Meaning in Cigarette Advertisements in Audiovisual Media

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Abstract

Advertisements are made in such a way as to make it easier for the audience to understand the message being conveyed, which in turn inspires the audience to take action, namely buying the advertised product. However, specifically for cigarette products, the image construction that is formed is different from advertisements in general. Messages, message meanings, and images in cigarette advertisements are not easily understood by the public. This happens, among other things, because the series of words and symbols that make up the message do not directly lead to the existence (form), function, and quality of the product. This study uses a qualitative approach with semiotic analysis. Advertising messages do not lead to a single meaning, so that audiences can have different opinions about the meaning of messages in advertisements. In addition, a series of messages and images are not understood as a brand's social reality, but as a unique form of advertising. Because, audiences have their own interpretation in interpreting the message according to their own knowledge and experience. The meaning of the message is interpreted not in the framework of brand image construction, but in the construction of social reality as a reality that may construct myths.

Keywords

At first, advertising is a way to inform the product. Then, the advertisement talks about the utility of a product. For example, vehicles will take us from our place of origin to our destination without tiring us out. Now, advertisements talk about product status which includes style and appearance with all its attributes, so that the function of the product itself is only limited to style and appearance. Changes in the function of fish cannot be separated from developments in communication technology, especially television technology. Television has changed the medium of human interaction with objects around it. The myth of inanimate objects, which is better known as the passive medium, has been invalidated by television technology. Because, television is an inanimate object capable of 'interacting' with humans, not only through human cognition but physically. Television is able to hypnotize the public and elevate itself like an ideology.

Seeing this, television and audiovisual-based online media are considered the most effective media for placing advertisements. Generally, imagery in television advertisements is adjusted to the closeness of the type of advertising object being advertised, although it is not uncommon for imagery to be carried out in multiples. That is, the ad uses several images at once for one advertising object. The purpose of the dual image is to reinforce the main message which

cannot be made explicit. Because, cigarette advertisements whose broadcasts are limited by Law Number 32 of 2002 concerning Broadcasting (Broadcasting Law), Government Regulation Number 19 of 2003 (PP 19/2003) concerning Cigarette Safety for Health, and Government Regulation Number 50 of 2005 (PP 50 /2005) Concerning the Implementation of Broadcasting for Private Broadcasting Institutions. In addition to prohibiting television from showing advertisements for tobacco products before 21.30 WIB, according to the Broadcasting Law, PP 19/2003 and PP 50/2005, cigarette advertisements are also not allowed to depict cigarettes, people are smoking and lead to people smoking.

Given these restrictions, cigarette advertisements on television eventually combine two or more images to disguise the image of cigarettes, people smoking and aiming at people who are smoking. That is, using symbols to build an image that describes the feelings and pleasures of smoking.

However, the main message of the ad which is conveyed to build a brand image, may be difficult for viewers to understand. Because, the message conveyed is only a spectacular construction of the social reality of life as a reality, so that what is depicted in television advertisements can be interpreted as a picture of reality in the world of its viewers. Then, television commercials become public discourse in the sociological space which enlivens endless discussions in society.

Ellul and Goulet (Bungin, 2001: 133) stated that the television technology system dominates people's way of thinking. Television broadcasts (including advertisements) can inadvertently leave broadcast impressions in the minds of the viewers. The impression will live in the minds of the viewers and form the theater of mind, so that what is depicted on television is a picture of reality in the world.

The reality according to Berger and Luckman (Bungin, 2001: 133) consists of objective reality, symbolic reality and subjective reality. Objective reality is the reality that is formed from experience in the objective world that is outside the individual, and this reality is considered as reality. Symbolic reality is a symbolic expression of objective reality in various forms. Meanwhile, subjective reality is the reality that is formed as a process of re-absorption of objective and symbolic reality into the individual through the process of internalization.

