

DENOTATIONAL AND CONNOTATIONAL MEANINGS OF THREE EYEBROW PENCIL ADVERTISEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

This research analyzed the denotative and connotative meanings of the eyebrow pencil advertisements. The theory of denotation and connotation is used to analyze the non-verbal signs in the advertisement using Barthes' semiotic theory. This research employs a descriptive qualitative method. The data for the research are three eyebrow pencil advertisements from several cosmetic brands, namely Maybelline, Revlon and L'oreal Paris, as the data of the analysis. These eyebrow pencil advertisements used several combinations of texts and sentences, as well as colors and images featuring famous models to represent the product that was advertised and the target consumers of the product. These advertisements were analyzed further to identify the denotative and connotative meanings within the signs of the eyebrow pencil advertisement. The result of the research showed that eyebrow pencil advertisements have denotative and connotative meanings to attract the market to buy the product.

Keywords: Connotative meaning, denotative meaning, eyebrow pencil, advertisement

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini makna denotasi serta konotasi yang terkandung di dalam iklan pensil alis. Penelitian menggunakan teori semiotika Barthes untuk mencari makna denotasi dan konotasi di dalam iklan pensil alis. Penelitian ini memakai metode penelitian deskriptif kualitatif. Penelitian ini memakai tiga iklan pensil alis dari beberapa merek kosmetik, seperti Maybelline, Revlon dan L'Oreal Paris sebagai analisis data. Iklan pensil alis tersebut memakai kombinasi teks dan kalimat, serta kombinasi warna dan foto model terkenal untuk merepresentasikan produk yang di iklankan dan target konsumen dari setiap produk. Iklan tersebut di analisis lebih lanjut untuk menentukan makna denotasi dan konotasi didalam tanda yang ada di iklan pensil alis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa semua iklan pensil alis tersebut menggunakan diksi yang mengandung makna denotasi dan konotasi untuk menyampaikan pesan yang menarik pembeli.

Kata kunci: Makna konotasi, makna denotasi, pensil alis, iklan

INTRODUCTION

In this current age, advertising has become part of our life. Advertising is a communication tool used by companies to persuasively engage with consumers by delivering the description and the features of the products, goods, and services in regards to the consumer's reception. (Moriarty, Mitchell, Wood, and Wells, 2019;

Novitasari, 2019). Advertisement is a form of communication, which is a vital part of advertising products to market the brand and deliver its services to the masses by persuasively informing the product's description (Wright in Fadillah & Sounvada, 2019).

Moriarty, Mitchell, Wood, and Wells (2019) state that there are three important functions of advertisement. First is identification, which is how the advertisement is introduced and identifies a product to the masses, the way the products are sold, whether through established stores or online marketplace. Second is information, which regards the description and the features of the product that is advertised. Third is persuasion, in which an advertisement must be able to persuade the consumers to grab their attention into buying the product. The persuasive nature of the advertisements is important to increase brand awareness so that the product is recognized and remembered by most consumers for a long time (Yohana, 2015).

Aside from promoting goods that also affect social life, advertisements must also be able to build product recognition within the public for a long-term period (Widyatama in Kurniawan, 2017), that advertisement is to build the product's image to be engrained within the society, so that the product is remembered in long-term as well as to build demand for the product. Furthermore, advertisement is built by combining verbal and non-verbal signs that contain messages into a media that will be conveyed to the masses.

Dyer (in Agustini, Netra & Rajeg, 2017) explains that advertisements is to be able to attract the consumers regarding the product that was advertised. Therefore, advertisements are made as attractive as possible to entice the consumers regarding the advertised product. This is done by including visual imagery such as images of the product and slogans that are related to the advertised product (Harris in Puspita, Nirwana & Abqoriyyah, 2019). These visual imageries from the advertisements can be considered as signs, and are divided into verbal signs and visual signs. These signs usually contain meaning and messages that the producer wants to convey to its consumers. To determine the meaning of the signs from the advertisements, a semiotic theory was used to uncover the messages of the signs from the advertisements.

This study is conducted to identify the denotation and connotation of eyebrow pencil advertisements. Eyebrow pencil advertisement is a feature of colors, texts, and slogans, as well as images of the product and the model who used the product, which is placed in order to persuasively grab the attention of consumers. These images can be considered as visual signs of the advertisements which can be analyzed using Barthes's semiotic theories to determine its denotative and connotative meanings. This research is conducted to find out the denotation and connotation meanings within the eyebrow pencil advertisement. The selected advertisements for the data analysis for this study are eyebrow pencil advertisements from Maybelline, Revlon, and L'oreal Paris. Barthes's semiotic theory to determine denotation and connotation meanings.

