

semiotics is the study of the process of the generation of meaning (Martin & Ringham, 2000, p. 116).

Although semioticians have different definition about semiotics, all of them consider that it is related to a sign. They also mention that sign which stands for something else has an important role to build sign system in semiotics (Segers; Cobley & Janz; Morris cited in Sobur, 2009, p. 16). According to Barthes (Barthes, 1988 cited in Sobur, 2009, p. 15), semiotics learns how humanity interprets things, which means that objects do not only carry information, but also constitute structured system of signs.

From the definition proposed above, the researcher can conclude that semiotics is a study which is closely related to sign and concerns with how the meaning is produced.

2.2 Sign

Signs are the basis of all communication and it represents something else. According to Littlejohn (1996, cited in Sobur, 2009, p. 15-16) the relationship between an idea and a sign will construct the meaning. Johansen and Larsen (2002, p. 26) state that the sign represents or refers to an object, event, action, repeated process, state of affairs, an emotional situation and so on.

Saussure (1967, cited in Chandler, 2007, p. 14) offers a 'dyadic' or two-part model of the sign. He defines a sign as being composed of:

1. a "signifier" (*signifiant*) - the *form* which the sign takes.
2. the "signified" (*signifié*) - the *concept* it represents.

The clearer explanation about signified and signifier can be seen in the figure below.



Figure 2.1 Saussure's model of sign
(Source: Chandler, 2007, p. 14)

In Saussure's opinion (1983, cited in Chandler, 2007, p.14. 17), sign is the unity of a signifier in the form of an idea or signified, both of them are purely psychological and are inseparable as the two sides of a piece of paper.

Furthermore, Saussure explains that it is more likely to unite concept and sound image rather than stating something with name (Saussure, 1983 cited in Sobur, 2009, p. 47).

In contrast to Saussure's model of the sign, Peirce (1931, cited in Chandler, 2007, p. 29) thinks that there are three essential elements in a sign that he calls as triadic model of sign which consists of:

1. The Representamen: the form which the sign takes (not necessarily material).
2. An Interpretant: not an interpreter but rather the sense made of the sign.
3. An Object: to which the sign refers.

Pierce (1931, cited in Chandler, 2007, p. 30) refers the interaction between the representamen, object and interpretant as “semeiosis”. That interaction can be seen in the figure below.

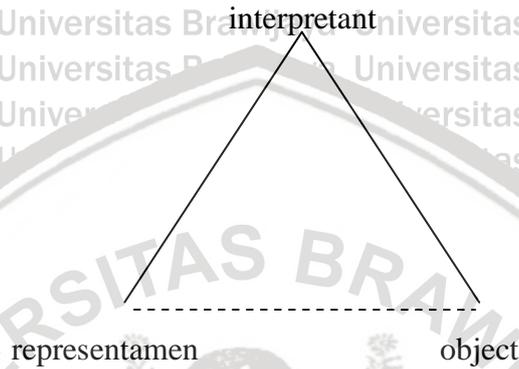


Figure 2.2 Peircean model of sign
(Source: Chandler, 2007, p. 30)

A sign is a connection between expression and content plan (Hjemslev cited in Sobur, 2009, p. 16). Sign is all that have significance to substitute something else in some respect or capacity (Berger, 2000; Peirce, 1996 cited in Sobur, 2009, p. 18. 41).

Peirce (1931, cited in Chandler, 2007, p. 36) also proposes three division of signs, symbol, icon and index. The further explanation about these three categories of signs can be seen in the next part.

2.2.1 Icon

Pierce (1931, cited in Chandler, 2007, p. 36) defines icon/iconic is a mode in which the signifier is perceived as *resembling* or imitating the signified (recognizably looking, sounding, feeling, tasting or smelling like it) - being

similar in possessing some of its qualities: e.g. a portrait, a cartoon, a scale-model, onomatopoeia, metaphors, realistic sounds in programme music, sound effects in radio drama, a dubbed film soundtrack, imitative gestures.

Johansen (2002, cited in Huening, 2004, para. 2) says that icons have specific properties in common with their objects (eg. portraits and diagrams).

While Boulton (2005, para. 2) defines that an icon is a sign that resembles something, such as photographs of people and it can be illustrative or diagrammatic, for example a 'no-smoking' sign.

The same idea comes from Gasser (2000, para. 3) that states the icon is the simplest since it is a pattern that physically resembles what it 'stands for'. He also delivers some examples of an icon, such as picture, photograph, gesture, and onomatopoeic words like *bow-wow*, *splash*, and *hiccup*.

2.2.2 Index

Index/indexical according to Peirce (1931, cited in Chandler, 2007, p. 37) is a mode in which the signifier is *not arbitrary* but is *directly connected* in some way (physically or causally) to the signified - this link can be observed or inferred: e.g. 'natural signs' (smoke, thunder, footprints, echoes, non-synthetic odours and flavours), medical symptoms (pain, a rash, pulse-rate), measuring instruments (weathercock, thermometer, clock, spirit-level), 'signals' (a knock on a door, a phone ringing), pointers (a pointing 'index' finger, a directional signpost), recordings (a photograph, a film, video or television shot, an audio-recorded

voice), personal 'trademarks' (handwriting, catchphrase) and indexical words ('that', 'this', 'here', 'there').

