

**A SEMIOTIC STUDY ON FOUNDATION PRODUCT VIDEO  
ADVERTISEMENT**

**THESIS**



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services to create advertisements as attractive as possible, both in print or electronic media. The attractive advertising and good marketing strategy depend on unique, creative, and interesting visual arts.

The analysis of advertisements is an interesting study to learn. Because as we know, through the advertisement, there are many hidden messages that the advertisers want to convey through a sign, symbol, or language. The interesting thing about the advertisement is not only in the use of language but also in the selection of visual images. In creating visual images, there are many things to consider, such as object selection, color selection in advertisements, product photo placement, etc. It needs to be well considered by an advertiser so that consumers can understand the aims and objectives contained in the advertisement. Besides that, the advertisements are made to look more attractive so they can make customers interested in the products.

According to Boorstin (cited in Dyer, 2009, p. 66), the visual image contained in the advertisement is more interesting than the original. It means that in this era, the advertisers succeeded in creating attractive visual images. The visual images depicted in the advertisement were more interesting than the original product. The advertisers use visual images as a medium for delivering messages contained in advertisements. However, in reality, there are many customers do not understand the message implied in the advertisement, and this makes the researcher interested to analyze advertisements because there are many hidden messages through a sign in the advertisement.

Research on language and visual advertising has been a favorite topic for some researchers in a few decades. Some of the researchers analyzed the signs contained in advertisements using semiotics theory. Semiotics is a favorite topic for some researchers because not all signs can be understood, and not all messages can be delivered well. For example, in mass communication, semiotics can also be used to analyze films, advertisements, music, picture, and other unique and interesting fields.

Research on advertising using the theory of semiotics is not the first thing to be done. Many studies have discussed advertising using semiotics theory. Yasin (2011) conducted a semiotic study using triadic-concept by C.S Pierce. The data that he analyzed taken from education advertisement on-campus magazine, and he took seven pictures to be analyzed. The result is in the education advertisement on-campus magazine in each university explaining the visions, programs, and facilities found on campus.

Furthermore, Eriana (2015) also analyzed semiotic. She used triangle of semiosis process from Charles Sanders Pierce's theory to analyze the sign in the advertisement. The source of the data in her research is the perfume advertisements, and she takes 29 pictures to analyze. In her research, she analyzed the icons and symbols contained in the perfume advertisement, and she found 29 icons and 23 symbols from 29 advertisements. From her research, she states that the icon gives a direction to get the meaning of the advertisement and the symbol as the effect of the icon in interpreting sign.

Lestari (2016), analyzed about semiotic in KFC advertisement posters. She also used triangle of semiosis process by C.S Pierce in analyzing the data. She discussed the icon and symbol in the advertisement and took 15 images of data to analyze. The result of this study, she found the icon and symbol in the 15 images of KFC advertisement. She also used a questionnaire to interpreting the meaning of the advertisement. Fourth, Ali (2017) analyzed semiotic by using a semiotic theory from Roland Barthes. He analyzed the data by using denotative and connotative meanings. The source of the data taken from the Wardah Cosmetics advertisement, and he took five videos to be analyzed. The result of this study is in the five videos of the Wardah cosmetics advertisement. He found 12 sentences that consist of denotative and connotative meaning from the video.

Agustini (2017) analyzed semiotic by using a theory from Saussure about signifier and signified and supporting theory by Leech about the structure of advertising. The data that she analyzed taken from Maybelline lipstick advertisement, and she took three pictures to be analyzed. The result of the study, she found that the verbal and non-verbal signs are related to each other. The relationship between verbal and non-verbal signs will help the readers understand and figure out the messages. And the last, Pauzan (2018), analyzed about semiotic by using the theory from C.S Pierce. He used triadic-concept in analyzing the data. The data of the study taken from John Wick's film. The result of the study, he found all the categories of signs based on C.S Pierce's theory, namely, icon, index, and symbol. In his research is he found 16 icons, 12 indexes, and 9 symbols, but he only analyzed 5 icons, 3 indexes, and 3 symbols.

