

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study attempts to analyze the commodification of nutritious milk for pregnant woman in an advertisement of *Prenagen* entitled “Dian Sastro's Happiest Moment with PRENAGEN mommy. In this chapter, the writer explains about the theory of Commodification by Jean Baudrillard first. This theory is applied to help in understanding the issue and strengthen the analysis. Review of some related studies also presented to show the distinguishing substance of this study from other studies.

2.1.1 Advertising and Commodification

Nowadays, most television viewers have adjusted to the advertisements. We decipher advertisements routinely, even automatically. The transparency of the advertising codes is critical to our daily routine when we are interpreting and deciphering advertisements. “Advertising is one of those relevant spaces: among the most flexible and mobile of spaces for re-investing life into the commodity form” (MacRury 116). Viewers or consumers will comprehend the process of making and taking meaning of advertisements differently depends on how they understand the advertisement itself.

Advertisement is one of the communication media in promoting and marketing a product. That is why the advertisement has to be

interesting, attractive, unique, and creative in order to get the consumers' interest to buy the products, which are being advertised. Advertisement, thus, is useful to promote the goods, and it also brings the sign value of the commodity in each brand. Goldman and Papson said that today advertising becomes a sign competition in order to offer based on the necessity of differentiating products. In selling consumer commodities, advertisement has been concentrated on the image, the look, and the sign (Goldman and Papson 6). Moreover, advertiser has brilliantly made an advertisement looks like it is important for society in which language which appeals to mere truth only arouses impatience to get down to the real business behind it. Then, words which are not a means seem meaningless, the others seem to be fiction, untruth" (Durham and Kellner, 58).

Advertisements routinely have an abstract meaning system from their context, place them into relations of formal exchange, engineer a transfer of meanings to construct an equivalency, and propose a reified commodity sign. In this sense, we see the advertising framework imitates the logic of the commodity form (Goldman and Papson 275). In other words, advertising offers a 'commodity' as something that is useful and therefore valuable to human life. The term commodity has come to describe the things when they are produced, processed, and spread out for market trading.

Baudrillard argued that the primary function of goods is not focuses on the usefulness or benefits, but more than that, it is now

indicating the goods as sign-value that spread through advertisement (Hidayat 61). Starting from the sign-value, the commodification concept appears and becomes the concern of this study. Commodification in this study appeared that the nutritious milk substitute the role of fresh milk and sold in society.

2.1.2 Commodification

In contemporary society, the consumption of mass produced commodities is a fundamental factor of the modern economy. The term commodity here means as something that has been produced for the purpose of being exchanged or sale. “The commodity sign is formed at the intersection between a brand name and a meaning system summarized in an image” (Goldman and Papson 3). Selling products of goods and services by giving a brand name itself becomes subject to an economic circuit of exchange, systematically creates meaning, and even constructs a wide variety of identities that spread in society through sign value of products. By giving a brand name that known as a product sold in society, it can indicates as the new need and become a necessity product that should buy or consume by people.

Products as the commodity itself has two value that attached directly, they are use-value and exchange-value. Use-value refers to the direct usefulness or of an object or service. It can also be called as the functional value. Yet, there is also an indirect usefulness, that is the capacity of one object or service to be exchanged for another which is

called its exchange value. In other words, products are produced in order to be exchanged for getting profit. When people consume products for the sake of their exchange values, it will obviously create the disease that is called false-need, it means that you consume things when you do not really need it; it creates false consciousness in your head.

In this study, the writer uses theory of Commodification and sign-value by Jean Baudrillard. Baudrillard focuses on the consumption as basic aspect in our social order. It means that consumption is the main power in structuring our behavior. Baudrillard offers the concept of sign-value. Sign-value refers to the social status as a commodity confers on its owner (Tyson 62). This makes a commodity is no longer purchased for its utility and price, but also for its 'symbol'. For example, nowadays most people prefer to buy *NIKE* shoes rather than non-branded shoes. Here, this shoes commodified the exchange value, people buy this thing because of the symbol of lifestyle, not the use-value of the shoes. Therefore, when someone picks *NIKE* shoes, there is a symbol of luxury that has attached in the *NIKE* product. It can be seen from the price that can only reached by middle to high class people.

