CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents theoretical framework and review of related studies which are related to semiotic studies on advertisement. Firstly, the writer provides an overview of semiotics as the first part of review in related theories. The second is an explanation about the theoretical framework of Barthes' semiotics which is used by the writer in analyzing the semiotics in Tri Indie+ Commercial. Basically, there are three stages of Barthes' semiotics, they are: textual analysis, picture analysis and interpretation. In addition, the writer puts some supporting theories of linguistic aspects in order to do a deeper analysis on the language level. They are the theory of lexicon from Jackendoff, morphology by McCarthy and syntax by Carnie. In addition, as the last part of this chapter the writer reviews some of related studies which are related to semiotics in advertisement.

2.1 Review of Related Theories

2.1.1 Semiotics

Semiotics is a general philosophical theory of signs and symbols that deals especially with their function in both artificially constructed and natural languages and comprises syntactic, semantics and pragmatics (Merriam-Webster, 2014). It is the study of how meaning is created, not what it is. Semiotics is used to dissemble the sign and signifier in the image. Sign and signifier are important in semiotics. A sign consists of anything that generates meaning. Saussure believes that language is constructed by arbitrary signs, the most important construction in

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semiotics; hence it is considered as a model. For him, sign is a physical object with meaning consisting of what he termed the 'signifier' and the 'signified'. The signifier is a term for the sign itself; the images as we, the audience, perceive it and the members of the same culture, who share the same language (Fiske 1990, p. 43).

The term semiotics (often also referred to as 'semiology'). Semiology is the study of the sign and symbol while semiotics is the object of the semiology. Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), a Swiss linguist, gave the subject its name when he first taught the 'Course in General Linguistics' in the University of Geneva. Saussure investigated the nature of sign and the laws governing them. He split signs into signifiers (sound and images) and signified (concepts).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Barthes' Semiotics

Barthes initially describes his semiotic theory as an explanation of "myth" because he always relates every sign he analyzed to what happen in the past that makes certain sign represents a particular thing. His approach provides a great insight into the use of signs, particularly those channeled through the mass media. Barthes was interested in seemingly straightforward signs that communicate ideological or connotative meaning and perpetuate the dominant values of society. He also sought to decipher the cultural meaning of a wide variety of visual signs.

Therefore, in his semiotic theory, he does not include the text as the only source of analysis but he also uses visual sign since the semiotics purpose itself is to interpret signs. The text and image which are used by the advertisement

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producer is not without any reason. Either it must represent certain ideology that wants to be spread by owner of the product or the advertisement producer, as Barthes believes that the significant semiotic systems of a culture lock in the status quo (Barthes, 2011).

What is identical from Barthes theory, as well as Saussure semiotics, that both of them deal with the concept of Signifier and Signified. What makes Barthes differ from Saussure is that he also applies the denotative and connotative meaning of text and visual as the main source of his analysis. Barthes claims that every ideological sign is the result of two interconnected sign systems. The first system is strictly descriptive while the signifier image and the signified concept combining to produce a denotative sign.

Barthes convinces that only those with semiotic savvy can spot the hollowness of connotative signs. They go without saying. They do not explain, they do not defend, and they certainly do not raise questions (Barthes, 1977). Therefore, it is up to the semiologist to expose or deconstruct the mythic system. That makes the advertisement we watch in television now looks like pretending current condition in natural order of things.
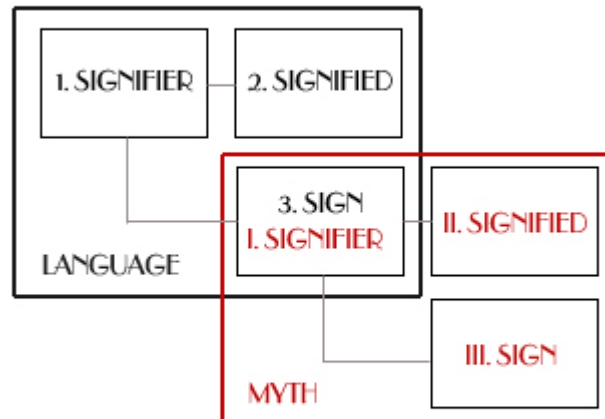
Below is the diagram of Barthes' semiotic theory:

Figure 1: Barthes' Semiotics

From the diagram, we can see that the three of them are connected to each other. These are the elements of the semiotics. Signifier is about the apparent things, something that we can see, but signified is the concept that lies on our mind.

