

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the present study. It includes the background, the research questions, and the aims of the research. It also presents the research method and the organization of the paper.

1.1 Background

Advertisement is a tool of communication which can be delivered verbally, nonverbally, or both, to let people know about certain products. It can be found everyday and everywhere and therefore could affect us as consumers. Landa (2004) states that an advertisement is a specific message made to inform, persuade, promote, or motivate people to buy the product. The success of a product cannot be separated from its advertisement as the tool to introduce the products to the market. Kotler (2006) argues that there are activities which are directed at facilitating and consummating exchanges, which is called marketing. It means that advertisements aim to inform people about the products and to persuade them to use the product.

There are some criteria in creating a good advertisement. Good advertisements must have believability, involvement, and creativity qualities (Geller, 2007). It implies that the creative use images (visual representation) and texts (verbal representation) may lead consumers to try the product. This is because the consumers

tend to be attracted by advertisements with good texts which are also supported by fascinating images.

The advertisements are usually aimed at all people as their target market. However, the copywriters sometimes tend to use specific objects in promoting a product. For instance, the advertisements of cigarettes are usually performed by men. On the other hand, the cooking spices advertisements usually involve women. This may be an indication that copywriters create advertisements by considering gender.

There are many kinds of advertisements that are related with men's activities, such as sports, electronics, and automotives. Meanwhile, there are also advertisements that are associated with women, e.g. cosmetics and kitchenware. However, there are some cases in which the advertisements are not necessarily related with those stereotypes. For instance, there are sport products which usually exploit man stereotypes but turn to display woman stereotypes as well. One of them is *Nike* brand.

Nike is an international brand of sport equipments, which also uses women as the models in the advertisements. The print advertisements of this brand present women models in a different way. In this case, it is known that most women advertisements tend to represent women to be perfect, beautiful, feminine, and graceful. In contrast, the sport advertisements depict women as strong, confident, and masculine subjects.

In addition, *Nike* is one of the most powerful sport brands in the world according to INTA conference in Berlin with 67% of votes in 2008. It also occupies

rank 59 for the Top 100 Most Valuable Global brands in 2009. It seems that women models in *Nike* print advertisements tend to contribute to the increase of *Nike*'s market share among women (Cole&Hribar, 1995; Lucus 2000). Therefore, *Nike* is triggered to produce more advertisements with women as models.

The present study examines the representation of women in *Nike* print advertisements. The advertisements represent women both verbally and visually. Through Critical Discourse Analysis as the framework, both representations will be explained.

1.2 Research Questions

The study is geared to answering the following questions:

1. How are women represented verbally in *Nike* print advertisements?
2. How are women represented visually in *Nike* print advertisements?
3. What are the ideologies underlying the representation?

1.3 Aims of the Study

Based on the research questions above, the present study aims to:

1. investigate the verbal representation of women in *Nike* print advertisements.
2. investigate the visual representation of women in *Nike* print advertisements.
3. reveal the ideologies underlying the representation.

1.4 Research Method

The present study applies Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as the framework of the study. CDA, as Fairclough (2003: 9) defines, is “a framework for studying connection between language, power and ideology”. There are three levels of text analysis in CDA as offered by Fairclough (2003), those are description, interpretation, and explanation. In the description level, as far as representation is concerned, the data are investigated through several analyses which consist of the Transitivity, the exclusion or inclusion of element of social events, and the abstract or concrete representations of social events. Meanwhile, in the interpretation level, the linguistic features are interpreted on the basis that the text has something to guess. The explanation level is the final stage where the ideologies are revealed based on the analyses in the preceding stages. According to Kress, (in Dellinger, 1995) Critical Discourse Analysis treats language as a type of social practice among many used for representation and signification including visual images, music, and gestures. It aims to reveal the representation and the ideology not only through the text media but also through the visual image.

In addition, this study applies Visual Mood and Modality Analysis (Kress and van Leeuwen: 1990) to discover the visual texts of the advertisement. This is important to discover the hidden messages which are related to the verbal representation. It is in line with Kress and van Leeuwen (1990) who say that image is part of text and supports verbal text to create meaning.

The data are taken from www.Nike.com, www.coloribus.com, and www.theinspirationroom.com, which are released in June 2007 until April 2009. Six of *Nike* print advertisements are chosen as the data. The selected advertisements represent the latest advertisements *Nike* publishes. This study uses both clauses and images as the object of investigation. The analysis of Transitivity, the Exclusion or Inclusion of Element of Social Events, and the Abstract or Concrete Representations of Social Events are applied in analyzing the advertisements verbal texts (see Fairclough, 2003). Meanwhile, in analyzing the visual texts, Visual Mood and Modality Analysis are employed (see Kress and van Leeuwen, 1990).

1.5 Clarification of the Terms

There are some crucial terms which are frequently used in this study. It is necessary to look at their definition in order to avoid ambiguity.

Representation is terms of the way every aspect of the world is described through discourse (Fairclough, 2003).

Verbal texts are defined as “texts whose meanings are realized through linguistic code” (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1990: 4).

Visual texts are defined as “texts whose meanings are realized through paintings or photographs” (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1990: 4).

Ideology is representations of aspects of the world, which can be shown to contribute to establishing, maintaining and changing social relations of power, domination and exploitations (Fairclough, 2003).

1.6 Organization of the Paper

This research paper is organized in five chapters. Chapter I is the Introduction. This chapter presents the background of study, statement of the problems, aims of the study, research methodology, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper. Chapter II discusses the theoretical review relevant to the present study. Chapter III comprises the methodology of the research that includes formulation of the problems, aims of the study, data collection, and data analysis. Chapter IV contains data presentation and discussion of the findings. Chapter V concludes the study and offers suggestions.