

## Verbal and Visual Signs of the Greenpeace Advertisements

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### Abstract

*This study entitled “Verbal and Visual Sign of the Greenpeace Advertisement” is intended to identify the verbal and visual sign presented in Greenpeace advertisement, to find out the messages conveyed in Greenpeace advertisement, and to analyze the relations between verbal and visual signs in Greenpeace advertisement. The data in this study were taken from three Greenpeace advertisements in adsoftheworld.com. This study was using documenting method to collect the data and qualitative method to analyze the data. The data were analyzed based on the theory proposed by Barthes as cited in MacEachren (1995), in the two systems of signification which formulates that a sign is a system consisting of expression (E) which relates (relation –R-) to the content (C), the theory proposed by Leech (1972) which focuses on the standard component of press advertisement, and the theory proposed by Halliday and Hassan (1985) in the three features of context of situation. The result of analysis shows that the verbal signs appear as the texts, words, or sentences in the advertisement. On the other hand, visual signs appear as a picture on the advertisement for the message conveyed can be seen from the denotative and connotative meaning of the advertisements. Therefore, verbal and visual advertisements support one another in presenting the message of the advertisement itself.*

*Keywords: verbal signs, visual signs, advertisement, meanings.*

### Abstrak

*Penelitian ini berjudul “Verbal and Visual Signs of the Greenpeace Advertisements”. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi tanda verbal dan tanda visual yang ditampilkan dalam iklan Greenpeace, untuk mengetahui pesan yang terkandung didalam iklan Greenpeace, dan untuk menganalisa hubungan antara tanda verbal dan tanda visual dalam iklan Greenpeace. Data dalam penelitian ini diperoleh dari tiga iklan Greenpeace yang terdapat di adsoftheworld.com. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode dokumentasi untuk mengumpulkan data dan menggunakan metode kualitatif untuk menganalisis data. Data tersebut di analisis berdasarkan teori yang dikemukakan oleh Barthes yang dikutip dari MacEachren (1995), tentang dua signifikasi sistem dan merumuskan sebuah tanda sebagai sebuah system yang mengandung “ekspresi” yang “berhubungan” dengan “konten”; teori yang dikemukakan oleh Leech (1972) yang fokus pada komponen standar dari sebuah iklan pers yakni pokok berita, ilustrasi, isi berita, signature line, and standing detail; dan juga teori yang dikemukakan oleh Halliday dan Hassan (1985) tentang tiga fitur dari konteks situasi, field, tenor dan mode. Berdasarkan analisis tanda verbal adalah teks, kata, atau kalimat yang terdapat pada iklan tersebut, sedangkan tanda visual adalah ilustrasi dalam iklan tersebut, pesan yang terkandung di dalam iklan tersebut dapat dilihat dari makna denotatif dan konotatif*

*dari iklan tersebut. Oleh sebab itu tanda verbal dan tanda visual saling berhubungan satu dengan lainnya dalam menampilkan pesan yang terkandung dalam iklan tersebut.*

*Kata kunci: tanda verbal, tanda visual, iklan, makna.*

### **1. Background of the Study**

An advertisement is a public notice or announcement which promotes all kinds of product, provides service, and publishes an event or job vacancy. Based on the merriam-webster.com, the act of producing an advertisement is called advertising. In recent years advertising has become an important part of a culture that could affect our lives today. Providing services is one of the most popular advertisement in recent years because this kind of advertisement is attracting more people because there are various kinds of services which can be provided. In addition, there are many ways to advertise something, such as advertising through the mass media, billboard, as well as brochure and pamphlet.

From the social perspective, advertising primary function is to support the change in the human lifestyles towards a better future. Advertising something can also arouse the human perspective about the recent event or phenomenon that happens in the society. It can also increase the human self-awareness of the social issues that exist around them. Even though the main function of advertisement is to sell, it is not its only function; it may also amuse, inform, misinform, and worry to warn (Cook, 1992: 5)

### **2. Problems of the Study**

- a. What are the verbal and visual signs presented in the Greenpeace Advertisement?
- b. What are the messages conveyed in the Greenpeace Advertisements?