The reality mentioned above is defined as the quality contained in realities, which are recognized as having a being that does not depend on our own will. Meanwhile, social reality (television advertising) can be interpreted as a myth, where everyday knowledge lives and develops in society such as concepts, general awareness, public discourse, as a result of social construction.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach. Qualitative is interpretive research using various interpretations involving many methods. In addition, qualitative research is empirical, in which the observation of the data is based on the expressions of the research subjects, as desired and interpreted by the research subjects (Mulyana, 2013: 5-11). The analytical tool used is semiotics. Semiotics is often used in text analysis. The text can be verbal or nonverbal and can be in any medium. The term text refers to messages, and collections of signs that are constructed by referring to certain genres or media (Cahndler, 2006 in Vera, 2014: 08). The semiotic method is used to uncover connotative meanings hidden behind media texts as a whole, making it difficult to be objective because of many influencing factors, such as culture, experience, ideology, and others.

Semiotics for the study of mass media is not only limited as a theoretical framework. However, it can also be used as an analytical method (Hamad, 2000: 83). One of its forms is Peirce's triangle meaning theory, below.
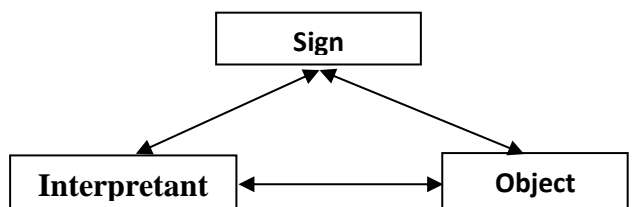

Figure 3: Peirce's Elements of Meaning

One form of sign is a word. While the object is something that is referred to by the sign.

While the interpretant is a sign that is in someone's mind about the object referred to by a sign. When the three elements of meaning interact in a person's mind, meaning appears about something represented by the sign.

In semiotic analysis, items that often appear are not the most important or the most significant, because the text will structure it as a whole. The research method used in semiotic analysis is interpretative and qualitative in nature. This type of research has the greatest opportunity for alternative interpretations to be made. In its application, this semiotic method requires a thorough observation of all the content of the ad (text), including the terms it uses.

In semiotics in general there are three types of problems to be reviewed. First, the problem of meaning, namely how people understand the message and what information is contained in the structure of a message. Second, the problem of action, namely knowledge about how to get something through conversation. Third, the problem of coherence, which describes how to form a pattern of speech that makes sense (logic) and can be understood (Sobur, 2012).

Discussion

Courtland L. Bovee (Bungin, 2001: 123) describes advertising as a communication process, in which there are: first, people who are referred to as sources of advertising ideas; second, the media as a medium; third, the audience. More details, illustrated in the chart as follows:
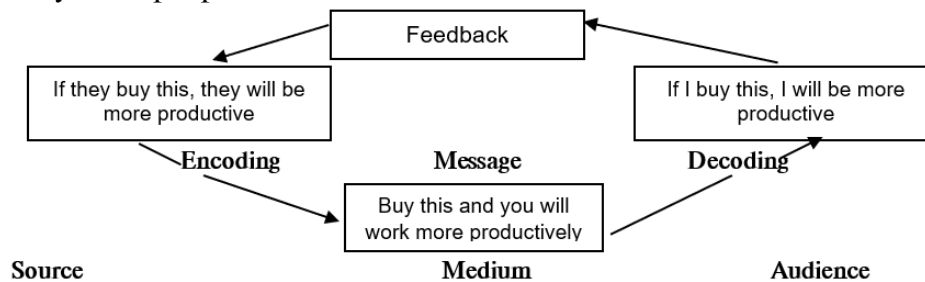

Figure 1: Advertising as a communication process
Source: Bungin, 2001: 123

The figure above contains the content of a person's or group's ideas, both the advertiser (the company that owns the product) and the creator of the advertisement (advertising company), an idea to give an image to an advertised product. Therefore, these ideas must be communicated to the audience (viewers) so that they can be accepted as well as feedback material.

In the communication process there is a dialectical process, in which individuals create ideas that are communicated and the audience responds and provides input on new ideas.

In the process of pouring ideas into messages, encoding occurs, where ideas are expressed in advertising language that convinces people. The media then took over the idea and then constructed it into media language. At this stage decoding occurs because the audience captures the media's language and forms knowledge or reality, and that knowledge can encourage them to respond back to the advertisement. There are two kinds of responses, namely viewers responding to advertising material and responding to media messages. Responding to advertising material can be in the form of a reaction to the advertisement, because it can be detrimental to certain parties. Meanwhile, responding to media messages can be an attitude to buy or not buy a product.

