

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Theoretical Framework

This section presents a brief explanation of several theories that support the research. These theories are related to visual rhetoric, Instagram, and explanations of advertisement.

1. Visual Rhetoric

Many definitions of visual rhetoric have been stated by experts. According to Danise (2007), visual rhetoric is a field of study that analyzes all types of images and texts as rhetorical structures, in which connotative meanings are unraveled. David Blakesley (2007) also defines visual rhetoric as the study of how visual images communicate messages, persuade audiences, and create meaning through both visual form and context. This approach considers the complex interaction between visual elements, context, and the purpose of the message being conveyed. One of the key theoretical foundations of visual rhetoric is semiotics, the study of signs and symbols and their use in communication.

Visual rhetoric can convey meaning directly or implicitly in a visual image. Visual rhetoric also describes the culture reflected in the image. Visual rhetoric refers to the application of knowledge that centers on the act of converting symbols into images in order to communicate or convey messages. Through a national rhetoric conference hosted by the Speech Communication Association in 1970, visual pictures were introduced into the study of rhetoric (Foss, 2005). In other words, artistic creations like paintings, photos, ads, and buildings also provide visual rhetoric images that have a function as a tool of persuasiveness, and aesthetic value. For example, a work of art or an advertisement is not only a communication tool but also must look attractive.

Foss (2005, p. 141) argues that not all visual objects constitute visual rhetoric; there are three characteristics of visual rhetoric. Images must be symbolic (symbolic action), involve human intervention, and be presented to an audience for

the purpose of communicating with that audience (presence of audience) (in Smith et al., 2005, p. 141). The three main features of visual rhetoric are stated below.

i. Symbolic Action

A picture should serve a purpose beyond that of a sign or symbol in visual rhetoric, and it should be indirectly related to the object of reference (Foss, 2005).

ii. Human Intervention

Humans engage in visual rhetoric in relation to the act of drawing an image. Drawing or taking a visual record (photography), for instance. Making something work requires a selection process that includes choosing colors, forms, materials, and even measurements. Visual imagery that is not rhetorical is likewise transformed into visual rhetoric by this human interaction. Both the creation and the interpretation of visual rhetoric include human effort (Foss, 2005).

iii. Presence of Audience

Visual elements produced and modified by designers are not just to express themselves. The other purpose is to communicate with the audience or the community. Designers can be audiences against their designs, but audiences do not have to be rhetoricians or designers (Foss, 2005).

Foss (2005, p. 303) argues that the term visual rhetoric used in the discipline of rhetoric does not only refer to visual objects as artifact of communication. The point here is that visual rhetoric is a rhetorical perspective that involves analysis of symbolic or communicative aspects. The rhetorical perspective on images or visual works is also characterized by a special focus on the nature of the image, the function of the image, and the evaluation of the image. The definition of visual image properties is paramount, followed by an explanation of their functions. Evaluating visual images requires an understanding of the substantive and natural properties of the components that make up the image (Foss 2004, p. 303). Foss's theory is described as follows:

- i. Nature of Image in the book "Theory of Visual Rhetoric" (2005), is explained as a process consisting of two main stages: "Presented Elements" and 'Suggested Elements'. The first stage, "Presented Elements", involves the description of the visual elements presented, such as space, image size,

medium, image material, and shape. While the second stage, “Suggested Elements”, involves identifying elements that may be implied in the work, such as concepts, ideas, themes, or allusions that allow for further development of meaning (Foss, 2005).

- ii. Function of Image, this theory focuses on finding how the function of the image can convey a message to the viewer, without knowing the intent and purpose of the creator of the visual work (Foss, 2005).
- iii. Evaluation of Image, the process of assessing images in several ways. In the book “Theory of Visual Rhetoric” (2005), experts choose to evaluate a visual work using the criteria of whether the elements in the visual work have a function or meaning that is in accordance with the purpose of the work itself, for example, in the study of an image that functions to remember, the researcher will analyze whether the visual elements (media, colors, shapes, etc.) in the visual work support the purpose of making the work (Foss, 2005).

Rhetoric is discussed as the main concept in this study. This provides a broader explanation of the visual characteristics associated with communication in the study of advertising. This study is based on important rhetorical ideas. Nearly all forms of communication are rhetorical in nature, meaning they can persuade audiences with their advertising messages or campaigns. According to Magdy (2008), visual communication is a persuasive endeavour that uses visual and textual to persuade others, hence it fits under the rhetorical framework.

