



The Analysis of Linguistic Signs and Symbol in Celebrity Fragrance Advertisements

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Abstract: *This research is a semiotic research that analyzes the meaning and the interpretation of the linguistic and non linguistic signs and symbols in celebrity fragrance advertisement. The study analyzed denotative and connotative meaning of the texts appears in the advertisement by using semiotic analysis purposed by Pierce and Rolland Barthes in interpreting the meaning of the linguistic and non linguistic signs and symbols. The result of the analysis shows that the advertisements bring different aspects of linguistic feature in attracting the readers and in promoting the product.*

Key words: *Semiotic, sign and symbol, meaning and interpretation, advertisement.*

Abstrak: *Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian semiotik yang menganalisis makna dan interpretasi dari tanda dan simbol linguistik dan non-linguistik yang muncul dalam iklan parfum selebriti. Penelitian ini menganalisis makna denotasi dan konotasi dari teks dan gambar yang muncul pada papan iklan sesuai dengan teori semiotik yang dikemukakan oleh Pierce dan Rolland Barthes dalam menginterpretasikan makna dari tanda dan simbol. Hasil penelitian ini menyatakan bahwa iklan parfum selebriti memperlihatkan adanya pembedaan fitur linguistik berdasarkan image selebliti tersebut dalam mendeskripsikan dan mempromosikan produk parfum kepada target pasar yang sesuai.*

Kata Kunci: *Semiotika, tanda dan lambang, makna dan interpretasi, iklan.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Advertisements are commonly used to promote products. Advertisement as a media of communication delivers messages in signs, images, and text. The visualization of advertisement influences consumers for certain purposes. Advertisement allows the reader to interpret the messages conveyed by the advertiser. Readers might have different interpretation depends on their ability to spot the

messages. Some interpretations are based on what they have seen at glance.

In delivering the idea, the advertisement makers play on visuals and texts. From the linguistics aspect, a text is defined as assemblage of signs such as in word, image, sounds and gesture. The visualization of the advertisement and the meaning for each of signs which appear on the advertisement have close relationship, because with applying the denotative and connotative meaning to the signs in

the advertisement, it is possible to catch the meaning and message that are going to deliver from the producer and advertisement makers.

Semiotics is the study of signs which leads the analyst to find the meaning of the sign. Sign is defined as something that signifies something. Anything can be a sign as long as we interpret it as *signifying* something. Semiotics concerns with meaning making and representation in many forms, perhaps most obviously in the form of *text* and *media* (Chandler, 2002). In semiotics, denotation and connotation are terms describing the relationship between the signifier and its signified, and an analytic distinction is made between two types of signified: a denotative signified and a connotative signified. Meaning includes both denotation and connotation (Chandler, 2007).

The interpretations of the advertisement are seen from linguistics and non-linguistics signs which appear on the text of the advertisement itself. Linguistics signs such as words, phrase, and sentences that consist of name of the artist and, brand of the product and also phrase or sentences that used to tell the reader the specification of type from those female celebrity's fragrance are combine with the picture and other signs in those advertisements. Those signs, according to Saussure, consist of signifier and signify. The ways of making the interpretation based on the analysis of

signified concept in denotative and connotative meaning.

Since the function of advertisement as a media of promotion, advertisements for celebrity fragrance try to promote the type, taste, smell, aroma, sensation and the specification of those fragrances. The idea is delivered by signs that are occurred in linguistic and non-linguistic signs.

To specify the analysis, the writer only focused on symbol in this advertisement because symbols have conventional and powerful meaning that able to influence the reader. Symbols which are found in the text of the advertisements must symbolize something. By understanding the symbolization of those symbols, the writer catches the message from the advertisers by making the interpretation. This interpretation is made after seeking the denotative and connotative meaning of the name of Female Celebrity's fragrance.

There are many previous studies which talk about the analysis of the advertisement and are related to some theories about Semiotic. These researches are found in form of journal, thesis and also in essay. Lilianti Angir (2008) conducted an analysis of denotative and connotative meaning in a research entitled *A Semiotics text analysis of Cleo Magazine perfume advertisements*. The research seeks for semiotic interpretation on perfume advertisements. This research is done by analyzing the keywords in the advertisement and relating it to the

theory about meaning from Roland Barthes. The research concluded that the advertisements are inspired by the nature such as, sea, ocean, flowers, water and even by the personalities, relationship and even by the way of living in one country.