On the first line, we can see signifier and signified. It lies on the language level where we can find two kinds of meaning; denotative and connotative. It is the linguistic system which Barthes calls language object. The second line deals with picture. There are the terms coded iconic and non-coded iconic. Non-coded iconic meaning is conveyed through the mechanical process of reproduction while the coded iconic meanings are introduced by human intervention - lighting, pose, camera angle etc. The last line is a matter of the cultural meanings of signs or familiarly called as myth. These cultural meanings derive not from the sign itself,

but from the way that society uses and values the signifier and the signified. We draw meanings from the stock of images, notions, concepts and myths which are already available in the culture in a particular context and at a particular time

In short, there are three main stages of semiotics analysis proposed by Barthes. The writer gives the brief explanation below

2.2.1.1 First Stage (Textual Analysis)

The first stage of the Barthes' analysis on semiotics is from the text analysis, which is then divided again into denotative and connotative meaning. Denotation is pure as long as description remains functional, produced with a view to an actual use (Barthes, 1990). In other words, it simply defines something based on its elements and functions. Barthes emphasized that, the only thing we need to read the message it conveys denotatively is the knowledge bound up without perception. When we analyze a text in denotative level, we may not put our own perception in describing the text. All we need is just analyzing it from the word and sentence structure.

Contrast to denotative, in connotative meaning we can find a poetic mutation that led us to link the qualities of its matter to a second meaning (Barthes, 1990). It is a commonly understood cultural or emotional association that some words or phrases carry. There is clearly another meaning implied in a statement and this meaning exists at the level of connotation.

2.2.1.2 Second Stage (Picture Analysis)

The second stage is picture analysis, which is covering the picture used as coded iconic or non-coded iconic. The non-coded iconic is a mediator to handle

the words, images and objects in the sign equation. It is the initial element triggering the process of investing meaning and thus making a sign. The union of the coded iconic and non-coded iconic is termed signification. This process of making meaning is, according to Barthes' interpretation of Saussure, arbitrary, a product of social convention. The sign can be interpreted as the value of the expression, and is a product of exchange and comparison among dissimilar words and ideas (Barthes, Image, Music and Text, 1977).

The coded iconic in the relationship Barthes imposes is defined as "the mental representation of a thing or officially said as a concept" (42-3). It incorporates such elements as practices, techniques, and ideologies. It is this component of the triadic relationship, which triggers Barthes' discussion of metalanguages (languages about languages—that is, a discourse employed to make sense of another discourse).

2.2.1.3 Third Stage (Interpretation)

The last stage is the interpretation. Here, Barthes uses the term myth to analyze his work. The term myth here is not as old as what is meant by the myth itself. Myth here is to connect what we analyze with what happens in our society whether in the present or the past. It makes us know how the condition of society reflects or influences the text and image production especially in advertisement.

2.2.2 Lexicon

It is the *meaning* of a word in relation to the physical world or to abstract concepts without reference to any sentence in which the word may occur. It is

related to the words or vocabulary of a language (Jackendoff cited in Mirabela, 2012).

2.2.2.1 Foreign words

Foreign words are used in advertisements to emphasize the origin of the product or exclusiveness of the product in relation to particular country:

"La crème de la crème of lip color."

French word 'crème' evokes the impression of good-class French cosmetics. Even more, the phrase 'crème de la crème' is taken from French and it means 'the best people or things of their kind' (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 2001).

2.2.2.2 Numerals

In many advertisements, we can see the use of numerals. It is necessary if the copywriters want to define the characteristics of the product exactly. Numerals are used to define quantity of various aspects, for example percentage of some substance in a product, number of years in connection to the length of the tradition of the product, the number of satisfied customers, etc.

2.2.2.3 Epithet

It is a descriptive word or phrase, which "An adjective expressing some quality, attribute, or relation, that is properly or specially appropriate to a person or thing; as, a just man; a verdant lawn." There are two types of epithets: *epithet constans* (commonly used stereotyped collocation, e.g. heavy rain, bright day) and *epithet ornans* (decorative). In advertising, most widely used are epithets like fresh, new, gentle, creamy, silky, delicious, beautiful, ideal, excellent, unforgettable, eternal, etc., and, accordingly, the gradational forms of them.

2.2.2.4   Adjectives

While reading the advertisement, the reader may notice the hyperbolic character of the language. This exaggeration causes increased number of comparative and superlative adjectives. *The product is better, nicer, newer, and tighter and the customer is happier and more satisfied*. The product offers more information, more entertainment, more comfort, more than any other product.

2.2.3 Morphology

Morphology is the study of word structure. It is a set of processes to create words (McCarthy, 2011).

2.2.3.1 Affixation

Affixation is the addition of prefixes, suffixes, and infixes to a root morpheme Bound morphemes that follow the root are **suffixes (**things like –ful, -ly, -ness in words like hopeful, quickly or weirdness), while morphemes that precede the root are prefixes (for example, *mis-* as in *misunderstand*).

