

Semiotic Analysis of the Lies Theory on 'Sasha' Toothpaste Advertising

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Abstract: This paper aims to analyze the Sasha toothpaste advertisement that was broadcast on mass media. Advertising is one form of communication consisting of information and ideas about a product that aims to influence the audience to the conative stage. The author is interested in analyzing Sasha's advertisement because there are several signs in the ad that are not in accordance with the reality in the Indonesian context, namely the content of siwak flakes on Sasha which siwak is a tradition of brushing teeth that refers to the Prophet Muhammad's recommendations as a sunnah. For the analysis needs of researchers using the theory of lies Umberto Eco. The method of this research is descriptive qualitative using semiotic analysis, wherein the semiotics the analysis focuses on the signs contained in the ad text. The results of the study indicate that the sign conveyed in Sasha's advertisement is a false sign referring to the Eco teori. Based on observations and analysis on Sasha toothpaste advertisements, it can be concluded that "Hijrah" and "Siwak" are signs that can be used to lie. Even words, images can also be used to lie. This is what Umberto Eco meant by the Theory of Lies.

1 INTRODUCTION

Advertising is a form of persuasive communication that aims to influence the audience to the conative stage. The purpose of the advertiser is of course that the products or services that are informed attract the interest of the audience to buy or use them. Based on this, the advertising creator set a creative strategy in creating advertising messages.

"Advertising is a form of communication that consists of information and ideas about a product that is aimed at the audience simultaneously in order to get a good reception, advertising tries to provide information, persuade and convince" (Sudiana, 1986: 1). Many types of advertisements, each of which has its own character. An advertisement requires creative ideas and concepts so that the persuasive message can be accepted by the audience.

Advertising is a form of mass communication that not only functions as a means of promotion to offer goods and services, but advertising has expanded functions, which is a tool to instill symbolic meaning through language and visualization in advertising messages. In accordance with its character, advertising is a portrait of reality

that exists in society so that it can spread social, cultural, political, and so on values.

However, sometimes advertisements that appear in the mass media do not match the actual reality, sometimes manipulated, sometimes exaggerated. Jean Baudrillard calls this phenomenon hyperreality, from here comes the theory of simulacra. While Umberto Eco issued a theory of semiotics called the theory of lies. At first glance, these two theories are difficult to distinguish, but the context of this theory is indeed different.

One ad that just appeared in Indonesian mass media in May 2019 to coincide with the month of Ramadan is Sasha's toothpaste ad. There are several things that the author thinks are very interesting in this Sasha ad. The first is that this advert carries the tagline "Sasha Pancaran Aura Islami", both of these ads use # time to migrate. Moreover, what is interesting is the selection of Teuku Wisnu and Shireen Sungkar as brand ambassadors with their Islamic appearance. The target market for this advertisement is specifically for Muslims because the content of toothpaste that is a selling point is using siwak wood powder.

Based on the information from PT Kino Brand manager, Sasha Halal Toothpaste has the superiority

of the original Siwak flake content in each product, it has also received halal certification. In addition to getting a Halal certificate, Sasha's toothpaste has also received a Halal Assurance System (SJH) certificate. Siwak, in the view of Islamic teachings, is a sunnah because the Prophet, according to history, always uses siwak to clean his teeth.



Figure 1. Siwak wood



Figure 2. Sasha's toothpaste packaging

The author is interested in analyzing Sasha's advertisement because there are several signs in the ad that is not in accordance with reality in the Indonesian context. For example, Siwak raw materials derived from Ark trees are tough to find in Indonesia, as reported in the following website portal: Siwak or Miswak (*Salvadora persica* Linn.) Is a plant that in Biology belongs to the Salvadoraceae family, and has been widely cultivated and spread in arid regions of the world, from India in the East stretching to the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq, Sudan in the North, and Central Africa to Mauritania in the West (<https://ganaislamika.com/siwak-1-tanaman-multi-guna-dari-timur-tengah/>).

