

THE SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF GALAXY X BTS: THE STRANGE TAYLOR SHOP ADVERTISEMENT

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Abstract: *The main purpose of advertising is to market a product or service so that consumers are influenced to buy the product or service. The advertisement itself in its creation requires high creativity so that it looks attractive. In the advertisement, there are verbal and non-verbal messages. The verbal and non-verbal messages contained in this advertisement can be analyzed using semiotic studies. The object of this study is the Samsung Galaxy x BTS: The Strange Taylor Shop advertisement which is aired on Samsung's Youtube channel. This study used the theory of Charles Sanders Pierce by classifying signs into Icons, Indexes, and Symbols which are then analyzed using qualitative methods. The findings of this research indicate that the icons of the Samsung Galaxy x BTS: The Strange Taylor Shop advertisement are Jin and Jungkook, who are globally renowned boyband members and the Samsung Galaxy Note 20 itself, with its premium design. The index refers to the color of the smartphone used in the advertisement, which is Mystic Bronze, creating a premium impression. Meanwhile, the symbol in this advertisement is the Samsung logo, using the distinctive Samsung typeface to convey consistency and a universal visual identity. So, the sign contained in this advertisement shows that the Samsung Galaxy Note 20 is a premium and global smartphone that provides convenience for its users.*

Keywords: *semiotic, advertisement, Pierce, sign*

INTRODUCTION

In this digital era, all activities can be carried out more sophisticatedly. The digital era itself means an era in which technologies are so advanced that all important activities can be carried out digitally. This allows humans to complete things more efficiently and practically. It cannot be denied that this development will be able to help various types of new businesses or activities that can improve the economy. The field of communication is one of the fields that is experiencing rapid development. In ancient times we had to use letters to exchange messages between relatives who lived far from us. This of course takes a long time. But now it has become easier. We can exchange messages with distant relatives just by cell phone; telecommunications equipment that is only the size of a hand. Nowadays cell phones have also turned into smartphones which support internet and can be used to communicate and connect with people.

The internet itself began to develop in the 1960s, known as ARPANET. Then in the 1980s it developed into internet. Clearly, the Internet has changed our way of life. The internet is embedded in modern human life. The internet is also the main reference source, news source, place to shop and so on. Almost everyone of all ages, from children, teenagers, to the elderly are familiar with the internet. This is because the internet is able to connect the whole world in real time. It is unnecessary to visit distant relatives to see them, because with the internet and smartphones, we can see their faces in real time with video call applications. Especially when the Covid pandemic attacked the whole world in 2020. The internet is very helpful in carrying out daily activities. In terms of education, students can continue studying from home using applications such as Google Classroom. In terms of business, producers market their products online in various market places. Of course, to be able to carry out these activities an internet network is needed. Apart from that, through the internet, we

can get various sites with various information. Producers take advantage of it by marketing their products and services online. The way producers market their goods or services is called advertising. The internet is a very effective advertising medium. This makes it easier for all businesses to market their products effectively and cheaply throughout the world.

The main purpose of advertising is to market products or services so that consumers are influenced to buy the product or service. In the past, producers marketed their products only in newspapers and television, now they are starting to enter a wider market, namely on social media such as Instagram, X, YouTube and so on. There are also features available that can make shopping easier, such as just clicking on the icon or link attached to the ad. The link will take us to the shopping site and then buying and selling transactions can be done instantly and easily. When creating advertisements, there are many things that must be considered because the main purpose of the advertisement is to introduce and attract consumers to buy their products/services. Making the advertisement itself requires a lot of creativity so that it looks attractive. In advertisements there are verbal and non-verbal messages that allow the audience to interpret the meaning of the advertisement for themselves. The verbal and non-verbal messages contained in this advertisement can be analyzed using semiotic studies, which is a science that studies something that is given meaning and is called a sign (Hoed, p. 3)

One of the advertisements that we often see and products that are marketed close to our daily lives is smartphone advertisements, considering that currently it is very difficult for us to stay away from using smartphones. We can do anything from making calls or video calls, looking for sources of information by surfing the internet, making friends on social media, and even shopping can be done on one device, namely a smartphone. Therefore, many manufacturers are competing to make smartphone products that are popular with the public. Not only does it have an attractive design, but the features offered are also varied. This is also comparable to the price offered according to the specifications of the smartphone.