Semiotics is a field of study focused on something that can be interpreted as signs (Eco in Chandler, 2017). Signs can be considered something that can represent meanings that describe the actual messages or imagery meanings related to the object that was represented (Chandler, 2017). Barthes (in Syahdini, 2019) expresses that semiotics is used to describe and construe the relation between the signs and the object, which are usually related to the study of language.

Barthes (in Gravells, 2017) defined semiotic theory contains denotation and connotation. Denotation is the literal and actual meaning related to the definitions in the dictionaries, whereas connotation is the meanings that are implicit and associated with the values related to someone's thoughts and cultural contexts within a society (Gravells, 2017). To construe his opinion regarding semiotics, Barthes proposes a semiotic model known as the pattern of signification:

Signifier	Signified
Sign (Denotation)	
Signifier	Signified
Sign (Connotation)	

Figure 1. Roland Barthes' Pattern of Signification

As described in the above figure, Barthes (cited by Syahdini, 2019) states that a signification contains denotation, which is defined as the first order of signification. In the first order, denotation is comprised of two elements, signifier, which is the meaning that was contained in denotation, and signified, the system that creates a relation with signifier. The relation between denotative signifier and signified result in the second order of signification as connotation. Likewise with denotation, connotation also comprises of signifier, which is the signified in the first order of signification and signified as its connotative meaning.

Previous studies conducted are found to analyze the denotation and connotation meanings of the advertisements. One of these past researches is a study entitled “*Barthes’ Myth Interpretation in Nike ‘What Will They Say About You?’ Advertisement*”, which was conducted by Izniatih (2018). This research shed light on signifier, signified, connotation, denotation, and myth contained within the signs of Nike’s “*What Will They Say About You?*” television advertisement. This study used descriptive qualitative research and Roland Barthes’ semiotic theory to analyze the signifier, signified, meanings, and the myth of the advertisement. The result shows that the advertisement implied that women can do every challenge and obstacle related to sports, and were able to become the figure for women who hoped to achieve success in sports.

Another previous study was conducted by Asih (2016) entitled “*A Semiotic of the Advertisements of Bukalapak Compared to Tokopedia and Elevenia*” to find out the denotation and connotation meanings as well as the messages contained within the television advertisements for *Bukalapak*, *Tokopedia*, and *Elevenia* online stores. The research uses imperative qualitative methods with Barthes’ semiotic theory. The study reveals that each of the companies has a different approach in advertising their online stores, with *Bukalapak* focusing on the security of their website, *Tokopedia* for its variety of items offered in the store and *Elevenia* focusing on store discounts and cheaper prices over its competitors. In addition, *Bukalapak* has better reception by reviewers and consumers alike over other competitors, which shows that most people prefer to shop with the online store that has a better guarantee of security for its services and transactions.

Lastly was previous research entitled “*Semiotic Analysis on Fast Food Restaurant Advertisements*”, which was conducted by Sofiyah (2019). This research is conducted to find the denotation, connotation, and myth from the several posters of fast food restaurants. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method and uses Barthes’ semiotic theory to analyze the verbal and non-verbal signs of the advertisements. The result of the research shows that the advertisements were made to increase brand awareness and consumerism and relate their restaurants as the place that offers many fast-food products. In addition, several fast-food advertisements combine a range of different colors to affect the consumer’s mind and grab its attention into buying the product.

There are several similarities and differences between the previous research and this research. All three of these researches analyze the denotation and connotation meanings of the advertisements and use Barthes’ semiotic theory to determine the meanings within the signs. However, there are some differences between the previous research, in which the first two previous studies used television advertisements as opposed to poster advertisements. The previous research analyzed denotation, connotation, and myth, whereas this research is to find out the denotation and connotation meaning in the three poster advertisements. The second research only analyzed the denotation and connotation of the signs within the online store television advertisements. The problem investigated for the research is to answer what the denotative and connotative meanings are contained within the signs of eyebrow pencil advertisements using the framework of Semiotics.

METHOD

This study uses the descriptive qualitative research method, which is defined by Edmonds & Kennedy (2017) as a study that presents theories and opinions from experts to experiment with a social phenomenon. Denzim & Lincoln (2018) explains that qualitative research analyzes the events that happen in our daily lives and construes its issues and its characteristics to provide an answer to support the statement based on the phenomenon that is analyzed. Qualitative research requires theoretical statements from the experts and the perspective of the researcher in

analyzing the data (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2017).

