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CONNOTATION AND DENOTATION ON THE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT OF KEMENDIKBUD REGARDING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract: This study analyses a public service announcement from Kemendikbud aired on television regarding a public appeal about staying at home and not travelling during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly on Eid holidays, in order to prevent an increase in COVID-19 cases. The study employed McIlwain's four advertising sign systems, namely photographs, written language, spoken language (narration), and moving images. The study was descriptive qualitative research. The results revealed that the first-order and second-order signification proposed by Barthes (1967) could be used in analysing the four sign systems. connotations represented the communication that occurred between the signs and the viewers' emotions. Meanwhile, denotations referred to the signs in the PSA that can be noticed by the viewers, namely photographs, written and spoken language, and moving images.

Keywords: connotation, COVID-19, denotation, Kemendikbud, public service announcement

INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has become a global health issue concern when the disease, which was first detected in Wuhan, China in late 2019, spread throughout the world and became a pandemic. The virus causes a fever, and symptoms of the upper respiratory system, such as coughing, sore throat, and runny nose. There are also symptoms like difficulty breathing, bronchitis, pneumonia, and sometimes death. Nowadays, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that the total number of cases identified worldwide is more than 175.686.814 confirmed cases and more than 3.803.592 confirmed deaths.

Over the past year, people have been struggling against digital threats, terrors of death, loss of relatives, catching sickness, shortage of medical resources and facilities, and economic collapse. COVID-19 has not only endangered lives but also ripped the human apart since lockdowns and isolations have to be done to halt the spreading of the disease worldwide. In Indonesia, confirmed cases were recorded at more than 1.919.547 cases,

while confirmed deaths from COVID-19 were recorded at more than 53.116 death. At the moment, the delta COVID-19 is spreading that appears to be more infectious. To prevent the soaring spread of COVID-19, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemenkes - *Kementerian Kesehatan*) highly appealed to the public not to congregate and travel if there is no need, as well as to stay at home.

The government's appeal for the society to remain at domestic is highly recommended because *mudik*, a tradition of returning to hometown to visit the parents and the elderly during the Eid holidays, has the potential to spread and transmit COVID-19 to people in the hometown. Travel can cause an individual to be infected by COVID-19, even if he/she does not have symptoms. The risk of getting infected with COVID-19 while travelling can lead to the spread of the disease. This can cause our loved ones in our hometown to be infected with the disease. The elderly and people of any age who have a serious underlying medical condition are at higher risk of containing severe illness from COVID-19. Hence, staying home is the best way to protect ourselves and others COVID-19, although, for a while, it is very difficult to get used to these conditions, especially for Muslims in Indonesia.

In engaging to the open to remain at domestic, through the Ministry of Education and Culture, the government (Kemendikbud - *Kementerian Pendidikan dan Budaya*) has been making efforts to reduce cases regarding COVID-19 infection, one of them is by making a public service announcement (PSA). PSA is made to encourage and invite the community to participate in carrying out something beneficial for society (Ariasih et al., 2020). Moreover, public service announcement PSA is very manipulative in controlling subtle subconscious and behavior. Afterwards, PSA is directed to change the socio-psychological structure of society or stimulate direct social action through its impact on the mindset of individuals of certain social bunches or society in common (Rudenko, 2017).

Previous research also outlines the semiotic sign and inferred meaning of two music recordings, specifically "Goodbye Christmas" by Lay and "Universe" by EXO. The inquire about centered on the ponder of significations, intentions, and myths in these recordings utilizing Barthes' hypothesis. The inquire found that significations were portrayed by properties, developments, expressions, and exercises in both music recordings. In addition, the findings revealed that the inferred meaning is passed on through visual pictures. These pictures communicate with the viewers about sadness, separation, friendship, and affection (Sagimin & Sari, 2020).

In addition, the research conducted by Fauzan (2020) aimed to see the meaning of connotation, denotation, and mythology included in the research especially in its object, namely the song "Film Favorit" by Sheila On 7. This study revealed that the most hypothesis utilized was Roland Barthes' semiotic hypothesis with the method of qualitative research and the approach of descriptive interpretive. The findings of this study inferred that the song lyrics under study contained connotative and denotative meanings. Likewise with myths. This tune carries the common myth of adore. Myths that contain the love esteem illustrate that cherish must be battled for and commit to keeping it awake (Fauzan, 2020).

Meanwhile, according to McIlwain (2007), the issue of race, representation, and the American discretionary framework are inborn within the long social history of racial separation. This consider analyze the presence of prejudice in tv political publicizing run by David Perryman against former Congressman JC Watts within the 1994 fourth area Congress race in Oklahoma. This think about utilized the concept of 'image rhetoric'

proposed by Roland Barthes through examining the four-sign framework by exploring the sign framework four notices. The investigation uncovered how advertisement supports utilize the 'Afro' allegory as the most picture; that the notice contended against the designation of Watts by certainly engaging to the (voters') gathering of people affiliation almost obscurity with inadequacy, wrongdoing, and recognitions of dark militancy related with the development of dark strengths (McIlwain, 2007). To fill the gap, this study is conducted to obtain the meaning of connotative and denotative from the system of the four sign released by Kemendikbud especially the PSA.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Semiotic of Advertising

Advertising semiotics offers an interdisciplinary perspective on the study of sign exchange. Since the early semiotic studies of advertising, the semantic concepts of denotation and connotation have been used as analytical tools. Since denotation consists of the literal meaning of a sign, and connotation refers to units of content that are beyond this primary level of meaning, connotation theory seems to be the most appropriate tool for discovering the "hidden" layers of meaning in advertising (Nöth, 1996). In addition, McIlwain (2007) stated that in utilizing Barthes' approach, he demonstrates in his paper that the benign nature of the advertising image serves to naturalise itself, to argue, even to mask the argument. Then, the masked ideological components in a produced collection of signs could be revealed by analyzing the ads system (McIlwain, 2007).