Visual rhetoric can be understood in three ways: first, as a field of study; second, as a method or principle of visual design; and third, as a type of visual communication. When viewed as a field of study, visual rhetoric is based on the concept of rhetoric, which encompasses not only the study of literature and sound, but also culture, art, and even science (Kenney & Scott, 2003). All of these require the use of visuals to express or explain something. In addition, actions that describe rhetoric are also included in this context. To achieve good results in visual rhetoric, textual and visual elements must work together to contribute to the ideas and meanings that will be produced.

2. Instagram

Instagram, as a highly-used social media platform, has changed the way individuals, brands, and organizations communicate and interact with audiences. Manovich (2016) defined Instagram as a platform that enables users to communicate through visual language by sharing and curating images and videos. He emphasized that Instagram facilitates "aesthetic communication," where visuals become central to self-expression, social interaction, and cultural trends. Social media researcher Danah Boyd described Instagram as a photo-sharing platform that allows users to share images and short videos with their followers, fostering community through visual storytelling (Boyd, 2014). This definition highlights the social aspect of Instagram, where users connect and communicate mostly through images rather than text.

According to Lagorio-Chafkin (2018), Instagram is a visually-based social network centered on photographic and video content, which offers users editing tools and filters to create visually appealing posts. She noted that Instagram's design encourages users to develop their brand through visuals, allowing them to engage with a global audience. Instagram promotes interaction where engagement through likes, comments, and shares builds online communities and increases social presence. Kietzmann et al. (2011) proposed a honeycomb model of social media, which outlines various elements of social media such as identity, presence, sharing, relationships, reputation, and groups. Instagram utilizes these aspects to allow users to build social connections and establish influence.

In conclusion, Instagram is a highly effective medium for implementing visual rhetoric in advertising due to its image-based nature, design flexibility, and ability to build interaction. By leveraging compelling visuals, multimodal narratives, and interactive features, ads on Instagram can significantly capture attention, influence emotions, and drive consumer behavior. Therefore, Instagram is an essential platform in modern marketing strategies based on visual rhetoric.

3. Advertisement

An advertisement is a form of persuasive communication that aims to influence audiences by delivering strategically designed messages. In general, advertising promotes certain products, services, or ideas through print, electronic, and digital media (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Advertising not only serves as a tool to convey information but also as a medium to build brand image and influence consumer behavior. Advertisement plays a major role in creating opinions and producing rules that the audience must obey as a result of the delivery of information or knowledge delivered by the advertiser to the readers or viewers. According to the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language, advertising is a notification to the public about goods or services sold, placed in mass media (such as newspapers and magazines) or in public places. Thus, advertisers use persuasive advertising language as a form of effort to foster reader interest using diction and linguistic elements. The use of language must be appropriate to be on target.

a. Persuasion in Advertising

In advertising, persuasion is the strategy that enables marketers to sway a consumer's opinion with their message or product. particularly through the use of images, which can be accomplished through the use of ethos, pathos, and logos. Another name for it is The Rhetorical Triangle (Newbold, 2018). A presenter with ethos is one who is reputable, trustworthy, and morally upright. Because this concept requires emotional appeal, pathos is therefore linked to the audience. Feelings that the presenter should or wishes to feel for the audience. The message to be delivered is then linked to the Logos. It ought to contain logic, truth, and facts.

In the same way, advertising communications must always present accurate facts that the audience can accept. Furthermore, these three ideas have significance for creating effective ad designs in the advertising industry. One kind of advertisement that is important to the community is a poster on social media, such as Instagram. Therefore, the message of raising awareness is effectively communicated in ads through the usage of Ethos, Pathos, and Logos.