The advertisements that are used as the data of this research come from several cosmetic brands such as Maybelline, Revlon, and L'Oreal Paris. The first data is the advertisement for Maybelline's Brow Ultra Slim 1.5 mm Defining Pencil, which was released in 2019. The second data came from Revlon which was released in 2019 and advertises Revlon's ColorStay Brow Pencil product. The third data is the advertisement from L'oreal Paris for the Brow Stylist Shape & Fill/Brow Pencil product, which is displayed in 2018. All of these advertisements featured several elements such as slogans, texts and images that were organized using elements of layout. In addition, these elements within the advertisements also contain meanings and messages that producers want to convey to their consumers.

The steps in collecting the data are: (1) Searching the eyebrow pencil advertisements on the internet, (2) finding three eyebrow pencil advertisements for the research data, and (3) downloading the selected eyebrow pencil advertisements used for the research. Identifying the denotation and connotation is the step for the data analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Denotation and Connotation

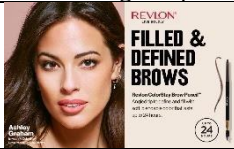
Table 1. Denotation and Connotation Meaning

Data	Verbal	Non-Verbal Signs	Denotation	Connotation
Maybelline (Brow Ultra Slim 1.5mm Defining Pencil)	Ultra		The word "ultra" can be designated as the adverb of "very", which means to increase the eyebrow's appearance significantly.	

Denotation:

The word "ultra" was defined in Collins Cobuild Dictionary as to emphasize something or someone has a quality to an extreme degree. In the context of the poster advertisement, the word "ultra" implied that their product is to increase the user's eyebrow appearance significantly.

Data	Verbal	Non-Verbal Signs	Denotation	Connotation
	Smoothen		The product would be able to smoothen out the user's eyebrows.	-
Denotation: "Smooth" was defined in Merriam-Webster as having a continuous even surface. This implied that the product can be used to smoothen out the user's eyebrows to make their eyebrows look as natural as possible, similar to when not using the eyebrow pencil.				
	Precisely		The product can improve the appearance of the user's eyebrow as precise as possible.	
Denotation: The word "precisely" is defined in Merriam-Webster as in a precise manner, which implies that the product is to produce the result and improve the user's eyebrow appearance in the most precise manner to make their eyebrows look as natural as possible. This can be seen in the model of the advertisements, in which her eyebrows are stylized while following the natural shape of her eyebrows.				
	Defined		The product is to increase the details of the user's eyebrows.	
Denotation: The word "defined" has a denotational meaning to inform that the product can increase the detail of their eyebrows to make them stand out and look more beautiful. This is also designated on the model of the advertisement having more detailed eyebrows.				
	Brows		The product was used for the user's eyebrows.	
Denotation: "Brows" is defined in Oxford Dictionaries as the part of the face above the eyes and below the hair. This meant that the product was made specifically for treating the consumer's eyebrows to improve their appearance.				
	Slim			Implied that the product would be able to keep the user's eyebrow as thin as possible.
Connotation: The word "slim" implies that the product can treat and keep the user's eyebrows as thin as possible while improving the details and appearance of their eyebrows to keep the appearance of their eyebrows as natural as possible.				
	1.5mm		Implied the tip of the eyebrow pencil is about 1.5mm.	-
Denotation: The word "1.5mm" specified the thickness of the eyebrow pencil's tip, which is about 1.5mm. This meant that consumers with slim eyebrows can use the eyebrow pencil to improve their appearance of the eyebrows.				

Data	Verbal	Non-Verbal Signs	Denotation	Connotation
	Pencil			The pencil was meant to be used for eyebrows.
Connotation: “Pencil” in the Cambridge Dictionary means a long, thin object, usually made of wood, for writing or drawing, with a sharp black or colored point at one end. However, in the case of this advertisement, the word pencil implied that the product is meant to be used for treating eyebrows and it is different from the regular pencils used for writing.				
Revlon (ColorStay Brow Pencil)	Filled			Implied that the product was made to fill the user's eyebrows.
Connotation: “Filled” means in Merriam-Webster to satisfy or fulfill. In the advertisement, the word “filled” implied that the product can be used to fill the consumer's eyebrows to increase the details of their eyebrows. This can be seen in the model shown in the advertisement, which has her eyebrows being more filled.				
	Defined		The product can be used to increase the detail of the user's eyebrows.	
Denotation: The word “Defined” in the advertisement is meant to imply to the consumers that the product can improve and increase the user's eyebrows to keep their appearance as refined as possible. This is designated on the model of the advertisement, which is shown to have more detailed eyebrows than usual, which can be used as an example after the product is applied.				
	Brows		The product was meant to treat the user's eyebrows.	-
Denotation: The word “Brows” is defined in Oxford Dictionaries as a person's eyebrow. This meant that the product was specifically designed to treat the user's eyebrows to improve the appearance of their eyebrows to make them more beautiful.				
	ColorStay			Implied that the product can keep the natural color of the user's eyebrows after use.
Connotation: The word “ColorStay” consisted of two words, “color”, which implied the color of the user's eyebrows, and “stay”, which means in Oxford Dictionaries as remains specified or position. This means that the product is to keep the user's natural eyebrows color even after using the product, which is also shown on the model of the advertisement having her eyebrows remain in natural color after using the eyebrow pencil.				
	Pencil			Implied that the pencil was specifically made for treating eyebrows.