Samsung is one of the companies that produce smartphone. Samsung company was founded by Lee Byung Cheol in 1938. The products and services offered by this company are numerous and are often used to support daily activities. Therefore, Samsung has become one of the largest technology companies in the world. One of this company's products is the Samsung smartphone. Even in 2023, Samsung succeeds in selling 226.6 million smartphones worldwide. This makes Samsung a global market leader. Samsung can displace previous cellphone manufacturers such as Nokia, Ericson, Siemens, Blackberry and Motorola by marketing touch screen smartphones with the Android operating system. Their main smartphone product is the Samsung Galaxy S1 which was first introduced in 2010, followed by the Galaxy S2 in 2011 and the Galaxy S3 in 2012. In fact, Samsung still maintains the S Series until now.

Then, in 2011 Samsung released their premium product, namely the Samsung Galaxy Note, which is a smartphone and tablet in one device. This model is equipped with a stylus pen called the S Pen. Samsung continued to develop this series until in 2020 it released the Samsung Galaxy Note 20. In this release, Samsung collaborated with BTS; boy band from South Korea as their Brand Ambassador. BTS itself is a renowned boyband globally. Bangtan Boys or better known as BTS has 7 members and debuted under Big Hit Music. This boy band debuted in 2013 with the album 2 Cool 4 Skool. Their two albums in 2015-2016 managed to enter the US Billboard 200. In the following years, BTS succeeded in bringing home prestigious trophies, thereby gaining millions of fans throughout the world. Moreover, BTS has the largest followers on social media. With BTS' achievements, Samsung succeeded in collaborating with them to promote their products in 2020. One of the advertisements for their collaboration was entitled Galaxy x BTS: The Strange Tailor Shop which gained 11 millions viewers even though this advertisement only showed two BTS members; Jungkook and Jin. This advertisement has two different settings which then merged into one. To be able to understand the meaning contained in this advertisement, it is necessary to analyze the signs contained in it. Semiotic studies is used to analyze these signs due to semiotics is a branch of science that studies signs.

Therefore, this research aims to conduct a semiotic analysis of Samsung brand smartphone advertisements in collaboration with BTS using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics. It is hoped that this research will contribute to the field of advertising, especially smartphone advertising.

Several studies on semiotic analysis have been carried out by previous researchers. One of them is Bunga Diantirta Yapati Puteri from Universitas Negeri Surabaya in 2017. This research carried out semiotic analysis of Aqua advertisements using Roland Barthes' theory. The result is that a myth created by Aqua advertising is naming almost all types of mineral water as Aqua. Then, there is a myth that by drinking Aqua we become focused and vice versa, when we don't drink Aqua we are not able to concentrate. This myth has been going on for a long time among the public and has indirectly become Aqua's special branding. However, this research is different from previous research where Bunga used Barthes' theory, this research uses Peirce's

theory in carrying out semiotic analysis on the Samsung Galaxy Notes S20 advertisement entitled Galaxy x BTS: The Strange Tailor Shop.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Semiotics is the study of signs. Signs are a system that allows us to view entities as something meaningful (Scholes, 1982: ix). Some experts who study semiotics are Ferdinand de Saussure, Charles Sanders Peirce, Roland Barthes, Umberto Eco, and many more. But the development of semiotics began to be known in the era of Saussure and Peirce. Saussure and Peirce studied semiotics at almost the same time. However, they do not know each other.

Charles Sanders Peirce is an American philosopher. In contrast to Saussure, who viewed semiotics as part of the discipline of social psychology, Peirce viewed semiotics as a branch of philosophy. Logic is the foundation of Peirce's semiotic theory, according to which rational itself requires reasoning ability. Then reasoning can be done through signs. So, these signs allow us to give meaning to what is displayed. Signs are a means of communication. These signs are created by humans to communicate. This is also a representation of linguistic language that applies generally.

A sign is something that is made up of another object or that takes an object and gives it a new meaning by utilizing anything that has several meanings (Berger, 2015: p. 1). Thus, signs are visible objects that can represent the relationship between the sign's item and its recipient, imply to something else, and provide room for interpretation. A sign must be able to be captured, refer to something, replace, represent, present, and have representative traits that are closely tied to interpretive attributes, among other requirements. Peirce separated the meaning-giving process into three phases: signs (representamen), objects, and interpretants. Later on, these phases are referred to as triadic. The three stages of Peirce's triadic concept can be seen from this picture.