Pierce (1931, cited in Huening, 2004, para. 5) explains that index always point, reference, or suggest something else and anything which focuses on the attention is an index, for example a sundial or a clock indicates the time of day, a rap on the door is an index. Huening (2004, para. 5) adds that the index cannot be a sign without the object (no interpreter or "reader" necessary).

Boulton (2005, para. 2) explains that an index sign is a sign where there is a direct link between the sign and the object. For instance the traffic sign of 'slippery road surface' placed on a road which is prone to flooding. It is an index because it represents information which relates to a location.

Index according to Gasser (2000, para. 5) is defined by some 'sensory feature' (e.g. something directly visible, audible, smellable etc.) that correlates with and thus implies something of interest to human being. For instance, dark clouds are an index of rain, a scowling facial expression is an index of the person's displeasure or concern, and a particular pronunciation of a word is an index that someone comes from particular geographic place or social group. Gasser (2000, para. 8) adds that index can be artificial and manmade (rather than environmentally natural or innate). For example, a *beep* from the oven can signal that the cookies are ready to be removed. In addition, Gasser (2000, para. 9) also states that words are said to be indexical when they directly point to their meaning- without depending on any relationship to other words. For example, the words like *here, there, I, me, you, this, etc*

2.2.3 Symbol

Peirce (1931, cited in Chandler, 2007, p. 37) defines symbol/symbolic is a mode in which the signifier does *not* resemble the signified but which is fundamentally *arbitrary* or purely conventional - so that the relationship must be learnt: e.g. language in general (plus specific languages, alphabetical letters, punctuation marks, words, phrases and sentences), numbers, morse code, traffic lights, national flags.

Huening (2004, para. 2) states that symbols have convention-based relationships with their objects (e.g. alphanumeric symbols). Pierce (1931, cited in Huening, 2004, para. 4) gives some examples of symbol in language which is believed as the most important symbolic sign systems, such as ordinary word, like 'give', 'bird', and 'marriage' as well as alphanumeric character on a computer keyboard, like \$, %, &, #, @, etc.

2.3 Connotation

Semiotic approach lies in the second level in which the message can be understood as a whole (Barthes cited in Tinarbuko, 2008, p. 15). This second level is called connotative meaning which includes aspects of meaning related to feelings and emotions and cultural values and ideology (Piliang cited in Tinarbuko, 2008, p. 20). This second level is so much depends on the first level that is denotative sign. Therefore, the important factor in the connotation is a signifier in the first order which is a sign of connotations. The relation between first and second level of sign meaning can be seen in the figure below.

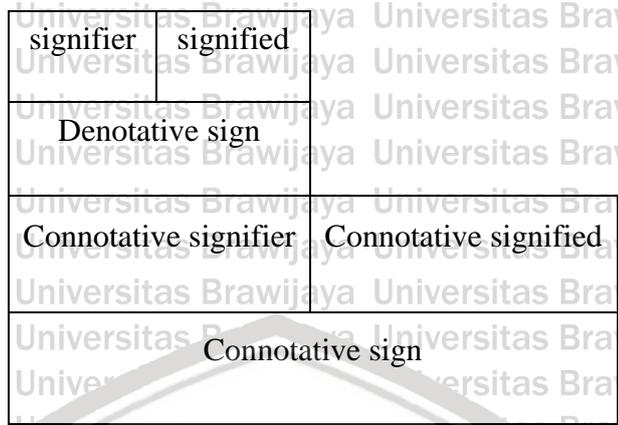


Figure 2.3 Barthes' model of sign
 (Source: Sobur, 2009, p. 69)

Connotation as a separate system, composed of signifier, signified, and the process that combines both (significance). The signifier in connotation called connotator, formed by the signs (the union between signifier and signified) of the first system, denotation system has (Barthes cited in Budiman, 2011, p. 167).

Then, the signified of connotations are influenced by socio-cultural and personal association, such as ideological, emotional, feeling and a certain value. (Chandler, 2007, p. 138; Sobur, 2009, p. 264; DeVito, 1997 cited in Sobur, 2009, p. 263).

In addition, connotation acquires additional significance resulting from the context in which it is applied, thus it is context dependent (Martin & Ringham, 2000, p. 42-43; Chandler, 2007, p. 138).

2.4 Semiotics in advertisement

Nowadays, internet is becoming the great advertising media because people have easily internet access everyday. One of the advantages of Internet marketing is its ability to target promotion and marketing to audiences in new and

innovative ways (Tsotra et al.,2004 , p.10). Therefore, internet advertisement has cheaper cost, easier access, and faster publication rather than the printing advertisement.

Advertisement is a communication media between the advertiser and the consumers. Advertisement determines the success of communication of the advertiser's intention and the consumers' understanding. If the advertisement is good enough to deliver the message, it would make the consumers receive the message precisely the same with what the advertiser meant. In this case, semiotics becomes important in understanding the effectiveness of advertisement (Combe & Crowther, nd, p. 4).

