "best packaging" at Beautyfest Asia 2022. The unique character of the

brand, and being able to produce products that are "out of the box", is what makes the brand *Mad For Makeup* increasingly recognized by many people. Referring to data from BPOM or *Badan Pengawas Obat dan Makanan*, the demand of beauty products continues to increase, it has even increased dramatically, namely data from 2018-2022 of 0.26% or 58 products to 59.20% or 78,794 products recorded until November 2022. This was reinforced by research which stated that in the past few years, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a change in consumer behavior. Fadillah and Subchan (2021), they tell if consumer behaviour have switched to using social media, such as marketplace applications to be a solution in maintaining consumer power. Also based on the results of Fadillah and Subchan's research, it has been said, there has been an increase in sales from 10 million – 20 million units (January 2020 – March 2020) to around 40 million – 50 million units in April 2020 – June 2020. So, it makes sense that the demand for beauty products goes up. One of the positive impacts resulting from these symptoms is that *Mad For Makeup's* Spotless Concealer products sold more than 100,000 products. Spotless Concealer is *Mad For Makeup's* product which they admit is the best-selling and most popular product known to many people.

With the existing opportunities, the popularity of the Spotless Concealer product is well highlighted through video reels. Based on *Mad For Makeup's* Instagram account, namely @Madformakeup_co, the posts they upload are not monotonous with selling products. They also regularly upload video content that contains such as tutorial makeup videos, product review videos made by their customers that are called as Rebel, and other types of content. The combination of the high use of the reels algorithm, with videos about their best seller product, namely Spotless Concealer, was indeed the best decision that *Mad For Makeup* made. Because Spotless Concealer has many reasons why this product has become a favorite of many people, including iconic packaging, ingredients that are safe for any skin conditions such as acne, and even a shade range that is very suitable for the skin of Indonesian people. Regarding the shade range, this is a positive thing.

According to Fleming (2019) in Hall (2021), the lack of color variations in beauty products in the industry is very easy to find in various stores. Trying to be different from existing cases, *Mad For Makeup* offers more color variations. These things are what make this product considered unique for many people. The uniqueness of *Mad For Makeup* in packaging ideas is not only represented in how they make products, but also in the Instagram content they create.

As a beauty brand, researchers tried to find out how the *Mad For Makeup* brand tries to display the definition of beauty, as they have shown it on Instagram social media through the reels feature or video, that contains a sign. By using semiotic theory assisted by multimodality analysis, as mentioned previously in this research, Roland Barthes' semiotic concept is felt to be more suitable for use. Because it is related to the presentation of the concept of beauty, it contains cultural values such as myths. Not only that, to validate the data, researchers also used Jean Baudrillard's hyperreality theory, as well as other data to produce better research results.

There are many previous researchers that have published their research about semiotics. The results of these studies greatly inspired the researchers to write this research. As for one example of the first research, titled *Representasi Cantik Dalam Iklan Video Digital Dove Rambut Aku Kata Aku*. The researchers are Dara and Herawati. According to Dara and Herawati (2022), Dove's *Rambut Aku Kata Aku* digital video conveyed its beauty representation with a femvertising approach. Femvertising or commonly referred to as female empowerment advertising, is a theoretical approach that aims to portray the image of beauty through freedom of expression in determining the hairstyle.

The second research that inspired the researchers was the research of Amalia and Zuhri. According to Amalia and Zuhri (2022), in their research entitled *Analysis of The Beautiful Concept in Marina Ads (Study of Semiotics Analysis on Marina UV White & Body Lotion Advertisement)*, it has been explained that the advertising media is able to provide meaning construction that can influence the

public's perspective. In conclusion, it has been explained that the concept of beauty is described by the representation of glowing skin, instant brightness, white soft and smooth skin, slim body, and long hair. All of these things are considered to be a stereotypical feminine character. The theory used in the research is Roland Barthes' semiotic theory.

There is also a next research that is no less interesting, which is a semiotic analysis entitled, *The Study of Japanese Women in the Facial Treatment Advertisement: A Semiotics Perspective of Pierce's Theory*. The research was published by Andini and other researchers. According to Andini, *et al.* (2022), the representation of the concept of beauty contained in the Facial Treatment Essence SK II advertisement is described by the concept of beauty standardization in the style of Japanese society. However, this representation is presented in a different way, namely with the use of CGI or Computer-Generated Imagery. The CGI is referred to as a virtual model character who is called Imma. Imma is described as having a beautiful face, with bright, white, and glowing skin.