Yasin (2011), Eriana (2015), and Lestari (2016) examined semiotic in the advertisement by using the theory of C.S Pierce. In semiotic theory from C.S Pierce, there are three categories of the sign, namely; icon, symbol, and index. But from three studies, they only analyzed two categories of signs that is icon and symbol. Pauzan (2018) also examines semiotic by using the same theory from Pierce. In his research, he found nine kinds of signs, but he only analyzed three signs, that is; icon, index, and symbol. So, for further research, it needs to research in the other field to find the other categories of signs from C.S Pierce, especially in the advertisement or the other field which has never studied before. Ali (2017) also discussed semiotic by using Roland Barthes's theory. He discussed denotative and connotative meanings. But, his research focused more on verbal expression in the video. And the last is Agustini (2017), she analyzed semiotic by using Saussure's theory, but her research is limited because she only uses three images as her research data. In addition, her research is also limited in lipstick product advertisements and only one brand of cosmetics.

Based on previous research, all of them already analyzed semiotic by using various semiotic theory. Most of them used semiotic theory from C.S Pierce and Roland Barthes. Only one study used semiotic theory from Saussure. In addition, some studies that used beauty products as the data of the research are more focused on one cosmetics brand. In this study, the researcher used semiotic theory from Ferdinand de Saussure to analyze the data. However, what distinguishes this research and previous research is the data. In this study, the researcher used advertising for foundation products from several famous brands such as Covergirl,

Maybelline, and Make Up For Ever. The selection of the advertisement as the main data of this research because, in the advertisement, there are many meanings and messages that the advertisers want to convey through the text and images contained in the advertisement. Besides that, advertising is also one of the media that often found in everyday life.

The researcher chooses the foundation product as the main data of research because, from some previous studies that discussed semiotic, it is still rare to use beauty products, especially foundation products, as the data of the research. Other than, it is very interesting in analyzing beauty product because, in these advertisements, the advertisers create unique and attractive words, visual image, and colors in the advertisement. In addition, research on the beauty product advertisement is very interesting because this advertisement is often found everywhere, and beauty products especially foundation products, are one of the products that are often used by women.

The researcher analyzed the signs in the advertisement by using the signifier and signified concept by Saussure. The signs in this advertisement contained with verbal and visual signs. The verbal sign, including the text, title, description of the product, slogan, and the visual element related to the picture and the color in the advertisement. The researcher also interprets the meaning and the message from the foundation product advertisement.









Semiotic introduced by Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sander Pierce. Saussure is a linguist from Europe. He uses the term semiology in analyzing signs, while the term semiotic itself used by Charles Sander Piece. Semiotics began to become the main approach in cultural studies in the late 1960s. Semiotic and semiology are the two terms that often used for the science of signs. The focus of both is the same, especially in analyzing the sign. It is just the term semiology is triggered by Saussure, and European people prefer this term, while the term semiotic more often used by Pierce and English people prefer this term.

Semiotics science is very useful for us to learn about the signs contained in the mass media. Semiotics is a science that learns about the signs found in human life. Semiotic studies have been widely known in many regions as well as at various levels, especially at the media level and distributing the message—the level of semantic production in the shift from the dated technologies of print to digital and electronic. In representation, semiotics experienced a shift from the mode of writing to the mode of image, etc.

## **2.2 Saussure's theory of Semiotics**

Ferdinand de Saussure, or commonly known as the father of modern linguistics, was born in Geneva on November 26<sup>th</sup>, 1857. He took studies in German and had taught in Paris for several years, and then back to Geneva in 1881. He is a linguistics professor at the University of Geneva. He founded semiology early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as linguistics, as a science that studies the role of signs as part of social life.





Verbal sign aspects found in our lives, one of the example is advertising. Verbal sign in advertising has a big influence on selling a product because, through a verbal sign, the customer will be easier to remember the product. In addition, through a verbal sign, advertisers will easily attract the attention of consumers in buying the products offered. The language in the advertisement was generally informal and colloquial. Sentences are usually simply constructed and short; it aims to make customers more easily understand the purpose of the advertisement itself.