Advertisements construct the definitive reality in the perception (Ranjan, 2010, p.9). In order to interpret the message in the same advertisement, each individual may have different idea than others. Therefore, as Combe and Crowther state that semiotics recognizes it and provides a framework for developing the need of the advertiser to frame the advertisement in such a way that the intended message is extracted from the campaign by as great part of the consumers as possible (Combe & Crowther, nd, p. 3-4).

In an advertisement, the usage of brand is important because not only to show who publish the advertisement but also it helps the recipients to frame their minds. Brand is like the context which can limit the message of the advertisement itself. Brand is used to make the advertisement more effective and can be understood by the recipients clearly and quickly.

Without brand, the recipient can interpret the advertisement broader with considering their cultural life. As Ranjan says that advertisements construct, form and manipulate the perception and the behavior of its consumers and the outside.

All the symbols are paying an immeasurable service of presenting and apprehending the culture and the world (Ranjan, 2010, p.8). Ranjan (2010, p.8) adds that each and every advertisement is included cultural shadow and let the readers to negotiate and share the cultural theme.

The usage of semiotics as point of view in making and reading the advertisement is consider as glasses. It makes both the advertiser and the viewer easily connect what actually the topic about. Furthermore, Tsotra et al (2004, p.10) state that semiotic study demonstrates that alternative visual categories are relevant to different groups. Because semiotic categories affect perception even when perceived unconsciously, the use of appropriate semiotic elements is essential to effective Internet advertisements.

2.5 World Wildlife Fund

World Wildlife Fund (WWF) is an international non-governmental organization whose aims are to conserve nature and ecological processes by preserving biodiversity, ensuring sustainable use of natural resources and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful use of resources and energy (Glossary of Environment Statistics, 1997). WWF as the world's leading conservation organization, works in 100 countries and is supported by 1.2 million members in the United States and close to 5 million globally and has been

protecting the future of nature in the late 50 years (http://www.worldwildlife.org/who/index.html). WWF also sensitive in environmental issues and tries to offer innovative solutions so that people can live harmony with nature as their vision (WWF, 2012). While, WWF's mission is to conserve nature and reduce the most pressing threats to the diversity of life on Earth (ibid, 2012).

WWF (2012) in its website also mentions some goals and strategies that will be reached by 2020, as follows:

WWF will conserve 15 of the world's most ecologically important regions by working in partnership with others to:

1. Protect and restore species and their habitats.
2. Strengthen local communities' ability to conserve the natural resources they depend upon.
3. Transform markets and policies to reduce the impact of the production and consumption of commodities.
4. Ensure that the value of nature is reflected in decisions made by individuals, communities, governments and businesses.
5. Mobilize hundreds of millions of people to support conservation.

2.6 Previous Studies

The researcher selects two previous studies discussing signs which are similar to this present study. The first previous study is a thesis written by Syauqi (2011) entitled "The Meanings of Photographs and the Functions of Captions on *TIME* Magazine Front Covers". The thesis is conducted by analyzing the meaning of the photographs in *TIME* magazine front covers. He also analyzes photographs' caption. The meanings of the photographs are analyzed by Peircean model of sign, while the photograp's captions are analyzed by using Saussure's theory. He

selects six photographs on Time magazine front covers containing Obama's photographs. His study tries to investigate all the sign aspects in time magazine photographs. Beside the theories by Peirce and Saussure, he also uses the theory of color to analyze his data. The result shows that the meaning of photographs is defined by the role of the color which is analyzed by Peirce theory. The analysis using Saussure's theory shows that the captions also take role in understanding and supporting photographs in delivering news in *TIME* magazine.

The second previous study is a thesis entitled "A Semiotics Study on the Effectiveness of Codes in Benny Rachmadi's Opinion Cartoons Compiled In *Dari Presiden Ke Presiden*" conducted by Laksono (2012). His study focuses on the effectiveness of codes that are used in the cartoons. He uses connotation theory by Roland Barthes, the semiotics sign (icon, index, and symbol) by Pierce and codes theory by Barthes and Chandler. He analyzes eight opinion cartoons by Benny Rachmadi compiled in "*Dari Presiden Ke Presiden*". The result shows that connotation will appear when the sign is related to each other and when it is connected with cultural value and social convention. Also, the codes aim to focus the signs on certain issue being discussed.

Similar to those two previous studies, this study investigates the semiotics signs by Pierce, which are icon, index and symbol. Different from Syauqi's thesis, this study does not concern on Saussure's theory and does not contain theory of color as he does. Also, it is different from Laksono's in the way he analyzes the codes which are used in the cartoons. The similarity is in the application of the theory of connotation by Barthes in analyzing the meaning of signs. In contrast,

the object that the researcher uses in this study is also different from those two previous researchers. This present study focuses on the identification of signs found in World Wildlife Fund (WWF) advertisements and the investigation of the meaning of those signs. The researcher uses the division of signs by Pierce to identify the signs and connotation theory by Barthes to analyze the meaning of signs. The researcher uses connotation theory of Barthes to have more understanding how the signs of World Wildlife Fund (WWF) advertisements support the idea or topic of the advertisements.