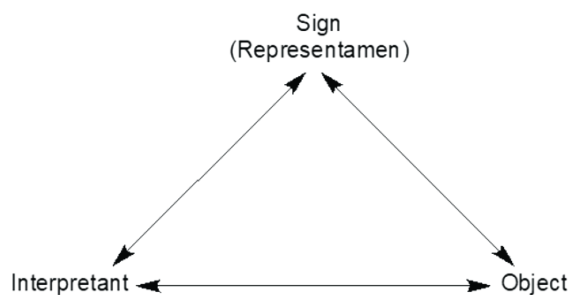


Figure 1. Peirce's triadic model

Signs (representamen) are physical objects that are seen by the five senses in humans and can indicate different meanings from the sign itself. Peirce defined signs as made up of Icon, Index, and symbol. Object is referred to sign's reference. An object is something to which a sign points or to which it serves as a reference. On the other hand, interpretant is a concept of thoughts of someone who employs signs and interprets the object they point to. For example, a switch off symbol as the sign (representamen), the object is computer switch off, and the interpretant is the mental concept of switch off machine.

Another triadic model of Peirce's semiotic is he divides the signs into three categories: icon, index, and symbol.

2.1. Icon

A sign that bears some resemblance to its referent is called an icon. Moreover, according to Hoed (2011) icon is a sign that the relationship between the representamen and its object is based on identity that is similar. The example of icon is a picture of a building, is a visual symbol that depicts the real building.

2.2. Index

A sign that points to or replaces something in relation to something else is called an index. However, the

index just indicates and reveals their location; it is not the same as what it refers to. As in the case of no fire, no smoke. In this relationship, smoke serves as an index and can be interpreted as an indication that fire is present. Another illustration would be pointing with the index finger to indicate something. People around the world then use this gesture naturally.

2.3. Symbol

A symbol is a representation of something whose meaning is created by social convection rather than following a set of rules. For example, certain colors have certain meanings that are formed from social convection. The color white has the meaning of purity, holiness, goodness, and so on. Meanwhile, black has the meaning of evil, impurity, immorality, and so on.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative methodology in which all data is examined as words and sentences. According to Hancock, Ockleford, and Windridge's book, qualitative research is primarily concerned with description and interpretation. It can also result in the appraisal of process evaluation or the creation of new theoretical notions. The purpose of this study was to find out the semiotic signs applied in the Samsung 's smartphone advertisement that was uploaded on Samsung's Youtube channel namely *Galaxy x BTS: The Strange Tailor Shop*.

The source of data was taken from an advertising video of a smartphone produced by Samsung company. Samsung has produced many variants of smartphone. One of them is the premium series named Galaxy series. Samsung Galaxy Note 20 belongs to the premium series. There are two editions of Galaxy Note; Galaxy Note 20 and Galaxy Note 20 Ultra. The Galaxy Note series is a high-end flagship Android phablets and smartphone. Galaxy Note models shipped with stylus pen namely S Pen. And incorporate a pressure-sensitive Wacom digitizer. Software features that appeal to the stylus and the huge screens of the devices are also included in all Galaxy Note models. These capabilities include note-taking, digital scrapbooking apps, tooltips, and split-screen multitasking. Samsung Galaxy Note 20 series offers refined hardware, more productive software, and powerful specs. The advertisement was uploaded on September 13th, 2020. Samsung's Youtube channel has 6.93 subscriber yet the advertising video gained 11 millions viewers. In the year Samsung appointed BTS as the brand ambassador of Samsung Galaxy Note, which is in 2020, BTS was named the best-selling artist by the organization that represent the global recorded music industry, IFPI. However, in the *Galaxy x BTS: The Strange Tailor Shop* advertising video, there are only two out of six members of BTS; Jin and Jungkook. The two members wear suits that give the impression of rich and young. The data were collected by following some steps. The video was watched repeatedly to have a better understanding of the story. Later, the allegedly data about signs were written down and grouped. Next, the data were classified into three classifications; icon, index, and symbol. The classified data were analyzed by using the theory proposed by Charles Sanders Pierce. The conclusion was drawn to summarize the result of the analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Advertisements are expected to increase sales of the products offered. Therefore, in making advertisements, there are many aspects to be considered, starting from model selection, storyline, word choices and so on. The message or image contained in the advertisement is then interpreted by those who see the advertisement. To help interpret the messages contained in the advertisement, this can be done by analyzing the signs contained in it.