Sandra Moriarty (1995), a professor Journalism and Mass Communication in University of Colorado conducted an analysis about visual semiotics. In her research, she makes the interpretation of the particular advertisement of the 1984 commercial produced by Chiat-Day for the introduction of Apple's Macintosh ran during the Super Bowl in January of that year. Her research is done in order to see the dominant visual images, what the dominant images describe about and also what they symbolize for. In answering the question, she also makes the interpretation on the advertisements that she analyzes. In her analysis she also relates her research to the viewers of the advertisement. The theories that she uses are the theories about symbol, index and icon which proposed by Peirce. As the result she says that a semiotic analysis of visual can be tested against viewer responses to the identity patterns of meaning construction. By reading this journal, the writer sees that how to see the relationship between visual advertisement to the reader and what should be done to make the interpretation toward the advertisement itself.

Another research by Wiwiek Sundari (1998) entitled *Analysis Semiotics Iklan Coca-Cola* analyzed about visual semiotics from Coca-Cola commercial on television. Sundari focused on the signification toward each of signs that is found in that commercial. This significance has the same way on making the meaning by using denotative and connotative meaning like what the writer going to do is.

Along with those researches, there are many journals that analyze perfume or fragrance e.g. *Le Parfum de Washing Up, A Semiotic Analysis of Two Ads for Persil Liquid* of Ruth McKeown and *A Semiotic Analysis of Magazine Ads for Men's Fragrances* of Alexander Clare

This research is focused on the texts in the Celebrity's Fragrances advertisements. The texts which consist of word, image, sounds and gesture are interpreted with Semiotics theories from Peirce about symbol then relate it to the theory from Roland Barthes about denotative and connotative meaning.

2. METHODS

The data is collected from female celebrity fragrance advertisements from the internet. The writer uses an observational method and non participant observation technique in collecting the data where the writer is not involved directly to source of the data. The writer searches the data from

internet then chooses 2 advertisements from Avril Lavigne and Celine Dion.

The data is analyzed by using the theory from Peirce and Roland Barthes. Before follow the step for analyzing the data, each data is described in order to see the symbols occurred in the advertisements. The symbols in texts are presented in table. The meanings of the symbols are divided into two types of meaning: denotative and connotative. At the end of the explanation, the writer concluded each of the analysis to see the message and the specification of these fragrances in interpretation.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Sign and Symbol

Signs are found in the physical form of words, images, sounds, odors, flavor, acts or object. Signs have no intrinsic meaning and become a sign only when we invest them with meaning. All these definitions suggest that the meaning of a sign does not depend on the thing it represents but merely on the users.

Saussure has offered a two-part model sign. He defines that a sign is composed of signifier (the form which the sign takes) and the signified (the concept the sign represents). The sign is the whole results from the association of the signifier with signified and the relationship between the two is called as 'signification' (Chandler, 2002). However, Saussure states that the signification is different

from the value of a sign. According to him, the signification depends on the relationship between the signifier and the signified, while the value of a sign is determined by its relationship with other signs in the system as a whole (Saussure 1983 in Chandler, 2002: 24).

A symbol is a sign "whose special significance or fitness to represent just what it does represent lies in nothing but the very fact of there being a habit, disposition, or other affective general rule that it will be so interpreted. Symbol can also define as a mode in which the signifier does not resemble but which is fundamentally arbitrary or purely conventional – so that the relationship must be learned.

These are the characteristics of symbol according to Tillich:

- a. Symbol is figurative and always refers to something out of itself.
- b. Symbol can be understood either in objective or imaginative.
- c. Symbol has a power which connects to something mysterious, mystical, religious and spiritual.
- d. Symbol has a root in society and supported by its society.