To complete the use-value, exchange-value and sign-value, Baudrillard adds the concept of commodification. If commodity can be briefly defined as 'something that is sold in order to make a profit', then commodification can be defined as a process that objects, whether it is physical either non-physical such as experience, can be traded as long as it

gets profit (Allan, 305). In consumption, the producer or advertiser makes the commodities as something that is not inspired by a desire of people, but they produced for exchange under market-like conditions in order to generate a profit. As Lee explains,

“It is thus the *Commodification* of products, or the fact that they are first produced in order to be exchanged for profit. In short, consumer goods have a social meaning, and that social meaning is, in the first instance, always contingent upon their status as commodities.” (xi)

Almost all aspects in our daily life are pictured in advertisement, then advertiser offer products and services to help or complete people's needs. But, not all of them are usefull in our daily life and if the consumption is excessive, in a sense of less function that the product has, it becomes false need. Through advertisements, every goods or products have their own meanings that they have to combined with the other goods and created a signs that aimed to create desire.

Assimilating the new needs that have been supplied by the cultural industries and have been accepted as the dominant ideology, Marcuse argued that capitalism's strengthened control over greater areas of working-class life (Lee, 30). Goods and services were designed with the high and seductive imagery in commercial product. As though people are going to believe that the products is necessary for life. We are all attracted

by the symbolic meanings that projected through the commodities offered to us.

2.1.3. Semiotics

Semiotics is the study of sign. Semiotics is well suited to the tasks of both constructing and deconstructing sign values because it mimics the structural mechanics of both the commodity form and advertising form (Goldman and Papson 275). Sign itself has a meaning as something that can be interpreted as having a meaning. In this theory, we should interpret what the meaning of sign behind the text. “The process of recording ideas, knowledge, or messages in some physical way is called *representation* in semiotic theory” (Danesi 3). The writer chooses this theory to analyze the meaning through language, symbols and images that appear behind the message of the advertisements. Furthermore, semiotics teaches us that every subject in this world brings signs and each sign produces its meanings. Therefore, this theory emphasizes that reality cannot be taken from granted because reality itself is a system of sign. Semiotic theory underlines that meaning does not naturally come from books, computers, or audio-visual rather that meaning actively created by us through complex interpretation codes (Chandler 15).

Semiotics by Roland Barthes is chosen to reveal the myth on the *Prenagen's* advertisement. His concept in mythologies is provided to explain how meaning is produced and how myth is worked in society. Semiotics divided into three levels of signification, namely denotative,

connotative and myth. Denotative level is the first system and expression of signifier. Denotative level explores what we see or hear in the image. Then, the connotative level is showing about the signs and value of the images in the text, it constructed and produced the myth. The myth level will reveal the relation of denotative and connotative level and interpret the representation of pregnancy. Myths involve an attempt to deconstruct the ways in which codes operate within particular popular texts, with the aim of revealing how certain values, attitudes and beliefs are suppressed.

Barthes' basic methods consist of three big branches of signs. There are linguistic message, non-coded iconic message and coded iconic message. Linguistic message is about the caption, the labels, or press title that appears in the image or text. Barthes believes that linguistic message is not illustrated by the image, instead "it is the text that amplifies the connotative potential of the image" (Storey 123).

This linguistic message level is divided into two, anchorage and relay. Anchorage almost appears with bigger caption than others do, it can construct the ideology to people. Anchorage holds the responsibility of how message is signified by the readers. Relay is to explain the function of the text or product and also completes the information. Besides, relay is the additional text written to extend the power of anchorage, which Barthes refers as 'images and texts stand in a complementary relationship' (Barthes, 41).

Non-coded iconic message can be interpreted as literal meaning, this level is similar to denotative level which the image itself appears in the text, known as visual message without any code. Coded iconic message is the symbols that appear in the image and it can reflect as connotative level or symbolic code. Whereas, myth is the ideology level that reveals the 'values and interests of the dominant groups in a society' (Storey, 119).

2.2 Related Studies

Review of related studies is needed to obtain important additional information of the study that also uses related theory and study object. The first previous related study is journal entitled *Advertising Fantasy: Consuming Passion – “Consumed” Desire* written by Amitava Sengupta and Sonali De. It focused on the symbolic meaning through advertising in Bengali, India. The journal concentrated on the symbolic consumption of advertising because symbols require agreement in meaning for the social construction of reality. Through advertising, people have an opportunity to construct, maintain and communicate their identity and social meanings in consuming commodities. The object of this study is the advertisements that were published in Bengali periodicals of four time periods in 1947-1948, 1971-1972, 1991-1992 and 2008-2009. Those periods provided an interesting sample of the function of market and consumer behavior. The first period was characterized by some major social or economic changes in Indian economy, while the last phase represents the current scenario. In the recent advertisements, globalization becomes the major influence for the consumers that