- c. How are verbal and visual signs related in the Greenpeace Advertisement?

### **3. Aims of the Study**

- a. To identify the verbal and visual signs presented in the Greenpeace Advertisement.
- b. To find out the message conveyed in the Greenpeace Advertisements.
- c. To analyze the relationship between the verbal and visual signs in the Greenpeace Advertisement.

### **4. Research Method**

The method is one of the most important points in doing research or a study. Based on merriam-webster.com, a method is the analysis of principles or procedure of inquiry in particular field. In this section, the research method provides four important points of discussion; they are data source, method and technique of collecting data, and method and technique of analyzing data.

#### **4.1 Data Source**

The data source in this study includes three advertisements taken from the adsofttheworld.com. The advertisements are about public service advertisements related to the social issues around the world. The website chosen focuses on the advertisement. From this site, there are three samples of Greenpeace advertisement used as the data source of this study and the samples contain verbal and visual messages.

#### **4.2 Method and Technique of Collecting Data**

The documentation method was used in collecting the data. The data in this study

was downloaded from the internet. The data contain verbal and visual signs which are the main focus of this study.

There are several steps needed to get the valid data related to this study, the steps which were used in this study are: first, the data containing verbal and visual signs were downloaded from the [adsofttheworld.com](http://adsofttheworld.com); second, the data were sorted based on their relation to the social issues around the world; third, compiling the data into one folder to make the analyzing process easier; fourth, taking a note of the verbal and visual signs which contained in the data.

#### 4.3 Method and Technique of Analyzing Data

The data were analyzed using the qualitative method. The qualitative method was used because the collected data are in the form of non-numerical data. The data in this study were analyzed based on the theoretical framework applied in this study. There are several steps in analyzing the data in this study. Firstly, the data were divided based on the components of advertisements; using the theory proposed by Leech in his book entitled *English in Advertising* (1972) which focused on the standard component of press advertisement. Secondly, the collected data were divided into visual signs and verbal signs and analyzed based on the theory proposed by Barthes cited in MacEachren (1995) in the two system of signification in which it is formulated that a sign is a system consisting of expression (E) relating (relation -R-) to the content (C). Thirdly, the data were also analyzed using the theory proposed by Halliday and Hassan (1985) in the three features of the context of situation.

## 5. Analysis

### 5.1 The Analysis of Greenpeace Advertisement.



There are three components of advertising in this advertisement based on Leech (1972: 59), as follows:

a. **Headline:**

Your child is growing.  
Not as fast as the oceans are rising.

b. **Illustration:**

The child's face which looks like half of it is covered with water.

c. **Signature line:**

GREENPEACE

#### 5.1.1 Verbal and Visual Signs of the Advertisement

**Verbal Signs:**

1. Your child is growing.  
Not as fast as the ocean rising.
2. GREENPEACE

**Visual Signs:**

1. The child's face which looks like half of it is covered with water. The color of the water is muddy with some color mixed in it.
2. Greenpeace logo in green color.

### 5.1.2 Denotative Meaning of the Advertisement

#### Verbal Signs:

1. "Your child is growing. Not as fast as the ocean rising."

A statement from someone to someone else who has a child; he/she stated that the child will grow eventually. And then the next sentence he/she said that the water is rising faster than the child's growth. These two statements show that the rising of the oceans is getting faster and faster, eventually, it will be faster than the human growth. In reality, the ocean keeps rising because of the global warming phenomenon. The global warming itself is caused by many factors, some of them are caused by human itself.

2. "GREENPEACE"

This is the name of the non-governmental environmental organization concerning the issues of climate change, deforestation, commercial-whaling, and overfishing.

#### Visual Signs:

1. "The Child's face which looks like half of it is covered with water."

An image that shows the condition where the human child face which half of it is covered with water. The color of the water is muddy with some color mixed in it. In this case, the child can also represent the next generation.

2. "Greenpeace logo in green color."