2.2.3.2 Reduplication

In linguistics, it is a morphological process in which the root or stem of a word (or part of it) or even the whole word is repeated exactly or with a slight change. Reduplication is used in inflections to convey a grammatical function, such as plurality, intensification, etc., and in lexical derivation to create new words. It is often used when a speaker adopts a tone more "expressive" or figurative than ordinary speech and is often, but not exclusively, iconic in meaning. Reduplication is found in a wide range of languages and language

groups, though its level of linguistic productivity varies. Below are some of examples of reduplication as a kind of word form:

- "To *jaw-jaw* is always better than to *war-war*."

  (Winston Churchill, remarks at a White House luncheon, Washington, D.C., June 16, 1954)

- "Hands off the man,the *flim flam* man.

  His mind is up his sleeveand his talk is make believe."

  (Laura Nyro, "Flim Flam Man")

2.2.3.3 Blend

A **blend c**ombines two words to create a new word. *Smog* is a blend of *smoke* plus *fog*. *Mockumentary* combines *mock* and *documentary*.

2.2.3.4 Acronym

It is formed out of the first letter of each word of a phrase. It is common to hear someone *lol* at a good joke (from LOL – laugh out loud).

2.2.3.5 Clipping

It is the reduction of a word into one of its component parts. The recently-coint word "app" meaning "application for a mobile device" is clipped from "application".

2.2.3.6 Compounding

It combines two or more roots to make a new word, such as 'birdhouse or redneck'. A recently formed compound is 'pump head' which is a person who has lost mental acuity after being attached to a heart-lung machine during heart surgery.

2.2.4 Syntax

Basically, syntax is the rules by which signs are combined to make statements. If you consider the words of a language to be its signs, then its syntax is the rules which put signs together to make statements, ask questions, and produce other utterances. Syntax incorporates the grammar of phrases, clauses, and sentences. Producing and uttering sentences is an important part of how we make sense of our world. We articulate the meaning of our experience in words; in the process of articulate, we make (or discover) the meaning of the experience. The syntax is the exact structure of what we write as an essential part of its meaning. Change the structure and you have changed the meaning, at least slightly (Missouri, 2013).

2.2.4.1 Sentence Structure

2.2.4.1.1 Verb Phrase

Verb phrase is the most frequently used phrase for advertisement slogans. In making verb phrases, the advertisers use varying modifiers to modify the verbs. Carnie (2006: 70-72) stated that a verb phrase can have adverbs, nouns, and prepositional phrases as the modifiers. Below are some of the data of advertisement slogans employing verb phrase.

(1) Discover the power of active naturals (Good Housekeeping, June, 2011)

(2) Invented for life (Good Housekeeping, June, 2011)

(3) Stay strong. Stay alive. With Boost (Good Housekeeping, June, 2011)

(4) Challenge what's possible (Good Housekeeping, June, 2011)

2.2.4.1.2 Noun Phrases

In general, noun phrases in advertisements are far more complex than verb phrases. In advertising language, the interesting part of the noun phrase is the premodifying part, which is usually very complex and is characterized by certain unusual structural features. The complexity of pre-modification is based on the effort to catch, describe and specify the properties of the product in attractive way. In many cases, whole advertising text does not contain any verb; it consists only of noun phrases. Inside the noun phrase, clusters of two, three or more adjectives are possible:

(1) The look. The lash. The lore of Dior (Reader's Digest, December, 2011)

(2) Oversized brush over the top lashes (Reader's Digest, December, 2011)

2.2.4.1.3 Prepositional Phrases

Carnie (2006: 69) stated that most prepositional phrases followed by noun phrase as the modifier. Example :

(1) Stay strong. Stay alive. **With Boost**. (Good Housekeeping, October, 2011).

(2) For leg like pure silk. (Cosmopolitan, June, 2011)

(3) More for your money…always! (Cosmopolitan, June 2011)

2.2.4.1.4 Adverb Phrases

In general, adverbs are functioned as the modifiers in a sentence or to give further information about certain conditions. For example the word *quickly* which put after the verb *run* in the sentence *I run quickly* will explain about how I run. In slogan, adverb phrases can stand alone as the main phrase. Adverb phrases employed in order to give further explanation about the products.

2.2.4.1.5 Adjective Phrase

In general, adjectives appear inside noun phrases (Carnie, 2006: 42). Carnie also stated that in grammar, the function of adjective is to attribute properties to the item they modify. Moreover, since advertisements are not always about the perfect grammar, copywriters can make adjectives stand without nouns. Adjective phrases have almost the same function as adverb phrases. Adjective phrases in advertisement slogan give information of the characteristics of the products. The readers are expected to know the quality of the products and what make them special. Furthermore, adjective phrases on slogan only can inform the readers about the products like the adverb phrases do.

Here are some examples of adjective phrase:

(1)   The movie was <u>not too terribly</u> long.