trigger them to become more consumptive toward luxury items. This condition is very different at the past, where the consumer just consumes the local goods through the advertising. The specific objectives of this journal were to see how meanings of commodities are created through symbolic association of ideological signs in the advertisements and to find the trend of this change over the period. The research showed the symbolic meanings that are associated with products, especially in garments, cosmetics and self-care products, jewelry, and banking and financial services. The symbolic meaning in this journal operated into two directions, it has role to construct the symbol in society and the self identity each people.

Moreover, the study found that there are values of the commodities as the objects of the individual needs and they are related to the transformation of lifestyle, living space, relationships, identities and bodies. The finding of this journal indicates that the value of commodities change every year and make a process for the consumer to choose and construct the meaning of products. The consumption of symbolic meaning, particularly through the use of advertising as a cultural commodity, provides the individual with the opportunity to construct identity and social meanings. In consumption, products are the objects of gratification need.

Next, the related studies is a thesis from Vema Novitasari entitled *The Commodification of Tourism in Taman Safari Prigen: A Barthesian Semiotics Analysis of Taman Safari Prigen's Brochure* (2013). This thesis focused on the green tourism spot in Indonesia, especially ecotourism that becomes interested to

be aware to the environment. She took the object of her thesis is Taman Safari Prigen's brochure that issued in 2012. This thesis aimed to explain how Taman Safari Prigen commodified tourism as portrayed in its brochure. This thesis also used the Roland Barthes' semiotics to analyze the myth of the image and it interpreted the signs that contain in a travel brochure. After found the findings that gained from the semiotic, she revealed the ideology behind a brochure by using Jean Baudrillard's theory on commodification. According to this thesis, Novitasari argued that tourism displayed as something useful by having a fun holiday, then it becomes a commodity that has a sign value attached directly into the tourism. This thesis only focused on the selected images in brochure, and chosen four sets of images that displayed the interaction between human and animals. The findings of this thesis were the Taman Safari Progen's brochure offered a place where human interaction and relationship that established during the trip, education and reservation can happen in the same place. Then it made the value that a feeling by visiting Taman Safari and doing those activities, the visitors feel like they have already done to take the responsibility to the nature or environment. The meaning 'responsible' here by Novitasari explained that this statement was not mean that Taman Safari Prigen does not give any contribution to the wildlife, however, the agenda of wildlife conservation can be wider and longer than merely visiting a nature-based theme park. This thesis also summed up that tourism was approach to find out what is actually happens in our daily life but most of us have overlooked. Moreover, based on the Taman Safari Prigen's brochure, it can be

implied that wildlife has become something that distant from our daily reality, we only accessed through the textual references such as story books or media.

The last related study is the article namely *Mediating Science and Nature: Representing and Consuming Infant Formula Advertising in China* written by Qian Gong and Peter Jackson. They analyzed the representation and consumption of infant formula advertising on Chinese television. The research found that consumers decode the message of advertisement based on their experience and knowledge. The issues of food scare of 2008 in China became the background of this journal to analyze how the Chinese dairy industry encodes messages of food safety and quality in their infant formula (baby milk). They analyzed the content of advertising through texts and images and used focused groups discussion and interviewed parents and grandparents to understand how consumers decode in baby care. The research is done by emphasizing on group discussions with parents and grandparents of babies and young children (aged three months to two years) in Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan province, conducted in February and March 2010 and March 2011. The result showed that Chinese consumers are critical with the representations of nature in the advertisements and that their decoding of the message was shaped by their experiences in childhood and knowledge of rural environment. While some consumers were doubtful with the health claims and childcare's advice offered by some brands in their promotional strategies. It showed that the people are still doubtful with the products offered by advertiser. This journal has the same object of analysis with this study, that is

infant formula. It also relates infant formula as food for people in consuming nutrition.

Related to this study, all the previous related studies mentioned above have the same research objective to interpret the advertisement. Those journals are used as the reference to strengthen the writer's argument in order to analyze advertisement and as viewpoint to reveal how the advertisement constructs the society's mind in consuming products or goods. But, unlike those related studies, this study focuses more on content analysis by using semiotics. In other words, this study has specific focusing on the product of nutritious milk or instant food and eating behavior during pregnancy.