In order to strengthen the results of the analysis and findings in this study, the author uses the method of semiotic analysis to reveal the hidden meanings displayed in this advertisement. Data is collected from Sasha advertisements spread in the mass media

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Semiotic

One of the semiotic figures in critical thinking is Umberto Eco. In one of his books entitled "Semiotic Theory," Eco said that semiotics is a study that examines the entire process of social life as a process of communication. Eco illustrates, people communicate through a variety of mediums, from the clothes they wear to the homes they occupy. From images, music, to culinary practices and even the landscape of the City. This communication process is called "significance." In this case, Eco refers to Peirce's idea of the process of non-linguistic communication, which does not require the emergence of message senders (Eco, 2009). The strong influence of the structuralism tradition, Eco's view of sign theory rejects between the appearance of signs and social practice.

The starting point underlying the theory of codes and signs is "semiosis" (the term from Peirce) which is infinite. "Umberto Eco's view of infinite semiosis is related to a type of mediator in relation to the position of the reader. infinite meaning on the other side: The unlimited semiosis of Eco is the same as the meaning of the Interpretant of Peirce (Lechte, 2001: 203).

The code associates language expressions with their fields of content. Eco uses the term "code-s" to indicate the code used according to the structure of the language. Without code, sound or graphic signs do not have any meaning, and in the most radical sense do not function linguistically. Kode-s can be "denotative" (if a statement can be understood literally), or "connotative" (if other codes appear in the same statement).

In the view of Umberto Eco, the code consists of two types, namely:

- Single code, where one element system is translated into another system. For example, Morse code.
- The code has a context; the purpose of the context here is social and cultural life. Therefore, the sign can have many meanings, meaning comes depending on the ability of the language user or the sign system. (Lechte, 2001: 201).

Based on this, Eco concluded that all types of cultural products are semiosis phenomena because they contain both of these elements. Consequently, the general theory of culture should be born from the womb of semiotics (Eco, 2009: 38). Eco defines

culture as a marking system through which the social order is communicated.

In addition to his interest in structuralism text analysis, Eco also combines openness, ambiguity, and reader. Umberto Eco said: "The author must strive so that the potential passwords he believes can be captured by prospective readers. The author must be able to understand the prospective readers" (Eco, 1984 in Sutrisno, 2005: 202). Eco distinguishes between closed text and open text. Closed texts usually do not have alternative interpretations, while open texts are deliberately designed to give way to the emergence of multiple interpretations (polysemic). The main characteristic of the text is ambiguity, irony, and complexity.

There are three things concerning the role of the reader, namely;

1. Semiotic codes and narrative codes are not merely the result of logical or transcendental cultural grammar, but rather the result of textual strategies where the author tries to communicate with the reader.
2. The reader has the freedom to interpret. In examining the construction of meaning, it must also be observed the cultural code of the text.
3. The text will vary according to what is expected to close the reader's freedom of interpretation. (Sutrisno, 2005: 202).

2.2 The Theory of Lie

"Semiotics is in principle the discipline studying everything which can be used in order to lie" (Eco, 1979: 7).

"If something cannot be used to express a lie, on the contrary it cannot be used to reveal the truth: it cannot in fact be used to" express "anything." (Piliang, 2003: 45)

According to Umberto Eco, the sign system is a cultural entity, that is the result of human construction. This allows the mark to be used as the correct delivery of information. However, the sign can also be misused to convey a message that does not match reality. Implicitly Eco's definition of the theory of lies is if semiotics is a lie theory, then it is also the theory of truth. Because, if a sign cannot be used to reveal the truth, then it cannot also be used to reveal lies. Thus the implicit lie theory is the truth theory, as the word afternoon is implicit with the word night. (Piliang, 2003:45)

Lies in the Eco perspective are not like actual meanings, not denotative meanings, but intelligent lies (Milan Kundera 1990 referred to as Imagology)

carried out by people who are experts in communication such as; mass media, advertising, film industry, etc. This is in line with Jean Baudrillard's theory of hypertension (figure of postmodernism). According to Baudrillard, hyper reality is the world of simulacrum and reality distortion where production and games are free of signs so that signs of loss of contact with reality are represented, where reality has been replaced by false images. In this way, something imaginary can be made real (Eco, 2009 at the reviewer Sugeng P. Syahrie). Denotative lies say or write something we know is not valid; in other words, the sign is not in accordance with reality.

