

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter one as an introduction covers the description of the research background. It consists of Background of the study, research questions, research objectives, scope of the study also weight and relevance.

1.1 Background of the study

Communication is the process of interacting with any social being, communication allows people to exchange information with the other people. Understanding in communication occurs when the speaker and listener are on the same page. When communicating, people need language to express themselves. The following language is used to communicate your needs, talk with other people, share messages, express ideas, feelings and also thoughts.

In this era, foreign languages are very important communication media. Mastering a foreign language is one of the prerequisites for a person to be able make contact not only in his own country. Everyone can easily communicate and receive information in different countries. Another language that has become an international language for communication between nations is English. This is reflected in the rapid exchange of information between institutions in the era of globalization. Language is a means to express everything that is in accordance with human understanding and can be realized without limits in interaction.

As the 4th Industrial Revolution approaches, language and knowledge are becoming humanity's greatest weapons. Language is not only used to describe our surroundings, but also to build and maintain social relationships. In this sense, language is also a potential tool used to exert power. Language has the potential to be an effective tool of control in totalitarian states; however, even in democracies, power is still exercised through the use of language. Those who hold political power and control the media are in a position to exert influence over language and shape social narratives. On the other hand, power often fuels opposition and

demonstrations and provides a platform for competing discourses. Even in these situations, language provides a means to understand and change the systems of power that exist beneath the surface. Language also has the ability to influence whether or not a person is accepted as a member of society. The battle to exercise power through language began in Indonesia, after the presidential election.

Elections in Indonesia have been taking place since 1955 to elect members of the legislature. At the national level, Indonesians only elected a president in 2004, for the first time, the president and MPR members were elected on the same day Budiharto & Meiliana (2018). The next general election to be held in Indonesia will be held this year on February 14, 2024. Seeing this situation, conversations and predictions about who the presidential candidate in Indonesia will be have become a hot and interesting discussion among the Indonesian people, and many are discussing it. People are slowly getting to know the presidential candidates through various advertising media. One of the popular campaign tools in Indonesia is digital advertising such as posters. The popularity of digital advertising is increasing because it is supported by many new data sources, which allow advertisers to identify the audience they want to reach more precisely Dommett (2019). Then according to Cheng & Liu (2014) a new method, visual grammar, developed by Van Leeuwen and Kress based on systematic functional grammar because visual grammar allows one to decipher visual meaning without using words through the absence of framing devices, through vectors and through the continuity or similarity of colors, visual shapes, and so on. To analyze this political discourse, Leeuwen (2004) states that it is important to know one's social distance, relations and interactions to understand one's interpersonal relationships.

Presidential election posters are visual representations used during political campaigns to promote candidates running for president of a country. These posters aim to convey the overall message, platform and theme of the campaign to the voters. By looking at the image, voters can infer not only what is in the image, but also the message it is trying to convey. In analyzing an image, it is not just about what is in the image, but what the image means.

In understanding the message in the advertisement as a whole, a semiotic approach can be applied. Advertisements can be studied through a semiotic approach because they consist of many signs, and the signifier refers to something that is signified. Semiotics is known as the study of signs. Semiotics is a sign, symbolic, and communication process, which take the forms of words, images, sounds, gestures, and objects. Semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign and symbols. So, we can conclude that anything can be a sign as long as someone interprets it as ‘signifying’, something-referring to or standing for something other than itself. It means, every existing thing in our life is looked as a sign or symbols, that is something that we should give them meaning, although there are some things that have no intrinsic meaning, they can be classified into signs if we invest them with meaning. In semiotics there are many approaches to interpreting signs, one of which is the theory of Roland Barthes. Central to Barthes' theory is the idea of an order of meaning or relationships. In relation to the above semiotic theory, the campaign poster for the 2024 Indonesian presidential election was chosen as the object of this research.



Figure 1. 1
Online Poster of
2024's Presidential
Election Candidate
(Poster 1)



Figure 1. 2
Online Poster of 2024's
Presidential Election
Candidate 2 (Poster 2)



Figure 1. 3
Online Poster of 2024's
Presidential Election
Candidate 3 (Poster 3)

Based on the explanation above, the reason the researcher chose to analyze the Semiotics of the meaning of images on political posters made for election campaigns is to provide a study of how mass media is used to influence and affect public opinion where voters must be more careful and wise when voting time arrives. It is recommended to evaluate candidates' plans, track records, and achievements compared to their posters and campaign advertisements.

1.2 Research Question

1. What are the semiotic meanings of the posters in the 2024 Presidential Candidates' campaign billboards?

1.3 Research Objective

The research objective was as follow:

1. To find out the Semiotic meaning of Posters in Billboards Campaign for President 2024.

1.4 Scope of Study

This research explores the semiotic analysis of presidential election posters used in the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Campaign. Examines how signs and symbols convey meaning, emphasizing the elements of Representation, Object and Interpretation. Limited in temporal scope to the 2024 election, this research aims to provide insight into the meaning of semiotic elements in posters.

1.5 Weight and Relevance

This research expected can be used:

1. Theoretically, to apply the knowledge gained during the Department of English Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Kuningan. Also the writer of this research hopes to give an additional source of a semiotic analysis especially using Barthes's theory of semiotics to improve our knowledge and understanding of semiotics.

2. Practically, from the results of this research is expected to be useful for readers to better understand in interpreting the messages conveyed by the media, especially outdoor media, in conveyed by the media, especially outdoor media in the form of billboards.

And the result of this study is expected to be useful for students of the English Education department at Kuningan University or students from the other university for the similar research as the other reference. The writer also hopes the result of this research could give more reference for the development of semiotics theory especially semiotics from Barthes.