The next visual sign is the Greenpeace logo in green color. Greenpeace logo itself is a GREENPEACE word in green color. The green color is chosen because not only it is the color of nature, but also the part of the name of the organization itself.

### 5.1.3 Connotative Meaning of the Advertisement

#### Verbal Signs:

1. "Your child is growing. Not as fast as the ocean rising." It is to inform that the oceans rising faster than they have expected.

This shows the condition of our earth where the volume of the oceans is rising faster than the human growth itself. And this statement gives us a warning about the danger that will come in the future and needs to be prevented from happening. Ironically, the global warming phenomenon is mostly caused by humans. By using this statement, they hope more people will be aware of the global issues that happen around the world and a lot of effort is needed to solve this issue.

2. "GREENPEACE", it is the name of the organization which focuses on the environment, especially the issues regarding the environment.

The sentence above is E2 which is the combination of E1 and C1. It indicates that the Greenpeace's main concern is the recovery of the earth towards the better future. The text Greenpeace itself also lets people know that the advertisement was created by Greenpeace to inform the readers that the global warming will harm us in the future if it's not prevented.

#### Visual Signs:

1. An image of child's face which is almost the lower part of her face is covered with muddy water mixed with some red color.

It implies that there is a great danger that awaits us in the future, the terms future itself comes from the child's face, as children can sometimes represent the next generation. It can be seen that if the volume of the

ocean keeps rising it may threaten our next generation. The muddy water with some red color mixed, implies that the future will become horrible if the global warming is not prevented as soon as possible.

2. The green color in Greenpeace logo is a symbol of nature.

The color of the logo implies that Greenpeace works for the preservation of nature and will try to prevent it from getting destroyed by the human itself. Green is also a symbol of healing, indicating that Greenpeace tries to heal the environment.

#### **5.1.4 The Relation between Verbal and Visual Signs of the Advertisement**

Based on the theory proposed by the context of situation proposed by Halliday and Hassan (1985), verbal signs support the visual signs in this advertisement by relating the verbal signs with the visual signs. The relation between verbal and visual signs can be seen from field, tenor, and mode.

The field, tenor, and mode can be found in the verbal signs of the advertisements. The field can be seen in the text "Your child is growing. Not as fast as the ocean rising" the text gives us the information on what is happening in reality and who will be affected by it. The tenor is explaining about who is taking part in the advertisement, the participant itself is the reader who is a human and his/her role is the victim or the one who will be affected. For the mode it is also contained in the same text because the verbal signs give us a warning about what is happening, it is to persuade the reader that is a human to increase his/her self-awareness regarding the issues and hopefully can make the human prevent it from happening. Based on the field, tenor, and mode, the conditions that

happen in reality cannot be seen only through the visual signs; because the visual signs only convey the images of a little girl which is half of it is blurred by some mixed color. Therefore, the function of the verbal signs is to help the readers understand what is exactly happening in the advertisement or what information that can be taken from the advertisement. By adding the verbal sign the reader can understand that the ocean keeps rising faster and faster which needs to be prevented. The second sentence of the advertisement implies about the condition that is happening around the world and it is a global issue that has already happened. The image of the child which is half of her face is covered by muddy water tells us about the horrible future that might be happening if the issue is not solved immediately. This advertisement is helping increase the human self-awareness of the global issues.

#### **6. Conclusion**

Based on the result of the analysis, there are some points that can be concluded as follows:

The verbal and visual signs presented in the Greenpeace advertisement are, for the verbal sign it is shown in the form of the text of the Greenpeace advertisement and for the visual sign it can be seen as the illustration or image that appear in the Greenpeace advertisement.

The messages conveyed in the advertisement can be seen from the denotative meaning and connotative meaning.

The relation between verbal and visual signs can be seen as the verbal signs supporting the presentation of the visual signs by adding any information. On the other hand, visual signs can also support the verbal signs by giving a picture or presentation regarding what is being

advertised. Field, tenor, and mode also play a great role in indicating the relationship between verbal and visual signs of the advertisement.

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