Advertising is a special form of communication to fulfill the marketing function. To be able to fulfill the marketing function, the communication delivered must be able to persuade and convince the audience that the product offered can meet their needs or desires. Advertising also intends to build a brand image. Meanwhile, broadcasting cigarette advertisements on television is a process of constructing television advertisements on social reality. Meanwhile, the formation of a brand image can be defined as an effort to direct positive perceptions that are expected to appear in the minds of the public.

The construction of television advertisements on social reality is a process of communication between advertisement creators and television viewers. In this process, television advertising constructs the image of a product into the audience's awareness.

Based on the description above, the construction stage of television commercials for social reality occurs through five stages, namely: 1) The stage of preparing advertising construction materials; 2) Construction deployment phase; 3) Construction formation stage; 4) Confirmation stage; 5) Stage of consumer decision behavior

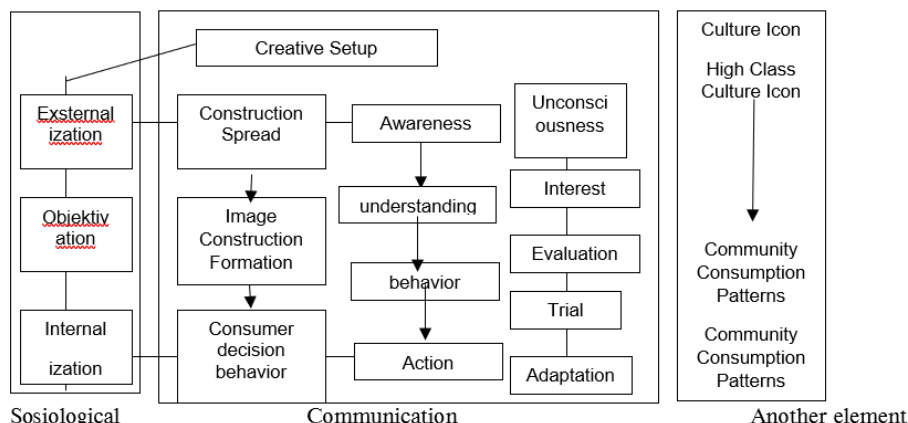The scheme and each stage of construction are explained as follows:

Figure 2: Stages of social reality construction by advertising
Source: Social Construction, Dagmar and AIETA, after development, (Berger, 1993, Kasali, 2007: 52-53)

Image in Television (Audiovisual Media) Advertising

The main task of television advertising is to sell goods or services and not entertain. Horace Schwerin reported that there is no relationship between liking an ad and being consumed by it (Bungin, 2001). However, Schwerin's words are no longer obeyed by copywriters (advertising scriptwriters) and television advertisement visualizers, because it turns out that entertaining while selling on television becomes more interesting. The reason is, copywriters believe that large ads with strong imagery will have more power in influencing viewers. Especially if the imagery is done through the construction of social reality even though that reality is pseudo. This is an example of technological efforts to create a theater of mind in the realm of human cognition. And, when the image is interpreted by the viewer as the copywriter wishes, there is actually a pseudo-awareness of the pseudo-reality that is described in the ad as a hyperreality (pseudo-realistic) or virtual reality. However, not all television commercials are created for image purposes. However, television commercials are considered perfect when it comes to the imaging stage. In general,

imagery in television advertisements is adjusted to the proximity of the type of object being advertised, although it is not uncommon for imagery to be carried out in multiples. That is, the ad uses several images of one advertising object. Associated with Baudrillard's statement (1980: 80), in commodity advertising marked with three types of sign values, namely the truth that "contemporary" objects no longer have use value, but value to mark; truth is no longer manipulated as an instrument but as a sign. Because, management's concern through "sign values" of luxury, style, power through advertising, packaging and modern manipulation becomes a commodity value compared to its use value and exchange value. Broadly speaking, Tamrin Amal Tamagola (1998: 333-334) mentions that there are eight categories of imagery used in television advertising, including: 1. Female image, 2. Masculine image, 3. Luxury and exclusive image, 4. Social class image, 4. Enjoyment Image, 5. Benefit Image, 6. Friendship Image, 7. Sexism and Sexuality Image

Imaging is the most important part in advertising construction. And when television advertisements image a product, whatever image is used, for a particular product, the

economic value of an advertisement becomes the main consideration. That is, the image must be useful for certain products.