Chandler followed the concept of sign proposed by Charles S. Peirce which has divided three kinds of signs such as icon, symbol and index. Charles S. Peirce defines symbol as a sign which refers to the object that it denotes by virtue of law, usually an association of general idea referring to that object (Chandler, 2002). From Saussure, he avoids referring to linguistic signs as "symbols", since the ordinary everyday

use of this term to example such as pair of scales (signifying justice), and he intead that such signs are “never holly arbitrary, they are not empty configuration, they show at least a vestige of natural connection between signifier and signified – a link which he later refers to as rational.

Symbol is arbitrary and conventional. There is a relationship between signifier and signified. The meaning of symbols is made by the users and can be different from one place to another. In general symbols can be found in form of alphabetical letter, punctuation marks, words, phrase, and sentences, number, Morse code, traffic light, and national flag. In symbol, the relationship between signify and signified is arbitrary, it requires the active presence of the interpretant to make the signifying connection (Hawkes, 2003). Following Saussure, it might say that the major systematic manifestation of sign in this mode occur in language.

According to Dilistone in his book *The Power of Symbol*, sign and symbol are commonly used in the same meaning but different in use (Dharmojo, 2005: 26). It is happened because the relationships between these two things are tight and the limitation of these subjects is close. In this table, the writer will show the differences between sign and symbol according to Turner.

	one’s feeling	feeling
2	Sign tends to have one meaning	Symbol tends to have more than one meaning
3	Sign does not particpate in realizing what is being signed	Symbol participates in meaning making and empowering what is being signed
4	Systematically sign has close system	Systematically symbol has opened system

Figure1. Differences between sign and symbol

Ricoeur (1985: 402) defines symbol as something which signifies something else in form of symbolic, secondary, figurative and exceeds the first interpretation. For example, flower does not only mean something which describes as colorful thing and relates to what is called flower but can be also connected to beauty, flaccidity, affection and peaceful (Dharmojo, 2005: 27).

The Roland Barthes model

Saussure has offered a two-part model sign. Two elements which build the sign names, signifier and signified.

- a. A “signifier” (signifiant) – the form which the sign takes
- b. The “signified” (signifié) – the concept it represent

No	Sign	Symbol
1	Sign does not have the power to stimulate	Symbol has power to stimulate one’s

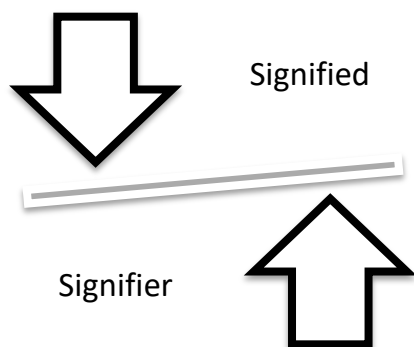


Figure 2. Saussure model of sign

Model of sign proposed by Saussure is known as dyadic mode. Opposite with the model of sign in the form of “self-contained dyad”, Charles Sanders Peirce offered a triadic (three-part) model.

- a. The representament: the form which the sign takes (not necessarily material)
- b. An interpretant: not an interpreter but rather the sense made of the sign
- c. An object: to which the sign refers.

Within Peirce’s model of the sign, the traffic light sign for ‘stop’ would consist of: a red light facing traffic at an intersection (the representament); vehicles halting (the object) and the idea that a red light indicates that vehicles must be stop.

A sign must be consist of both a signifier and a signified. We cannot have a totally meaningless signifier or a completely formless signified. A sign is recognizable combination of a signifier (the word “open”) could stand for different signified (and thus be a different sign) if it were on a push-

button inside a lift (“push to open the door”). Similarly, many signifiers could stand for the concept “open” (for example on top of a packing cartoon, a small outline of a box with an open flap for “open this end”) – again, with each unique pairing constituting a different sign.

If Saussure defines a sign as being composed of ‘a signifier’ and ‘signified’, Roland bathes proposes denotation and connotation as order of signification or the corporation of the level of the signified. Denotation and connotation are terms describing the relationship between the signifier and signified, and an analytic distinction is made between two types of signifieds; a denotative signified and a connotative signified. Meaning includes both denotation and connotation (Chandler, 2002).

