UNIVERSAL BEAUTY: ANALYSIS OF L'OREAL PARIS ADVERTISING BY SEMIOTIC CHARLES SANDERS PEIRCE

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the universal message conveyed through the emphasized symbols in the advertisement of L'Oreal Paris Infallible Foundation targeting multicultural audiences. In the era of globalization, global beauty brands such as L'Oreal Paris play a significant role in generating product innovations advertised extensively, including through digital platforms. The Charles Sanders Peirce semiotic analysis method is employed to identify signs and symbols in the advertisement and to analyze the universal meanings and messages conveyed. The findings reveal that the advertisement of L'Oreal Paris Infallible Foundation, showcased on the Official YouTube L'Oreal Paris Indonesia, successfully delivers its universal message by embracing diversity through the representation of models with diverse backgrounds. In this context, diversity is not only seen in the variability of skin tones but also in different cultures, races, and ethnicities. L'Oreal Paris effectively conveys the message that beauty is not confined to specific standards; rather, it is perceived as something broad, inclusive, and represented by various shapes and colors. Furthermore, the slogan "you're worth it" implicitly rejects narrow beauty stereotypes and norms, reinforcing the idea that every individual possesses unique and valuable beauty without having to conform to narrow standards. Thus, this advertisement not only promotes beauty products but also conveys a strong message of self-acceptance and appreciation for diversity in beauty perception. The universal message in this advertisement creates a positive and inclusive relationship with multicultural communities. This underscores the importance of understanding and acknowledging cultural diversity and values held by various societal groups in an increasingly interconnected era of globalization. Hence, L'Oreal Paris is deemed successful in promoting its products with an inclusive and culturally relevant approach, making it a good example of expanding market reach positively and effectively.

Keywords: semiotics, cosmetic advertisement, global brand, universal massage, multi-cultural representation

INTRODUCTION

The role of advertising in the era of globalization is increasingly crucial in connecting and influencing societies, especially through digital platforms with extensive

reach capable of reaching multicultural audiences (Alamsyah, Aulya, & Satriya, 2024). Advertisements must showcase the superior aspects of the products offered to consumers to stimulate their interest in purchasing those products. To capture consumers' attention, product presentations must be presented with maximum appeal, thereby triggering an increase in curiosity about the products offered (De Mooij, 2019; Meyers-Levy & Malaviya, 1999).

Mass media advertising not only serves as a means of promoting products or services but also plays a significant role in delivering specific messages to society (Shimp, 2000). Thus, in the advertising production process, a character is introduced through the selection of advertising models that reflect certain identities. In addition to the selection of advertising models, the use of language through taglines also plays a significant role in capturing consumer attention (Alfadilah, Armin, & Hasyim, 2017).

The utilization of female models is often employed in advertising and marketing practices, particularly in the beauty industry (Jeffreys, 2014; Wolf, 2013). Women's beauty becomes a focal point in the media to market a product, aiming to attract audiences' attention. Beauty is considered relative in societal views. As a global beauty industry with a multicultural target market, there is certainly diversity in race and culture. Therefore, it is important in marketing practice to acknowledge and respect this diversity by striving to represent beauty in all its forms. This may include expanding the scope of models used in advertisements, celebrating beauty in all skin colors, body shapes, and physical characteristics, as well as adjusting marketing strategies to relevant cultural and social contexts (Kafley, 2016).

This aligns with L'Oréal's strategy of universalization. L'Oréal's vision refers to globalization that acknowledges, understands, and respects diversity, including differences in desires, needs, and traditions with the aim of presenting customized beauty products that meet consumers' aspirations worldwide. International models are often used by L'Oréal Paris as representations in their advertisements distributed across multiple countries. This reflects their efforts to expand market reach with a uniform approach while still maintaining alignment with cultural diversity in each targeted location.

Given the diversity present in each country, researchers are interested in examining how L'Oreal Paris can communicate this strategy in their widely distributed advertisements targeting multicultural societies. To understand the intended meaning of these advertisements, this research will employ Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic analysis method to analyze one of L'Oréal Paris' advertisements from the Official YouTube channel of L'Oréal Paris Indonesia by identifying the signs and symbols emphasized by the brand and determining the universal meanings and messages conveyed in the advertisement

RESEARCH METHODS

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach. According to Creswell, (2015), qualitative research is an approach to constructing knowledge statements based on constructivist perspectives, such as meanings derived from individual experiences, social values, and history, with the aim of constructing specific theories or patterns of knowledge, or based on participatory perspectives. In descriptive qualitative research, researchers utilize an approach that describes or explains a phenomenon. This study analyzes the universal messages and meanings conveyed in L'Oreal Paris

advertisements, as well as identifies the use of signs and symbols to communicate these messages.

The research applies a qualitative method with Peirce's semiotic analysis technique. Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic method aims to analyze meanings attributed to signs and symbols of material objects. According to Peirce Tinarbuko, (2017), semiotics is the science that studies signs, their functioning, and the production of meaning. Therefore, the researcher selects Peirce's semiotics because this method is based on philosophy and is more suitable for analyzing visuals where the researcher will identify the signs and symbols highlighted by beauty product advertisements under the L'Oreal Paris brand. Subsequently, the researcher represents them according to what is directly observed and explains the meanings of these signs and symbols.