Data	Verbal	Non-Verbal Signs	Denotation	Connotation
Connotation: The word “Pencil” implies that this product is meant for use with the user’s eyebrow to increase treat and increase the appearance of their eyebrows. It is different from the other pencil that are used for writing, as this particular product is made specifically for treating user’s eyebrows.				
L’Oreal (Brow Stylist Shape & Fill / Brow Pencil)	Define		-	Implied that the product can enhance the user’s eyebrows appearance with more details.
	Stylist			Implied that the product is to improve the appearance similar to after being treated by a stylist.
Denotation: The word “Stylist” implies to the consumers that their product is to produce an appearance similar to famous models after being stylized by makeup stylists. This emphasizes that their product can increase their appearance to look similar to famous artists.				
	Shape		The product can shape the eyebrows following the user’s natural eyebrows.	
Denotation: The word “Shape” is defined in Merriam-Webster as the visible makeup characteristic, which is the shape of the eyebrows. This implied that their product is to adjust the shape of their eyebrows according to their natural shape to make their appearance more natural. This is shown in the model of the advertisement with her eyebrows have been shaped by the eyebrow pencil.				
	Fill			Implied that the user can fill their eyebrows to increase the details of their eyebrows.
Connotation: The word “Fill” in Collins Cobuild Dictionary means to become or to make it full. In this case, the word implied that their product is to fill and increase the details of their eyebrows to make them thick and more detailed. This is emphasized in the model with her eyebrows being thicker and more detailed, which is done to showcase the result of the product after using it.				
	Pencil			Implied that the product is to style the eyebrows.

Connotation:

The word “pencil” has a different meaning compared to the actual definition, which means in Oxford Dictionaries as the instrument used to draw or write something. The word “pencil” implies that the product is specifically made for stylizing the consumer’s eyebrows to adjust their appearance to make their eyebrows look more beautiful.

Discussion

This research is conducted to fulfill the objective of the research which is to identify the denotation and connotation of meanings within the signs of the eyebrow advertisements. From the result of this study, the research uses semiotic theory to construe the messages that are contained within the signs of a media. This is supported by the statement made by Mayr (Trisnayanti et al., 2021), in which semiotics is a field of study that analyzes the meaning and relation with the social phenomenon in the human’s life contained within a symbol of the sign. In addition, Chandler (in Trisnayanti et al., 2021) expressed that signs are writings, verbal communications, and imageries that can interpret meanings and messages to be conveyed to their audience.

This research also identifies the denotative and connotative meanings that are contained within the sign of the eyebrow pencil advertisements. They contain denotation and connotation meanings that construe the purpose of a media to be delivered to the masses. In addition, there were several previous research that analyzed the denotation and connotation within advertisements, which are a study conducted by Izniatih that analyzed the signifier, signified, meanings, and myth in Nike’s advertisement, a study by Asih that focused on denotation and connotation meanings within online store advertisements and a research by Sofiyah that studied the denotation, connotation, and myth in fast food advertisements. These previous studies focused entirely on determining the denotation and connotation meanings within the advertisements to identify the overall message of the advertisements, whereas this study analyzes the denotation and connotation meanings in advertisements.

CONCLUSION

This study is conducted to determine denotation and connotation meanings within the signs contained in several eyebrow pencil advertisements from cosmetic brands such as Maybelline, Revlon, and L'Oreal Paris. All of the eyebrow pencil advertisements contained denotation meanings that represent the function and the purpose of the product to the consumers to grab their attention to buy the product. The denotational and connotational meanings are to make the target audience feel attracted by the product supported by the images the advertisement presented.

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