Roland Barthes notes, Saussure model of sign focuses on denotation at the expense of connotation and it is left to subsequent theories (notable Barthes himself – drawing on Hjelmslev) to offer an account of this important dimension of meaning.

Denotation, connotation, and myth are orders of signification proposed by Barthes that he has adopted from Hjelmslev’s model (Chandler, 2002). And this formula can be seen from diagram Barthes below:

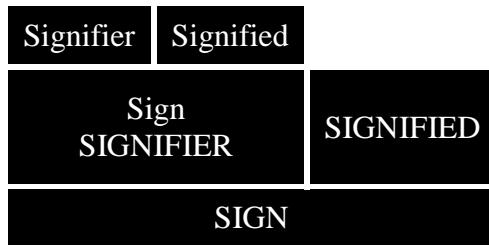


Figure 3. Order of signification

The first order of signification is denotation or literal meaning, at this level, there is a sign consisting of a signifier and signified. The second order of signification, which uses the denotative meaning as its signifier and attached to its additional signified.

Based on Paul Cobley and Litza Jansz in their book ‘Introducing of semiotics’ Barthes has discussed the connotative first because, as he argues, the process of connotation so ‘natural and so immediate when it is experienced that it is almost impossible

to separate denotation and connotation. The identification of denotation only takes place when connotation is theoretically deleted from the equation (Cobley and Jansz, 1999). Logically, a reader recognizes what signs actually depict and then goes on to decipher some sort of cultural, social or emotional meaning.

In reality, however, identification of what signs depict-especially pictorial ones-happened so quickly that it is easy to forget that it has happened at all. One other important are which Barthes open up for study of signs is the role of the reader. Connotation although it is feature of sign, requires the activity of a reader in order to take place (Cobley and Jansz, 1999). Taking his cue from Hjelmslev, Barthes therefore produces his map of sign functioning:

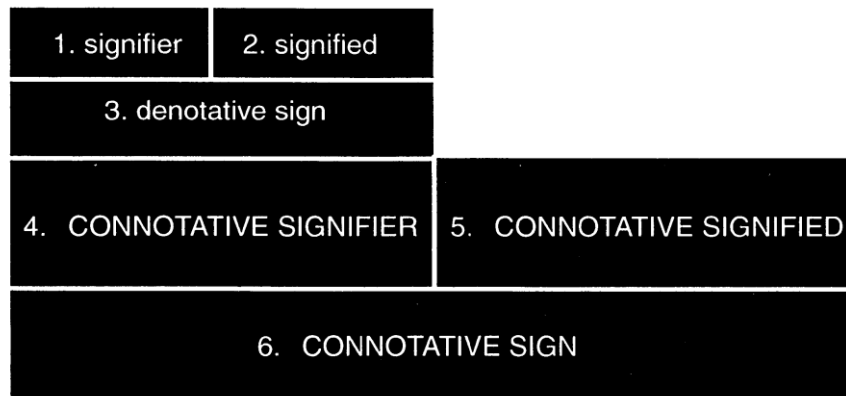


Figure 4. Sign functioning

The denotative sign (3) is made of a signifier (1) and signified (2), but the denotative sign is also a connotative signifier (4) and a connotative signifier must engender a connotative signified (5) to produce connotative sign (6) (Cobley and Jansz: 1999).

Meaning
 Meaning is the thing or idea that a sound, word, sign, and etc represent. In semiotics, meaning can be defined as signified or the conceptual meaning in a sign. The meaning of sign has been debatable among philosophers or

thinkers. Saussure says that a sign is the basic unit of meaning. While Charles Sanders Peirce 1931 (in Chandler, 2002: 32) notices that, nothing in this world can be sign unless it is interpreted as a sign. Umberto Eco (1976) defines sign as anything that can be used to tell a lie. Chandler (2002: 241) concludes these definitions into a simpler one that 'a sign is a meaningful unit which is interpreted as 'standing for' something other than itself.

Denotative meaning is also known as the definitional, 'literal', obvious or commonsense meaning of a sign. It is the central meaning of a word, as far as it can be described in a language object and dictionary (Barthes, 1975:38). For example, as people known blue as the color, in denotative meaning blue will define as one type of color.