#### **2.4 Visual sign**

The visual sign is a type of signs without words. This sign is generally referring to the picture. Visual signs in the advertisement are usually presented by the logo of the company, model, or product image. Image is one thing that is very identical to advertising because, through images, consumers are easier to know about the description of a product. Also, through the image, the customer can easily understand the message that the advertiser wants to convey.

Images are easier to understand and have a big influence than a word. According to Dyer (2009, p. 65), images have a very large influence on a product because, with images that are interesting and easy to understand, it will make consumers more interested in buying a product. The visual sign also found in a lot of beauty product advertisements. Usually, advertisers make attractive visual images to attract consumers' attention. In many beauty advertisements, the image which often displayed is a woman who has an attractive appearance. Besides that,













## **3.2 Data Collection**

In this part, the researcher shows the sources of the data, the instrument of the research, the step in collecting the data, and the step in analyzing the data.

### **3.2.1 Research Data**

The data in this research was verbal and visual data, which contained verbal and visual signs. For the verbal signs, the data was all of the words, sentences, and utterances contained in the foundation product advertisement. For the visual sign, the data was the pictures and selection of colors found in the foundation product video advertisement. The researcher chooses nine foundation advertisements consisting of three cosmetics brands.

### **3.2.2 Data Sources**

The source of the data was the foundation product video advertisement in social media, especially youtube. The data randomly selected from several famous beauty brands, such as; Covergirl, Maybelline, and Make Up Forever, that have been produced in 2016 and 2019. The researcher chooses three videos from each beauty brand. The data taken from the official youtube channel foundation product advertisement, they are; <https://youtube.com/user/CoverGirl>, <https://youtube.com/user/maybellinenewyork>, and <https://youtube.com/user/MakeUpForEverUSA>.

### **3.2.3 Research Instrument**

The instrument of this research was the human instrument. It means that, in this research, the main instrument was the researcher. The researcher became an









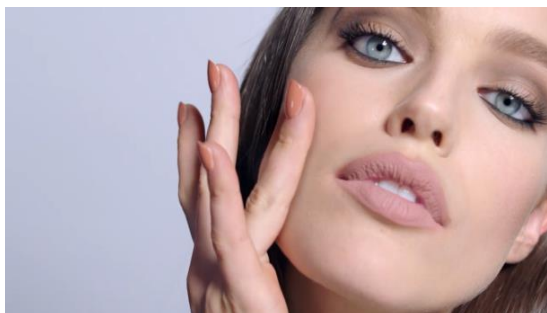




From data 1 above, the main focus of the signifier is the visual image of two foundation products with different shapes. As the signified from the data above, in this scene, the advertisers want to show about the packaging form of the foundation products produced by Covergirl's company. In this visual image, it can be seen that the foundation products from Covergirl have two different forms of packaging that are; packaging in bottles and packaging in a round shape. This scene shows that Covergirl's company gives readers the freedom to choose a foundation packaging product that suits customer needs. The advertisers show the shape and packaging of foundation products so that readers can find out the product packaging so that readers will easily find the foundation products if they want to buy these products.

#### 4.1.1.1.2 The images of the women models of the foundation products

The second signifier in the foundation product advertisement is the visual images of the women models in the advertisement. As we know, the beauty product is the product that is closely related to women's daily lives so that the models in the beauty product advertisement, most of the models are women. Based on the analysis that has been done by the researcher, there are 25 data shows the women models in the foundation advertisement. Most of the foundation product advertisements used the young women models as the models in the advertisement, only one advertisement that used old women models as the models of the foundation products advertisement. The image of the women models in the foundation advertisement has a different look. Here, the example of the analysis the images of the women models in the foundation advertisement:

**Data 2****Table 4.3 Signifier and Signified of Data 2**

<b>Types of Sign</b>	<b>Signifier</b>	<b>Signified</b>
Vis. Im	The visual image of a young woman model with brown hair using a full makeup look on the face.	Shows the foundation products when applied on the facial skin, which can make the appearance looks beautiful.