- i. Ethos, also known as ethical appeal, is used in advertising, for example, to show the public the validity of an advertisement or campaign. This is very important when trying to convince an audience. In addition, ethos has value and demonstrates the credibility of the writer or presenter. Ethos means character in the original Greek. Furthermore, the word “ethics,” as it is used today, comes from the Greek word “ethos.” Therefore, it is important to consider who will be involved and what features will be used when applying ethos in advertising to ensure that the advertisement or campaign is credible and trustworthy (Newbold, 2013).
- ii. Pathos is an emotional appeal that is also employed in advertising to influence the viewer. Pathos is used by authors, speakers, and marketers to evoke empathy and delve deeper into the content being presented. Pathos typically arouses or generates empathy or feeling in the audience. The same is true for public service announcement campaigns that make use of this emotional appeal. For instance, viewers will have some emotion or sentiment regarding the impacts that wild creatures must endure as a result of forest devastation. Furthermore, language that conveys meaning, emotional tones, provocations, emotions in the plot, and symbolism can all be used to build pathos (Newbold, 2013). Most advertisements, particularly the hilarious ones, do a great job of influencing the viewer with this emotional appeal. It has a positive emotional impact on a product or problem and can evoke a reaction from the audience, whether they choose to buy or support it.
- iii. The appeal of logic or the application of reason and logic to influence an audience is known as logos. Logos is used to present facts, history, comparisons, and possibly even statistics on a topic (Newbold, 2013). The word “logos” also comes from the Greek word “logic.” Although abstract in nature, it can be expanded with further theoretical clarity. However, the facts that support good reasoning and arguments are the most emphasized points. This is due to the fact that the information provided or advertised will be convincing evidence to persuade or influence the audience. The use of Logos alone, however, is not sufficient in advertising or message delivery; to fully

convince the audience, the presenter or advertiser must use Pathos to make the topic relevant and Ethos to make the audience feel and believe in the information. Therefore, these three concepts are essential in visual rhetoric for successful results or arguments in campaigns, advertisements, and other media.



Figure 1 Diagram of Persuasion based on Ethos, Pathos and Logos adapted from The Rhetorical Triangle (Newbold, 2018).

Source: (Mat Alim & Sulaiman, 2021)

According to Newbold (2018), the rhetorical triangle in the above figure illustrates the connection between Ethos, Logos, and Pathos in marketing and advertising. In this relationship, the audience represents the Pathos, the message represents the Logos, and the advertiser represents the Ethos. As previously explained, persuasion of the audience or user will occur when the three primary concepts mentioned above are combined. This persuasion becomes crucial in figuring out whether the message will motivate the user or audience to take action.

B. Study of the Relevant Research

Several previous studies on semiotic analysis and visual rhetoric in advertisements have been reviewed to conduct this research. Then, three previous studies are described in the following order.

The first study was conducted by Mat Alim and Sulaiman (2021). This study focused on how visual rhetoric is applied in visual communication, particularly in public service announcement (PSA) campaigns. This research discussed the role of visual cues in shaping perceptions and delivering social messages effectively to the

public. The author connects semiotic theory with rhetorical strategies in visual design, such as symbolism, visual metaphors, and the arrangement of visual elements. By analyzing examples of PSA campaigns, the researcher explains how meaning and emotion are instilled through images, colors, and text. The research also highlights the importance of critical thinking skills in reading hidden or implied visual messages. In addition, the article underlines the importance of audience awareness of the moral, social, and cultural messages carried by campaign visualizations.

The second study was conducted by Tenca (2022). This study focused on how brands use Instagram to develop their personality and engage users through multimodal content (i.e. using text, images, emojis, hashtags, videos, etc.). The study analyzes how these elements combine to create meaning and influence consumer perception, which contributes to brand identity. The study concludes that Instagram, as a visual and interactive platform, is an ideal place for brands to carefully build their personality. By utilizing multimodal resources, such as images, text, and interactive features, brands can effectively engage users, build relationships, and maintain a strong and consistent identity. This study emphasizes that brands should pay attention to the interaction between different modes to effectively communicate with their audiences and maximize marketing results.

The third study was conducted by Ristanti (2021). This study focused on how the “Fernweh” edition of the Ritter Sport chocolate advertisement represents the concept of vacation amid mobility restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The ad was chosen as the object of research using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic analysis. The ad uses symbols such as natural scenery, bright colors, and the word “Fernweh”, which means longing to travel, to evoke emotions and nostalgia for the holiday experience. As such, it not only promotes the chocolate product but also offers an imaginative escape from physical limitations during the pandemic. This research shows that marketing strategies like this can create an emotional closeness between consumers and products through associations with longed-for experiences.

Therefore, to fill the gap, this research aims to analyze the use of visual rhetoric and the use of persuasion in advertisements using Sonja K Foss's (2005)

theory combined with Newbold's (2018) theory in image posts from the Instagram account of an English language course in Tasikmalaya, as well as to understand how these elements contribute to building brand identity and audience engagement.