Connotation uses the denotative sign (signifier and signified) as its signifier and attaches to it an additional signified. Connotation is also used as the term used to refer to the social-cultural and 'personal' association (ideological, emotional, and so forth) of the sign. Signs are more opened to the interpretation in their connotation than their denotation. For example is the sign 'blue' becomes a signifier for the second named "sad" in the second order of signification.

Interpretation

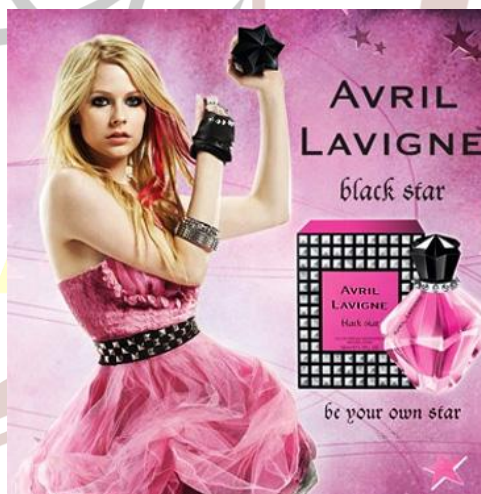
According to the dictionary, interpretation has the meaning as the particular way in which something is

understood or explained. Making the interpretation based on the meaning of signs has to relate from the function of the usage of signs. Interpretation can be done in many points of view, based on the understanding of the interpreter. Subjectivity is something that will be the main reason for making an interpretation even though the interpreter has to relate it also to some conventionality in the society.

4. SEMIOTICS ANALYSIS OF CELEBRITY FRAGRANCE ADVERTISEMENTS

There are ten data that has been analyzed. Each symbol found in the advertisement is analyzed by using the theory of denotative and connotative meaning from Roland Barthes.

Datum 1



Analysis: *Black star is a unique celebrity fragrance with unique aroma.*

First symbol occurs in Datum 1 is Avril Lavigne. Avril is a pop-rock singer who famous since 2003. Avril brings gothic style in her performance. In this advertisement, Avril is illustrated uses a pink gown as the representation of woman feminist. But in opposite, that gown is combined with black glove and belt. These accessories commonly used by men. In additional, she also makes a black color around her eyes. This combination shows that, Avril is something unique and different with other. As a female, she makes a style looks like a male, but she also keep to be a female over all. The action of Avril sprays the fragrance to her body means that, she is wearing that fragrance. That action can also represent that, for women who want to be unique like Avril Lavigne can use this fragrance too.

Avril Lavigne	Pop-rock singer
Avril Lavigne is a pop-rock singer who brings gothic style	Woman with a unique style
Avril is a woman with a unique style	

Second symbol occur is Black Star. Black Star is the name of this fragrance. In real life, it is impossible for us to find black star. In the sky, at night people see the bright star. Black and bright just like gown and black glove and belt, these things represent two opposite things. Black according to Oxford Dictionary (2007) means something having the very darkness color, without light and completely dark. In the real life, black symbolizes night, a color of elegance or class, represents ideas such as power,

sexuality, sophistication, formality, wealth, mystery, fear, evil, unhappiness, depth, style, sadness, remorse, anger, a lack of color, the primordial void, emptiness and sorrow. According to Henry Dreyfus, Black, sumi, is the color of mystery and solemnity; the color of the night. Black expresses the depths of the unknown, and encourages the imagination of a different world from that of daylight realities. Used by itself, black can represent bad luck or misfortune.

Star is known as a shiny thing is the sky that we see at the night. Star always looks pretty in the darkness of night. In the real life star symbolizes the central of attention. In all condition, star will always look bright, no matter what color of it. The name of this fragrance, might mean that this fragrance is something different and unique but very special, like a star in the night. The aroma of this fragrance is different. The aroma of this fragrance is the result of the combination of two opposite things, in this case, men and women aroma. This aroma can create elegance, sexuality, power, sophistication, wealth, formality, even though mystery sensation.

