

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Social media as a communication and marketing tool has gained considerable popularity, especially in the younger generation. Instagram, with over one billion active users, is fast becoming a preferred channel for the sharing of visual information. The use of Instagram by educational institutions provides an opportunity to attract the attention of prospective students in a more engaging and innovative way (Tuten and Solomon, 2017). English language courses are increasingly using Instagram to introduce their institutions and reach a larger audience of children, teenagers, and adults who want to improve their language skills.

The use of visual rhetoric and semiotic strategies within the ads can substantially affect audience perception, choices of enrollment, and brand visibility. Knowledge of the influence of visual elements within Instagram ads on consumer responses can aid language course providers in improving their visual communication and making them stand out from the competition. This makes the analysis of this phenomenon important for institutions looking to attract students and build brands through digital advertising.

In educational research, semiotic analysis is a powerful tool to decipher the symbolic and communicative elements of learning materials and classroom interactions. Back to the function of language, whatever is seen in the surrounding environment, especially those that appear visually or textually, is meaningful. Mat Alim and Abd Rahim (2021) conducted research on visual rhetoric in visual communication through public advertising campaigns (PAC). This study highlights that visual rhetoric not only conveys information but also shapes perceptions, emotions, and social awareness. This study confirms that the strategic use of visual rhetoric in PSA advertisements can increase campaign impact and public awareness of social issues. Another study by Ristanti (2021) focused on how the concept of vacation is represented in the Fernweh edition of Ritter Sport chocolate

advertisements released during the COVID-19 pandemic by using Charles Sanders Pierce's theory, this study focused on Pierce's triangle of the meaning chart. Meanwhile, in this study, the writer will focus on analyzing the visual rhetoric elements on Instagram from an English language course advertisement using Sonja K Foss's theory and combine the persuasion analysis by using Newbold's theory.

In conclusion, based on the phenomenon and the previous study, the writer is fascinated to analyze the meaning of visual rhetoric elements on Instagram from an English language course advertisement in Tasikmalaya. Thus, this study is entitled, "Analyzing the Visual Rhetoric of an English Language Course Advertisement on Instagram". Ultimately, the result of this study is expected to contribute as a reference for people who want to build their own institutions.

B. Formulation of the Problems

Based on the background above, the researcher addressed the following question, "How do the visual rhetoric elements construct meaning and perform their rhetorical function in an English language course advertisement on Instagram?"

C. Operational Definitions

1. **Visual Rhetoric:** Visual rhetoric is the use of images, colours, shapes, and layouts in visual communication to convey a message or influence the audience. In this context, visual rhetoric is used as one of the ways for the Instagram account of the English language course to build a brand and attract audiences to sign up for lessons there.
2. **Instagram:** Instagram is a social media platform designed for sharing photos, videos, and stories, allowing users to interact through likes, comments, and private messages. Instagram also supports various filters, effects, as well as editing tools, which make content more engaging.
3. **Advertisement:** Advertisement is a form of communication that aims to promote a particular product, service or idea to an audience through various media, such as print, digital, television, radio or social media. Advertising aims to introduce a product, service or brand to an audience that may not yet know about it.

D. Aims of the Study

Based on the research question, this research aims to analyze how visual rhetoric elements construct meaning and perform their rhetorical function in an English course advertisement posted on Instagram.

E. Significances of the Study**1. Theoretical use**

This research adds insight into visual rhetoric analysis in educational contexts.

2. Practical use

This research provides strategies for educational institutions to improve their marketing through social media.

3. Empirical use

This research provides data and analysis that can be used as a reference for further studies in the field of digital marketing in education.