In television advertising imaging, an advertisement generally uses multiple images. That is, using multiple images at once in an advertisement.

Product Image in Cigarette Advertising on Television (Audiovisual Media)

Today's advertising is something that is difficult to understand, especially cigarette advertisements. Because, unlike other products, cigarette advertisements cannot display cigarette packs, cigarette sticks, even cigarette smoke and which are aimed at people who are smoking. As a substitute, producers use symbols so that the message conveyed can be understood by the public. However, it is not easy because the audience is not yet familiar with these symbols. Thus, producers must display advertisements with high frequency and duration so that the symbols used in advertisements can be recognized by the public.

The frequency, duration and positioning of the media (the selection of media and events) do not really affect the audience's understanding of advertising. The audience more than just knows the storyline of the cigarette advert, only a few understand it, which means they memorize the details of the storyline of the cigarette advert. Similar to the cigarette ad tagline, audiences know all the ad titles, while only a few know the details of ad titles and subtitles. Likewise with the contents of the story, where many audiences only know the contents of the advertising story. Most audiences do not understand the contents of the story in cigarette advertisements.

It seems that the series of words and symbols that form messages in advertisements do not directly lead to the existence of the product let alone to the function and quality of the product. Thus, audiences have difficulty understanding the messages contained in advertisements.

Submission of cigarette advertising messages is different from other product advertisements. Cigarette advertisements convey messages by using certain meaningful symbols using symbolic language. Thus, the meaning of the message contained in the advertisement will be understood differently by the audience.

Audiences have differences in understanding the meaning of the message in each advertisement. For example, the audiovisual advertisement for Sampoerna A Mild cigarette. At the beginning of its product appearance around 1989, Sampoerna A Mild issued an advertising campaign carrying the tagline "How Low Can You Go?". Symbolically this ad wants to convey the message that the tar and nicotine contained in Sampoerna Mild cigarettes are very low compared to other cigarette brands.

The success of Sampoerna A Mild has encouraged other cigarette manufacturers to produce mild cigarettes that have low levels of nicotine tar. Then came the mild cigarette brands such as Starmild, Bentoel Mild, L.A. Light, Djarum Black.

Starmild created promotional advertisements with the tagline "Make Life Livelier". The advertisement can be interpreted as the meaning of solidarity or sharing happiness. Making life more alive can be meaningful cheerful and dynamic. When associated with the storyline, it can mean quickly forgetting problems. So, Starmild makes life more lively meaning all problems can easily be forgotten.

Bentoel Mild created a promotional advertisement with the tagline "Mild Plus for Male Plus" edition "Style − Sensation − Change" which can be interpreted as a form of luxury and exclusivity. "Male Plus" is identified in men who are stylish, sensational and follow (dynamic) changes. When it comes to advertising storytelling, the sensational and dynamic man is a tired executive. So Bentoel Mild said that these cigarettes are the cigarettes of stylish, sensational, energetic, dynamic (change) and successful men. Furthermore, this ad says, "If you smoke Bentoel Mild, I'm like a young executive."

Fresher in L.A. The light edition of the jetski attraction can be interpreted as relaxed, exclusive and friendly. Fresher is identified as young. Fresh, energetic and attractive in young people. When associated with advertising, it means upscale young people who are fresh, energetic and attractive. So, the meaning of the message in L.A. Light is the cigarette of modern (upper class) youth who is fresh, energetic and dynamic.

While Djarum Black with the tagline Full of Imagination can be interpreted as freedom of expression, opinion and creativity which is usually found in young people who are expressive, creative and innovative. So, Djarum Black identifies itself as an expressive, creative and innovative youth cigarette.