Black star	Fragrance's name
Black star is the name of this fragrance	Two opposite things which create something unique and different
Black Star is a fragrance with unique and different aroma	

The third symbol is the sentence be your own star. This sentence can be classified as persuasive sentence. Denotatively, this sentence means that the advertiser persuade the reader to be their star. From this sentence the advertiser tries to

persuade the reader to wear this fragrance. Since this fragrance from Avril Lavigne and has a unique aroma, from this sentence the writer want to deliver the ideas, such as:

- a. Be Avril Lavigne by wearing this fragrance, this message especially refers to the fans of Avril Lavigne who want to be closer with their star.
- b. Be unique and different by wearing this fragrance, this message can be taken directly from previous analysis about how unique and different this fragrance with other.
- c. Be a super star by wearing this fragrance, this message refers to the reader of the advertisement. Since this fragrance is female celebrity's fragrance, using this fragrance can be the way be a super star.

Be your own star	To persuade readers to be their star
Be your own star means the advertiser persuade the reader to be their star	Persuasion for the readers to wear this fragrance
Be your own star is the way to the advertiser persuade the readers to wear this fragrance	

Datum 2



Analysis: Notes is a fragrance with remembered aroma which creates relaxation, enjoy and happy feeling to the user.

From datum VI the writer found there are three lingual symbols occur. First is the name of female celebrity who presents this fragrance, Celine Dion. In this advertisement, Celine is illustrated swings on the swing which hanging in the sky. Her face made a smile and relaxes gesture. In real life, Celine Dion is known as famous talented Diva. As a diva, she has a good image, and her old always be the representation of maturity of a woman. Her maturity is built up from her experience to join in entertaining life for years.

Celine Dion	A celebrity who presents the fragrance named notes
Celine Dion is the celebrity who presents the fragrance named notes	Famous talented diva who is known as a mature woman
Celine Dion is a famous talented diva who is known as mature woman.	

Playing a swing makes you happy. The one who swings will feel like flying and swinging on the sky. Swing is loved by every people. Set of time in this advertisement is evening. Evening is known as the condition between afternoon and night. It is also the condition between shine and dark. In other words, evening represents the condition between busy and break. After getting busy in the afternoon and before taking a sleep at night, people enjoy their evening with many interesting activity.

Since those symbols which occur in the advertisement symbolize similar things, the writer thinks that, notes is the fragrance which better to use when you are need something such as relaxation and enjoy. Evening is the time when commonly activity starts to stop, when everyone has a break is a perfect time to

use this fragrance. “A New Floral Harmony” shows that this fragrance essences by harmonic sources. This fragrance smells warm, sensual, and romantic bland of floral for the opening accord. Then at the final taste, the smell finishes off with white musk, veniter and sandalwood (Celine Dion, 2008). By showing this advertisement, the advertiser tries to promote that the fragrances from Celine Dion is needed to create perfect relaxation. Perfect performance from Celine Dion as a famous singer might be used to support the specification of the aroma which is created from this advertisement.

A new floral harmony is a special message from the advertiser. Literally, this sentence means a new floral harmony. Relate the fragrance and previous analysis above, from this linguistics symbols, the writer thinks that there is a pressure is new. This pressure tells that, this fragrance is the only one fragrance for female with floral relaxation harmony. In short, this fragrance is something that very useful to create a relaxation feeling to the user in their business.

A new floral harmony	Statement “a new floral harmony”
A new floral harmony means Statement “a new floral harmony”	The one special fragrance for woman with floral harmony.
A new floral harmony is The one special fragrance for woman with floral harmony.	

5. CONCLUSION

This research found various connotative meaning for each of advertisement. In the dominant way, the images of the celebrities are used to emphasize for whom that fragrances are made. The advertisers play on word and also picture to strengthen what they are going to say about the advertisements. The name of the

fragrance is the main keyword which tells the specification about the aroma and also another function that celebrity’s fragrance is supported by the environment of the arrangement of symbols in that text.

Finally, as the result of the analysis the writer concludes that celebrity fragrance advertisement is something to promote a product which is made by using the image of artists who present those fragrances and can be tools to be closer with them. One thing for sure, that advertisement is also one of their job to support their popularity.

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