From the data 2 above, there is a signifier of the visual image of a young woman model with brown hair using a full makeup look on the face. As the signified from the data above, the use of makeup in this scene shows the results of using foundation products when applied to the face. It can be seen that the appearance of a young women model in the data above looks prettier and fresher using makeup. It also happens to customers when using makeup. The face will look fresher and more beautiful. In addition, in the data above, the advertisers display young women models as models in foundation advertisements that indicate the target customers of foundation products. A young woman model in the foundation advertisement shows that this foundation product was made for young women who like to use makeup, so this foundation product is suitable for































the above data makes it easier for readers to know the results of using foundation, so that it can attract the attention of readers to buy foundation products, especially for readers who like the final result of using a matte foundation.

#### **4.1.2 The Messages on the Foundation Products Advertisement**

To answer research question number two, the researcher elaborates the messages contained in the foundation product video advertisement based on the analysis of the signifier and signified on the previous discussion. In this research, there are nine videos of foundation product advertisements from several leading brand cosmetics, they are; Covergirl, Maybelline, and Make Up For Ever. Many advertisements, especially on the video, there is a verbal and visual sign. Through the verbal and visual signs in the advertisement, there are hidden messages that the advertisers want to convey to the reader. The advertisers create the advertisement as attractive as possible so that the readers can catch the messages from the advertisement.

From the foundation product advertisements shown in this research, there are several meanings that the advertisers want to convey. It is undeniable that three foundation products, which have different ways of displaying advertisements on their products, try to highlight the advantages of each product—every product designed to have its message meaning both verbal and visual.

Verbally, each foundation product video advertisement explains the benefits, product characteristics, the superiority of the product, and the target consumers they are looking for. Visually, each foundation product video

advertisement that is displayed focuses on how the product displayed can highlight the visual side regarding the type of product, product benefits, how to use the product, the model that represents the product, the expression of the product model, and the colors used as visualization the product. So that, from various scenes of this video advertisement, it is undeniable that there is a visual image displayed that cannot separate from the elements of the verbal text. It is shown that the visualization element is not enough to deliver the message of every scene of the video advertisement; additional elements of the verbal text are needed to make the advertisement more interesting.

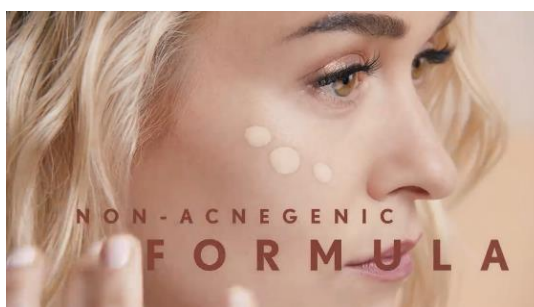
Based on the analysis that has been done by the researcher, there are hidden messages that the advertisers want to convey to the readers. The first messages are about the superiority of the foundation products. From the nine videos, all of them tell about the superiority of each product issued by each brand cosmetics. Almost all products have a maximum level of coverage, long durability, have many color choices that match the color of the skin, transfer-resistant, etc. The information about the strengths of the foundation's products is needed so that the reader understands the superiority of the product. In this research, there are 27 data tell about the superiority of the foundation product. Here, one of the example about the superiority of the foundation products:



**Data 14**

In the image above, it can be seen that the facial skin condition of young women models looks moist and healthy. It is shown that by using this foundation product, facial skin will look healthy and moisturized, and look brighter without oily on the face.

The third message in this advertisement is about the ingredients contained in the foundation product. In some foundation advertising scene, the advertisers show the ingredients used in foundation products aimed to convince the customers about the products. So, the customers will be more interested in buying the products. The researcher found 3 data in this research which shows the ingredients of the foundation product. The example of the data can be seen below:

**Data 15**





In this case, the researcher analyzed verbal signs in the form of the text contained in advertisements and visual signs that include the analysis of images contained in the advertisement. In the foundation product advertisement, the researcher found signifier and signified meaning from the verbal and visual signs in the advertisement. Most of the foundation product advertisement shows the superiorities of the product, the results of the product, and the formula of the product.