The fourth study, entitled *Beauty Representation in Scarlett Whitening Advertisement: Roland Barthes' Semiotics Analysis*, also has interesting research conclusions. According to Setyaningsih and Palupi (2022), the concept of beauty representation is reflected in the focus on the Asian region, especially Japan and South Korea. South Koreans and Japanese are described as having prominent beauty, by having white skin, glowing faces, fresh appearance with soft skin texture.

Based on the detailed explanation above, the researchers decided to examine the representation of the beauty concept. Specifically, the concept of beauty that campaigned by the beauty brand, *Mad For Makeup*, in some of their Instagram video content promoting Spotless Concealer products. The researchers are sure, related to the language and signs that are uploaded in social media, it has something to be represented. Regarding the concept of beauty, each of them must have a

different cultural understanding or myth, including in *Mad For Makeup*. Not only that, researchers also believe that *Mad For Makeup* has a reason that can be seen from the content they create, related to the importance of beauty representation.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Based on the background of the research, the following is the formulation of the research questions:

1. How does *Mad For Makeup* represent beauty in Spotless Concealer product videos on Instagram?
2. How beauty representation is important to be shown in *Mad For Makeup*'s Spotless Concealer product videos on Instagram?

1.3 Research Objective

Based on the formulation of the research questions above, this research has the following objectives:

1. To find out the beauty representation in *Mad For Makeup*'s Spotless Concealer product videos on Instagram.
2. To understand the beauty representation is important to be shown in *Mad For Makeup*'s Spotless Concealer product videos on Instagram.

1.4 Research Significance

This research is written with significance. As mentioned in the background, problem statement, and research objective sections, these things are able to explain that this research is able to provide new knowledge for the branch of semiotics. In more detail, this research has two significances. The two significances in question are theoretically and practically.

First, the theoretical significance. This research explains how the signs in Instagram videos related to *Mad For Makeup*'s Spotless Concealer products can represent beauty. Thus, each research process contains a detailed explanation of how Roland Barthes' semiotic theory of myth is applied. As a support for the validity of the data, researchers also use Jean Baudrillard's hyperreality theory to help represent the research results that have been obtained.

Practically, this research also has important significance covering various audiences, such as for academic readers, and general readers. Within the scope of academic readers, the researchers hope this research can make a new contribution in the branch of semiotics. Later, this research can be used as literature that supports new research in the future. Not only that, the significance for the general reader is no less important. This research is expected to provide new insight and knowledge for many audiences, namely related to the existence of signs that represent something. As the result of research on *Mad For Makeup*'s Instagram videos related to Spotless concealer product, which are persuasive media, it also has a representation of beauty.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

1. Semiotics

Semiotics is a branch of linguistics that discusses signs. According to Cobley and Jansz (2002) in Ruhiat (2022), signs can be found in language in any media, for example in audio and visual. More clearly, semiotics explains how a medium in language forms a sign system, conveys the meaning, as well as how the two are related to each other. As will be applied to the data in this research.

2. Myth

Myth is one of Roland Barthes' famous semiotic theories. Roland Barthes' semiotic theory is closely related to social values, so it is related to the culture contained within it. Discussing a culture, according to Chandler (2002), the existence of myths really helps people to comprehend the world in which they

live. This theory is very suitable for understanding the social values contained in many medias of language.

3. Hyperreality

Nuraini and Listiani (2022) say this theory can be understood as the existence of a unity between signifier and signified that can form a hyperreality contained in a media. Asharudin (2023) tells the Budrillard's hyperreality theory explained that reality has been replaced by the influence of the media. The high use of mass media, television, and the internet, can affect the perception of reality. This is reinforced by the influence of the consumerist culture that has developed in society. People will assume that what is in the media becomes more real than the existing reality.

4. Beauty

Nowadays, beauty is defined as a form of appearance that is necessary and important for a person to have. According to Hermawaty (2016) in Amini (2020), a body is claimed to be beautiful not only based on the beauty of the face, but also accompanied by skin that is identically white, smooth and firm, as well as a body shape that is curved and highlight certain organs. With this statement, it is not uncommon to know in society about beauty stereotypes. These stereotypes are considered to have quite an important role. Because not infrequently, many people change their appearance to conform to these standards.

5. Instagram

Payuk and Zakrimal (2020) explain that Instagram is a social media application that is widely used by many people. With Instagram, people can share photos, videos and other networking things. These features can be used by all users equally. It can be used for personal or group purposes.