Seeing this phenomenon, around 1996 Sampoerna A Mild issued an advertising campaign with the tagline Others Can Only Follow. Others can only follow is a satire on the imitator culture and satire on the imitators of success. In other words, Sampoerna A Mild is a pioneer of mild filter kretek cigarettes, and others can only follow can be interpreted as the market leader brand because it is followed by other brands.

Promotion and advertising will continue to experience changes in accordance with market and social developments in society. Promotion and advertising will be adjusted to the needs that refer to market and social developments in the community itself. However, regulations regarding restrictions on cigarette advertisements on television are still in effect. Therefore, cigarette advertisements will still use symbols in the images they use. Therefore, the meaning of the message contained in the ad may not necessarily be known by the public.

The message and content of the message in cigarette advertisements is different from the advertising messages of other products, but the image used in the advertisement is no different from other products. Because, the image in the ad is generally the same.

The images used in cigarette advertisements are generally a blend of masculine, social class, luxurious, sexy, pleasure, friendship and association images. Thus, it will be difficult for audiences to understand the image used in a brand.

The audience considers all images contained in an advertisement, even though the dominant image remains in an advertisement. For example, the Djarum Black ad has all the existing images but the exclusive image is more dominant in this ad. In contrast to Sampoerna A Mild, there are only two images in the ad, namely the image of social class and enjoyment. However, in Sampoerna A Mild's advertisement there is no dominant image, because audiences consider Sampoerna A Mild's advertisement to be unique, even strange.

The message in the ad is a picture of a social reality that is created and the image used in the message describes that reality. Thus, it can be said, the social reality of advertising is not understood by the public. Because, social reality in advertising is only understood as a unique form of advertising.

Cigarette advertising is different from other product advertisements, one of which is about imagery. On other products, imaging will be easier to understand because the image used is directly related to the shape or name of the product. In cigarette advertisements, imagery is used to explain the brand as well as construct a brand image, so it is not impossible that the image then constructs social reality, not constructs a brand.

Low frequency and duration of impressions make it difficult for audiences to understand the meaning of messages and images in advertisements. Thus, the higher the frequency and duration of ad impressions, the easier it will be for audiences to be able to understand the meaning of messages and images in advertisements.

Audiences have difficulty understanding advertisements because the messages and images in advertisements are incomplete. Thus, misinterpretation of advertisements may occur. Thus, advertising image is more likely to construct social reality, no longer constructing a brand image.

Audiences have different levels of knowledge, experience and intelligence, this allows audiences to make different interpretations of interpreting advertising messages. Thus, although it is impossible to avoid differences in interpretation even though the level of knowledge, experience and audience intelligence is the same, there is nothing wrong with ad creators using a series of words and a series of symbols that lead to a center opinion, namely a series of words and symbols that do not contain multiple meanings. Likewise, the image that is used to reinforce a series of words and symbols, in fact does not lead to brand construction, but constructs a myth. Thus, if you want the product to be easily recognized and understood, the social reality used is the reality of the brand (product) not the social reality of everyday life.

Conclusion

The frequency and duration of ad impressions will affect how much (many) audiences will know and understand the ad. However, in cigarette advertisements, the frequency, duration and positioning of the media do not really help the audience's understanding of the advertising message. The series of words and series of symbols that form messages in advertisements do not lead to product existence, product function and product quality. Audiences have different opinions on the meaning of messages in advertisements, because the series of words and symbols in advertisements do not lead to a center opinion. The series of words and series of symbols in advertisements do not lead to a single meaning, but contain many meanings. Thus, audiences interpret the meaning of messages in advertisements according to their own knowledge. The message in cigarette advertisements is a picture of a created social reality, and the image used in the message describes that reality. The series of messages and images are not understood as the social reality of advertising by audiences, but are only understood as a unique form of advertising. Thus, the image used in advertisements, it can be said, is unable to construct a brand image in the eyes of the public. Furthermore, cigarette advertising is not to construct brand image but rather to construct myths. Audiences have their own interpretation of interpreting advertising messages. And, the audience interprets the meaning of the message not in the framework of social reality construction as a reality that might construct myths.

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