(2)   A person <u>smarter than me</u> needs to figure this out.

(3)   The final exams were <u>unbelievably difficult</u>.

(4)   This pie is <u>very delicious</u> and <u>extremely expensive</u>.

(5)   Everyone was <u>extremely delighted</u> when the winner was announced.

(6)   The new outfit was <u>very pricey</u> but <u>really beautiful</u>.

2.2.4.2 Sentence Types

We may distinguish four sentence types: declaratives, interrogatives, imperatives and exclamatives. Following definitions of each of them are quoted from Quirk et al. 1990: 231. Declarative is a kind of sentences in which it is normally used for the subject to present and to precede the verb. Interrogative is a sentence which is formally divided in two ways: yes-no interrogatives (a question

which the answer is only yes or no), and wh-interrogatives (a question which needs more information than what is asked). Imperative is a sentence which commonly has no overt grammatical subject. Exclamative is a sentence which has an initial phrase introduced by what or how, usually with subject-verb order.

2.2.5 Advertisements

Advertisement is defined as any paid form of nonperson communication about an organization, product, service, or idea by an identified sponsor (Belch, 2004). He also explains that the *paid* aspect of this definition reflects a fact that the space or time for an advertising message generally must be bought. The nonperson component means that advertising involves mass media (e.g. TV, radio, magazines, and newspapers) that can transmit a message to large groups of individuals, often the same time. There are several reasons why advertising is such an important part of many marketers' promotional mixes. First, it can be a very cost-effective method for communicating with large audiences. Advertisement also can be used to create brand images and symbolic appeals for a company or brand.

Cook (2001) explains that in communication through television advertisement, language has always-physical substance of some kind, and though this substance – sound waves or marks – serves a trigger for the assignation of phonemes or graphemes by the receiver, allowing him or her to build the signs which create linguistic meaning, it carries other kinds of meaning too. Advertisement favors any mode of communication which is simultaneously powerful but indeterminate in this way. As we can see in television advertisement

or familiarly we call is as a commercial, we can also find picture which is not only for attractive purposes but also present semiotic meaning as the producer message to their audience.

2.3 Review of Related Studies

There are several studies which have been conducted in the field of semiotics particularly in advertisement. One of them is a study conducted by Martiana (2010), a student in Department of English, Faculty of Language and Arts Education, Indonesia University of Education. She studied about a semiotic analysis proposed by Barthes in A Mild 'Go Ahead' in printed advertisement to get the meaning of youth spirit presented by the advertisement. She focused on the two versions of A Mild advertisement; they are Bubble and Untuk Diri versions. Her study showed that the spirit of youth was represented by the use of young people as models; the use of warm (grey) color saturation that signifies young people as being hopeful; and the use of cool colors (green and light blue) to signify youth in both advertisements.

In 2011, Pramadyta, a student of Airlangga University, conducted a study about the beauty concept on Zinc commercial by using Pierce's semiotics. The purpose of this study was to reveal the phenomenon happened in publics about the stereotype of beauty concept in most shampoo advertisements in Indonesia. The focusing of her research would be in the portrayal of beauty concept in most shampoo advertisements in Indonesia through girl hair, the tomboyish concept in Zinc and the interpretation of the sign. She concluded that the commercial mostly showed about the portrait of the figure with new beauty concept from any beauty

concept ever in Indonesia about shampoo product advertisements rather than follow the stereotype of beauty concept that appears in the society. Here, Zinc commercial preferred to portrait the figure with the tomboyish concept or masculine side.

Another study which is used by the writer as her related studies is a study conducted by Correa (2011), a student of Australian Catholic University. She studied about the construction of gender identity in India through television advertisement by using the theory of Barthes' semiotics as her guidance. From her research, she concluded that all the advertisements involving domesticity emphasized the traditional role of woman as a wife and mother. Many women were brought up to accept the image of the subservient woman as natural and hence any personal or marital problems faced by women were attributed to their failure to live up to traditional norms of feminine behavior. Such advertisements served to reinforce the patriarchal ideology that marriage and domesticity were the ultimate goal for a woman.

The first study concerned more on the picture and how the color reflected the meaning that wanted to be spread by the advertiser through printed advertisement. The second study also focused on the picture on how it was reflected the beauty concept of most shampoo commercials in Indonesia. The last concerned on how traditional gender rule influenced the way of advertiser created an advertisement.

Although all of them analyzing different genre of product, different advertisement medium and different theories of semiotics but they have

something in common. All of them focused more on the analysis of picture in their discussion. The text analysis is only done by showing the meaning of the text, not the structure.

Therefore, in this study the writer concerns more on the text as the main part of persuasive tools by revealing the meaning and the structure of the text itself. In other word, we should also know how the advertiser arranges the text because the structure can also influence the meaning, not only the word chosen.