Data validity is one of the crucial roles in analyzing data to ensure the truth value of the collected information. In testing data validity, the data validity technique used in this study is data triangulation. In this research, the researcher employs source triangulation by collecting data from analytical documents, namely analyzing L'Oreal Paris Infallible Foundation advertisements on L'Oreal Paris Indonesia's official YouTube channel.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research examines the interpretation of messages conveyed in the digital advertisement of L'Oreal Paris Infallible Foundation, which is available on the official YouTube channel of L'Oreal Paris Indonesia. The advertisement was documented and subsequently segmented scene by scene to facilitate further analysis of the scenes contained within the advertisement. Subsequently, it was elaborated on and classified based on the components of Charles Sanders Peirce's Semiotics.

History of L'Oreal Paris

The establishment of L'Oréal in 1909 was prompted by the increasing desire among women for short, blonde hair, adopting a trend reminiscent of men's hairstyles. Subsequently, a French chemist named Eugène Schueller created the first applicable hair dye, known as "Auréale." This innovative product marked L'Oréal's early journey as a cosmetic company and was sold on a mass scale.

Eugène Schueller was awarded the Advertising Oscar for his promotional talent in 1953. He passed away in 1957, and François Dalle took over as chairman and CEO at the age of 39. Under Dalle's leadership, L'Oréal innovated with products that provided desired results for women without compromising safety aspects.

The introduction of the hair dye brand Préférence in the 1970s marked a turning point with the creation of its famous slogan, now internationally known as "Because You're Worth It." The message conveyed in the first advertisement emphasized the importance of self-esteem. However, L'Oréal Paris did not only view this slogan as the sole symbol of empowerment. The brand presented a vision of modern femininity that

challenged stereotypes by selecting ambassadors from diverse backgrounds of origin, culture, and age to represent global diversity.

As women's participation in public and professional domains increased in the 1980s, L'Oréal Paris provided a range of cosmetic and skincare products to support them in facing the world with comfort, confidence, and maintaining a youthful appearance.

The transition to the Millennium era marked a new phase for L'Oréal, as the company accelerated its expansion into new markets, segments, and distribution channels while beginning to address sustainability challenges. L'Oréal also continued to innovate to remain relevant with the evolving times and accommodate the changing lifestyles and needs of their customers.

Vission and Mission of L'Oreal Paris

L'Oreal Paris envisions creating the world of Parisian beauty to inspire women worldwide. From everyday life to the fashion stage, various interpretations of Parisian beauty and femininity are continuously reimagined each day. As a French beauty icon globally, L'Oréal Paris represents beauty in all its forms. L'Oreal Paris believes that there are no universal standards of beauty applicable to everyone. Instead, the uniqueness of beauty is recognized as something universal. They emphasize on the individual uniqueness of each person and believe that beauty should not be confined to one standard or universally applicable concept.

Therefore, L'Oreal Paris expands the definition of beauty by emphasizing offering everyone worldwide the best in terms of quality, efficacy, safety, sincerity, and responsibility to fulfill all beauty needs and desires in limitless diversity. L'Oreal Paris acknowledges that beauty is more than just looking attractive. Beauty is a power that instills confidence in people and helps them feel comfortable with themselves. To realize this vision, L'Oreal Paris has a mission to provide innovative, safe, and effective products and services, as well as to promote diversity, inclusivity, and equality in the beauty world.

The research findings obtained from Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic analysis of a digital commercial video aired on YouTube by L'Oreal Paris Indonesia will be presented. This study focuses on observing and analyzing scenes that can provide insights into the universal message conveyed in the L'Oreal Paris Infallible Foundation advertisement, thus ensuring its acceptance by multicultural societies. The selected scenes have undergone a selection process aligned with the research objectives and Charles S. Peirce's semiotic model, which includes the representamen, object, and interpretant. The analyzed screen captures from the advertisement are categorized into several aspects, including models, settings, costumes, and narration, facilitating the analysis within Charles S. Peirce's semiotic framework.

Visual	
Representament	Qualisign: the narrative, "New L'Oréal Paris Infallible Foundation with a better formula," gives a confident impression that the product can be trusted. Sinsign: The L'Oréal Paris Infallible Foundation product is visualized in different skin tones on a black background with a sign directly related to the object described.
Object	Icon: Product visualization with different skin color variations shows that this product can be used on different skin types.
Intepretant	Dicisign: The use of narrative highlighted in the scene above shows a strong belief in the quality of the product and conveys the message that the product can be trusted. Furthermore, by visualizing the different skin tones variations of the L'Oréal Paris Infallible Foundation, it shows its diversity, reflecting the diversity of races and skin tones. The importance of skin color as a key element in building beauty is at the core of product implementation that emphasizes the dynamic evolution of beauty (Wiraputra & Pristica, 2023). This emphasizes the impression of an integrated and representative product, arousing the interest and recognition of different social groups.