In business activities, we realize that many product innovations continue to be developed by one company with other companies, causing business competition. The effect of product innovation will create a more competitive climate both from the perspective of technology, price, and both so that the product reaches more markets, and the potential for higher competition stimulate product innovation (Castaño, Méndez, & Galindo, 2016). With high competition in the business world, it requires a company to be more creative and have a competitive advantage compared to other companies to be able to compete in global business (Dwianti, Lestari, & Nurfebiaraning, 2015). The presence of advertisements is a form of communication carried out by companies to promote the products they sell. With advertising, the company indirectly uses a sign to send messages about the product to be marketed so that people can interpret the sign. Therefore, cosmetics companies try to design cosmetic products with benefits and characteristics that have the advantage of representing the target consumers sought.



Product innovation also needs to be published in the form of advertisements. Submission of advertisements can be implemented in a variety of media like; electronic media, print media, etc. One very interesting from advertising is the presence of video advertising media. In advertising, many factors influence these advertising activities. The world of advertising is currently very widespread, with a variety of ways of presentation and media used so that in terms of competing for creative strategies are needed (Putri, 2015). Therefore, the most important elements in advertising are not just effective creative visual designs but also verbal language in the advertisements themselves, which are considered important as a way to get consumers' attention and represent the product. The most important element in advertising must focus on visual and textual appeal to attract the attention of consumers (Levyda & Ismi, 2020).

In delivering advertisements, the researcher needs to analyze semiotics both in their visuals and the use of verbal language. Furthermore, to find out the meaning of each of these signs, the researcher used a semiotic theory from Ferdinand de Saussure about the signifier and signified concept. The interesting thing in this research is the researcher not only analyzed the verbal signs in the advertisement, but the researcher examines more deeply the visual elements that strengthen the meaning displayed in the advertisement. Saussure's semiotic concept describes a signifier aspect which is closely related to the physical, tangible content of the advertised product. Then signified, trying to see the meaning revealed through the concepts, functions, or values contained in the advertised product. Therefore, Saussure tries to examine the relationship between

signifier and signified as one entity. From the two components, customers can interpret the sign of each advertisement displayed by a product.

The researcher found that between the signifier of the verbal signs and visual signs are related to each other in creating the meaning of the signified. The signifier of verbal signs, both in the form of text and utterance described the characteristics of the foundation product, both in the form of the formula contained in the product or the advantages of foundation product. Meanwhile, the signifier of visual signs in the form of product images and advertising models aim to give an idea to the customer about the shape of the product, how to use the product, and the shades of the foundation colors so that the customers are interested in buying the product. These two signs are related to one another because, through verbal and visual signs, the customer will be easier to understand the purpose of the advertisement. The findings in this study seem reminiscent of previous related studies, which state that the relationship between verbal and visual signs is interrelated to each other to understand the meaning of the advertisement (Agustini, 2017).

After analyzing the signifier and signified and also the meaning and the message of foundation advertising. The researcher concluded that in cosmetics advertisements, especially in foundation advertisements, women are shown as beautiful figures. All kinds of beauty products made to support a woman's appearance to be able to look beautiful and attractive. Allah SWT does not forbid women to make up and beautify themselves as long as it is not excessive because









advertisers make advertisements as attractive as possible to attract the attention of customers to buy the products or services offered; besides, through these advertisements, the advertisers also have hidden messages conveyed through these advertisements. To find out the meaning and message contained in advertisements, we can analyze it by using semiotic theory. There are many semiotic theories put forward by experts such as Ferdinand de Saussure, C.S Pierce, Roland Barthes, etc. The future researcher can use a different theory or compare two theories to analyze the semiotic signs in subsequent studies. Furthermore, research on semiotics is very interesting. The researcher suggests analyzing about semiotics by linking it to the use of camera movement. In addition, the researcher also suggests analyzing semiotic by using different objects, such as; film, magazines, cartoons, songs, etc. Finally, the researcher hopes that this research can give a contribution to the next researcher who will conduct the semiotic approach.





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