The *Galaxy x BTS: The Strange Tailor Shop* advertisement only features two BTS members, namely Jin and Jungkook. With a Tailor shop in the background, Jin is seen sitting on a couch and then picking up his phone that was ringing. Then, a suit sketch shown using a Samsung Galaxy Note appeared on the screen. Then, Jungkook enters the room then grabs the smartphone on Jin's hand. Then, Jungkook is playing a game on the phone by adding aa Xbox Game Pass device which was attached directly to the smartphone. Jin, who is shocked, then tries to grab the smartphone. The atmosphere became more dramatic with the scene of Jin and Jungkook fighting over the smartphone while doing a simple dance which emphasizes that they are members of boyband who are certainly good at dancing. Moreover, the background lighting also changes according to the rhythm of the music. In general, Samsung wants to give the impression of a "global premium smartphone which provides convenience" for its users and several other signs.

Then, to understand these signs, it is necessary to carry out semiotic analysis. This analysis is carried out by looking for the signs contained in it and then giving meaning to the signs. The semiotic theory used in this research is from Charles Sanders Peirce's. In this semiotic analysis, Peirce divides signs into 3 semiotic representations; Icons, Indexes, and Symbols.

Icon

Icon is a sign in which the relationship based on similarity and indicating that the depiction and the object it represents are identical. The relationship between the representamen and its object in icon is conveyed with the phrase "similarity in various qualities" (Budiman, 2011)

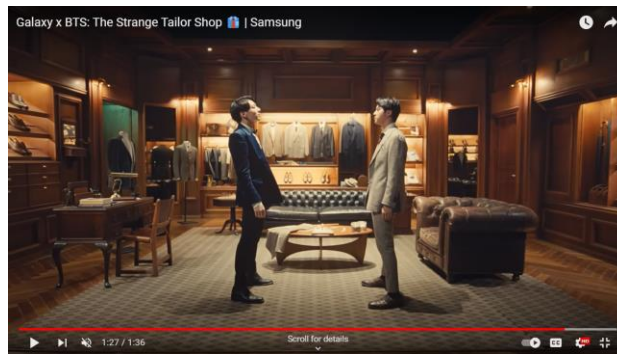


Figure 2. Jin and Jungkook as the model of the advertisement

This Samsung Galaxy Note 20 advertisement collaborates with a boy band from South Korea, where Samsung itself also comes from South Korea. *Galaxy x BTS: The Strange Tailor Shop* advertisement only features two BTS members. Therefore, the icons in this advertisement are the two BTS members, namely Jin and Jungkook. Jin is described as a tailor, which is in accordance with the title of the advertisement. Jin is seen wearing a luxury suit sitting on a luxury couch inside his shop which also shows the collection of luxury suits in the shop. On the one hand, Jungkook enters the scene in a blue jacket, immediately grabs the smartphone that Jin is holding. Then, Jungkook was using the phone to play video games. Therefore, the icons in the *Galaxy x BTS: The Strange Tailor Shop* advertisement are Jin and Jungkook.

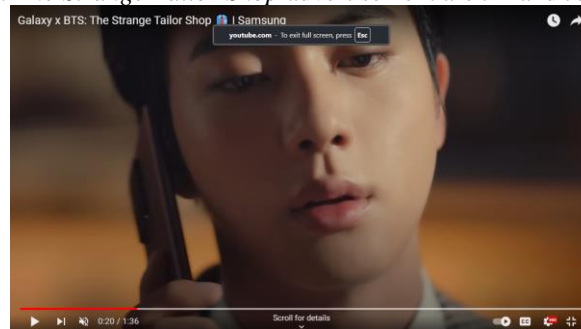


Figure 3. Jin is holding Samsung Galaxy Note 20

The next icon displayed is the Samsung Galaxy Note 20 itself. In the first scene, the cell phone is shown ringing and then Jin picks it up, then the words "hello?" appears. From here, the meaning to be conveyed is that the telephone call comes from a customer who wants to order a suit. This can be seen from the next scene, which shows a sketch of a suit design drawn with the Samsung Galaxy Note 20 which is equipped with an S Pen. Meanwhile, Jungkook uses the smartphone to play games. This is shown in the scene of Jungkook using the Samsung Galaxy Note 20 by connecting it to Xbox Game Pass. So, it can be concluded that the icons in the *Galaxy x BTS: The Strange Tailor Shop* advertisement are Jin, Jungkook and the Samsung Galaxy Note 20 which is the advertised product.

The use of these two icons adds confidence that the Samsung Galaxy Note 20 can provide premium yet convenience and flexibility for its users. This can be seen from Jin, who is described as a tailor who owns a boutique, who can use the smartphone to support his work, namely drawing clothing designs using the S Pen, which is installed on the smartphone by default. Therefore, using the Samsung Galaxy Note 20 makes it easy to support the user's work. Then, on the other hand, Jungkook uses the smartphone to play games. This means that the Samsung Galaxy Note 20 is not only used to support work but also for entertainment. Moreover,

playing games can also be supported by using Xbox Game Pass to increase the performance of the smartphone.