Visual	
Representament	Qualisign: The backdrop of the building's neo-classical architectural concept and the smart casual clothing style worn by models depict visual quality in the advertisement. Sinsign: Five models from diverse cultural backgrounds, with smiles

	on their faces while narrating L'Oreal's slogan "you're worth it," convey a message about self-worth and confidence delivered by L'Oreal Paris.
Object	Icon: Five models from diverse cultural backgrounds representing global diversity. Furthermore, the incorporation of architectural backgrounds featuring neo-classical concepts and attire styled in smart casual fashion reflects the origins of the L'Oreal Paris brand originating from Paris.
	Symbol: The slogan narrative "you're worth it" holds connotations conventionally linked with social values such as self-worth, self-confidence, and self-value (Wijaya, 2022).
Intepretant	Argument: The utilization of five iconic models from diverse cultural backgrounds, races, and skin tones reflects L'Oreal Paris' endeavor to embrace diversity, inclusivity, representing beauty in all its forms, and equality in the beauty world. As asserted by Wiraputra & Pristica, (2023), the representation of diversity in advertisements encompasses ethnic backgrounds, age, experiences depicted in the ads, product packaging, and beauty narratives. Furthermore, the incorporation of building backgrounds featuring neo-classical architectural concepts in the advertisement adds an authentic Parisian touch, as noted by Perdana, Putra, & Budiantoro, (2021), who highlighted that the neo-classical architectural concept is predominantly associated with European regions and is commonly found in buildings in England, Rome, Paris, and Berlin.
	The visualization of model attire in the aforementioned scene, showcasing a combination of casual and formal wear, reflects the choice of smart casual style, portraying an authentic impression of the Parisian lifestyle, where individuals opt for smart casual attire to express simplicity by adopting classic and elegant pieces (Mehata, 2021)
	The slogan, serving as L'Oreal Paris' tagline, carries the meaning of unifying women worldwide, encouraging them to fearlessly pursue their desires and believe in their self-worth, emphasizing their inherent value (Wijaya, 2022). This tagline evokes consumer sentiment, affirming their deservingness of L'Oreal Paris products and fostering confidence in their appearance without ethnic or cultural limitations.

This research analyzes a single digital commercial video aired on the official YouTube channel of L'Oreal Paris Indonesia. Throughout the analysis process of the aforementioned advertisement video, the researcher conducted a segmented analysis of several scenes in the L'Oreal Paris Infallible Foundation ad, classified using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics to identify representamen, object, interpretant, and the universal message emphasized in the advertisement.

The study distinctly presents how each element within the advertisement, ranging from the models used to the narrative and visuals conveyed, contributes to the overall message and brand image. It reveals that the advertisement effectively embodies L'Oreal Paris's vision of promoting beauty in all its forms and embracing cultural diversity, race, and skin color. The utilization of five models with diverse cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, and skin tones represents that beauty can be found in all shapes and skin colors, emphasizing inclusivity and embracing diversity as values upheld by L'Oreal Paris. This is supported by Kara & Özgür, (2023), who state that the representation of women's diversity in cosmetic advertisements reflects complex cultural dynamics influenced by factors such as geography, tradition, religion, age, gender, and socio-economic status. The concept of beauty, as a symbol of health and productivity, continues to evolve over time, particularly due to globalization, economic activities, immigration, and the role of social media.

Overall, the discussion in this research provides a profound understanding of the communication strategies employed by L'Oreal Paris to convey the universal message that beauty is not confined to particular standards to consumers. The use of women models from diverse cultural backgrounds in beauty representation is an innovative step towards embracing diversity and breaking down narrow beauty stereotypes (Kara & Özgür, 2023). The analysis conducted reveals how the brand utilizes various elements such as diverse model representations, a variety of skin tone shade variants, and a strong slogan to convey this inclusive message to its audience. This provides a deeper insight into how large companies like L'Oreal Paris use their product advertisements to promote the idea that every individual possesses unique and valuable beauty, without having to conform to specific beauty standards.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings on L'Oreal Paris Infallible Foundation advertising, it can be concluded that the advertisement successfully delivers a universal message that resonates with multicultural societies. L'Oreal Paris effectively conveys a universal message about beauty that transcends specific standards through the advertisement of L'Oreal Paris Infallible Foundation. The analysis involved the separation and classification of advertisement elements using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics, which identifies representamen, object, interpretant, as well as the universal message being conveyed. The research results indicate that the utilization of diverse models, a wide range of skin tone variants, and strong slogans such as "you're worth it" successfully embrace cultural diversity and refer to inclusivity values.

The utilization of female models from various cultural backgrounds and providing a diverse range of skin tone variants in its products reflects L'Oreal Paris' commitment to promoting universal beauty and embracing diversity as its core values. This research contributes to understanding the communication strategies used by global brands such as L'Oreal Paris in delivering inclusive messages to multicultural audiences. Furthermore, the research also presents a new perspective in understanding how

nonverbal communication, such as facial expressions and model representation, contributes to shaping the brand image and consumer perceptions of beauty.

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