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Analysis based on Communication Phenomena

An example of a lie in Eco's perspective is Sasha's toothpaste advertisement, which promotes Islamic religious elements, namely siwak raw material. The tag line "Pancaran aura Islami" and the time of pilgrimage is a sentence that is identical to Islam. In addition to the brand Ambassador Teuku Wisnu and Shireen Sungkar, some of the advertising stars are all Muslim/Muslimah seen from the Muslim clothing they use. Testimonials from users are almost all Muslim. Based on this, it is certain that Sasha's target market is Muslims.



Figure 3. Sasha Advertisement

Siwak, in the view of Islam, is the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad, the Prophet used Siwak to clean his teeth and mouth every time he prayed. Sasha's marketing raises this sunnah in marketing its

products. Even though history based on siwak is not only used by Muslims, although it is closely related to Muslim culture. This was evidenced by an article written by Ra'ed I. Al Sadhan and Khalid Almas, he once wrote a paper on the history of the use of siwak which was later published in Saudi Dental Journal in 1999. In a paper entitled "Miswak (Chewing Stick): A Cultural and Scientific Heritage" it is mentioned that miswak or siwak has been used by Babylonians since around 7,000 years ago. Siwak was also used in the Greek and Roman empires. Furthermore, Siwak is also used by Jews, ancient Egyptians and Muslims today(kumparan.com)

So basically not only Muslims who use siwak, but as if the advertisement wants to say that siwak is an Islamic culture, the prophet advocates to mate, therefore Muslims should replace the toothpaste used with Sasha because Sasha is one- only toothpaste in Indonesia containing siwak wood chips.

The people featured in the advert are public figures whose daily appearance is identical to Islam. The phrase "perfecting the sasha's hijrah with bersiwak" is time for pilgrimage always put forward.



Figure 4. Sasha's Brand Ambassadors

The reality of Islamic aura is not only visible from a lifestyle that in this case, is the selection of cosmetics such as toothpaste. Actual Islamic aura is

a person's daily behavior that reflects good morals as a foundation for behaving in life.

Siwak is a tool for brushing teeth, but in this advertisement, the siwak used is Ark wood chips and only one part of the Sasha ingredient. To strengthen the Islamic image, the advertisement uses Ambassador ad shireen and Wisnu, which appear to be in an Islamic-style fashion that is used with the slogan "Perfect Hijrah with Sasha"

This is where the simulacrum and reality distortion is taking place through production and the free play of signs, so the signs of loss of contact with reality are represented. The audience is lied to the slogan "Hijrah with Sasha" because the real understanding of Hijrah is not that simple. The Hijrah referred to in this ad is because Sasha claims that only this toothpaste is halal and is suitable for consumption by Muslims, so let Muslims move to use halal toothpaste. Actually, there are many other brand kinds of toothpaste that also get halal certificates from MUI.

Another thing to note is that Ark wood raw material cannot grow in Indonesia because it can only grow in hot areas such as in the desert and in several other places. Using siwak raw materials means that production costs are more expensive, sold to the market is also expensive. Only certain people want to buy. Even though Muslims in Indonesia are not all able to use expensive toothpaste.

4 CONCLUSION

Something that is imaginary becomes apparent in advertisements in the mass media. Signs in the form of images, music, text-tagline are imagology in the mass media, which Eco calls a theory of lies, or hyperreality in baudrillard terms.

Based on observations and analysis on Sasha toothpaste advertisements, it can be concluded that "Hijrah" and "Siwak" are signs that can be used to lie. Even words, images can also be used to lie. This is what Umberto Eco meant by the Theory of Lies. Namely the virtual world that is not in accordance with the reality, but the results of the game signs that can be interpreted mixed, depending on the individuals who interpret it.

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