Moreover, collaborating with Jin and Jungkook as the global Ambassador for Samsung Galaxy Note 20 is the right choice. As in 2019, Jin was ranked as the overall 13th most popular idol and sixth among girls aged 13–19 in South Korea. Apart from that, Jin is famous for his handsome face so he often calls himself "worldwide handsome". Then, Jungkook himself is the youngest and lead vocalist of BTS. In 2019-2020, Jungkook was the most searched male Korean idol on Google and YouTube. With the popularity of the two BTS members, *Galaxy x BTS: The Strange Tailor Shop* advertisement received 11 million views on Samsung's YouTube channel. So, it is hoped that Samsung's collaboration with BTS will increase Samsung's popularity globally, where BTS itself is a boy band from South Korea which has millions of fans throughout the world. In conclusion, the icons found in this advertisement convey the meaning a premium smartphone with convenience and flexibility.

Index

Index is a sign which contains a causal relationship, meaning that one thing causes another. In accordance, Budiman (2011, p. 20) states that the sign and the object have a definite, real relationship that is typically causal or sequential.



Figure 4. Samsung Galaxy Note 20 in mystic bronze

The first index of the Samsung smartphone advertisement entitled *Galaxy x BTS: The Strange Tailor Shop* is the ringing sound of the Samsung Galaxy Note 20 which is placed on the table. Then Jin, who was sitting on a chair, lifted the smartphone. In accordance with the definition of Index, the existence of cause and effect indicates that this is included in the index. The sound of a telephone ringing indicates that someone is making a telephone call. So, according to Pierce's theory about Index, there is a causal relationship. The next index is the sound of Jungkook's shoes when he enters the room. The causal relationship that arises from this scene is that the sound of shoes indicates that someone is walking. Next, the smartphone color used in the advertisement is mystic bronze. The mystic bronze color was chosen from the other two colors, namely mystic gray and mystic green. Mystic bronze is a bronze color with a perfected tone. Add a little purple to create a color that is timeless but still sophisticated. Thus, giving a luxurious impression. The design of the Samsung Galaxy Note 20 is also very premium and timeless. This is in line with the theme and clothes worn by the advertising model. Jin and Jungkook wore suits that gave a luxurious and premium impression, the same as the impression that the product itself wanted to give.

In conclusion, the semiotic signs in the form of an index in this advertisement give the impression that this premium smartphone gets premium benefits such as ease of changing activities such as working and playing games easily.

Symbol

Symbol is associations between signs and objects that are established by socially normative rules. Symbols are both conventional and arbitrary, which means that both parties have agreed that the sign should be followed. Linguistic signs are generally symbols.



Figure 5. The information about the shop is written in English



Figure 6. The word Hello was shown

The symbol in the Samsung smartphone advertisement entitled *Galaxy x BTS: The Strange Tailor Shop* is the use of English in the advertisement text. The writing on the shop front window containing the name of the shop and the shop's operating hours uses Latin letters in English even though Samsung is a company from South Korea and the advertising model is a boy band from South Korea. In image 6 the text displayed is the word "Hello?" the word that is said when picking up the phone is in English. Plus, the shooting setting in the video seems to be outside South Korea. English is an international language that is often used to market products on a global scale. This shows that Samsung wants to dominate the global market. So, BTS as a boy band that is famous throughout the world is very in line with Samsung's target market.

Another symbol in *Galaxy x BTS: The Strange Tailor Shop* advertisement is the Samsung brand itself. This symbol indicates that the smartphone is produced by the South Korean company Samsung. Samsung is a multinational company that As of 2020, Samsung was the world's eighth highest brand value. There is certainly no need to doubt the quality of Samsung products. In 2016 Samsung released their own font, namely the SamsungOne font. This typeface is expected to show consistency and universal visual identity. This also makes it easier for global recognition.

In other words, the Samsung brand and the language used in the Samsung's smartphone advertisement entitled *Galaxy x BTS: The Strange Tailor Shop* are the symbols of the message they want to convey, namely premium, providing convenience and global standard.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

After analyzing *Galaxy x BTS: The Strange Tailor Shop* advertisement using the semiotic theory of Charles Sanders Pierce, the author classifies signs into three, namely Icon, Index, and Symbol. The results obtained from this classification are that the icons, indexes and symbols in the *Galaxy x BTS: The Strange Tailor Shop* advertisement give the impression of a premium smartphone which providing convenience and global standard.

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