Moreover, Semiotics helps to reveal what kind of associations are used in order to build the minds of the consumers and to reveal the intended meaning, these expressions are described by utilizing the differences in the theories proposed by Roland Barthes. From the results of the study by Yildirim (2021), it was found that brands use various connotations to enrich the power of their meaning in advertisements (Yildirim, 2021).

Sign System

In advertising, advertisers intend to communicate the perception of the image projected to their viewers. To achieve this objective, they post an image that can be interpreted like verbal language that expresses its meaning more explicitly (McIlwain, 2007). McIlwain (2007) also divided the signs system into four categories, photographs, written language, spoken language (narration), and moving images. In line with Roland Barthes, who expressed that messages are passed on through the utilize of both pictures and language. Images keep communicative excellence, thus aspects of the language features contained in the images do not need to be read as written. Hence, the meaning is derived based on what the images contained (McIlwain, 2007).

The photo connotatively represents the existence of the viewer of the events in it, both from the time and place shown through the picture. The messages of Linguistic are more unequivocally connotative and stay or give extra clues with respect to how the watcher ought to translate the picture being shot (McIlwain, 2007). these differences need to be analysed simultaneously to understand the meaning of the image in the advertisement.

Sebeok (2001) also clarified that signs have certain unsurprising and normal properties of structures, whereas human signs can encode two sorts of references, specifically connotative and denotative, depending on utilization and circumstance in which it can be utilized to compose certain sorts of content. The signs are categorised into

the levels of two signification as issued by previous reserchers and exprerts; namely connotative and denotative (Sebeok, 2001).

Denotation and Connotation

The meaning of the word can be described with denotation and connotation. They are the two main methods of obtaining meaning in the language that represents ideas, objects, and feelings. Denotation and connotation are not two separate signs. They are the two elements of a sign, and the connotative meaning of a word exists along with the denotative meaning (Pakpahan, 2021). Denotation represents the explicit or referential meaning of a sign or the literal meaning of a word, 'a dictionary definition.' while Connotations represent various social nuances, cultural implications, or emotional meanings associated with signs (Pakpahan, 2021).

In other words, denotation, the most tangible meaning of the sign, what the sign depicts on an object or its meaning is explicitly based on the Lexia (picture pieces) that contain reading codes. Code reading is a system that allows humans to view certain entities as signs; 2) Connotation, the second layer of meanings that are open to various possible interpretations, which are formed when the signifier is associated with various aspects (Tamara, 2020).

For example, the word house does not refer to a specific 'house', although it can, but, to a category of the building that we know have the qualities of a 'house'. The denotative meaning of house is, really 'house', a prototypical mental image characterised by certain distinctive features such as [place to live], [has door and window], [made of brick], etc. This combined mental picture allows us to determine whether a particular real or imaginary building under consideration would fall into the house category. Now, in human semiosis, a sign can be freely extended to include any other kind of reference that emerges through association or analogy in order to obtain something in accordance with the denotatum. This extensional process is known as connotation, and the new reference is known as connotation. Experts then proposed the two levels of significations below to see the connotative sign represented by the denotative sign.

Denotation and connotation are terms that describe the relationship between the signifier and the signified, and an analytic distinction is made between two types of signified: the denotative signifier and the connotative signified (Pakpahan, 2021) that displayed in the table below.

Table 1 Sign Functioning from The Map of Barthes

Signifier	Signified
Denotative Sign	
Connotative signifier	Connotative signified
Connotative Sign	

Table 1 shows that the denotative sign or first stage of signification is that of denotation, (3) is produced from the signifier, (1) and the signified (2). Both create the denotative sign, it is also considered as the connotative signifier (4) thenext stage of the semiotic system. The connotative signifier should create a connotative signified (5) to make a connotative sign as a second phase of signification (6) (Barthes, 1967).

METHOD

To get the connotative and denotative meaning from McIlwain's four advertising sign systems, this study employed the descriptive qualitative method to collect and analyse data. This strategy was utilized to supply a deep and comprehensive analysis and investigation of a single substance. Additionally, a descriptive-qualitative plan was carried out in a common setting (Alwasilah, 2012).

The official YouTube account of KEMENDIKBUD RI was taken as the data of this study. The ad's one-minute PSA was uploaded on 18 May 2020. The information within the PSA was at that point distinguished utilizing Barthes' hypothesis on the concept of semiotics as one of the phenomena that occurred in the advertisement.

The signs then were categorised using McIlwain's four advertisement sign systems, which are photographs, written language, spoken language (narration), and moving images. Furthermore, each of the sign systems was categorised into the levels of two signification as issued by previous researchers as the experts; connotation and denotation. Afterwards, the signs were listed and analysed. In addition, the findings of this study was arranged in the descriptive form.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The clear subjective information examination of the open benefit declaration from Kemendikbud lead to the comes about and discourse. The area is separated based on McIlwain's hypothesis of sign frameworks (2007).

Photograph Sign

Photo could be identified as a stock picture with a denotative meaning. The image presents the representation of a natural reality that is taken mechanically, not controlled by human mediation (McIlwain, 2007). Based on the PSA used in this study, three photograph signs were found in the video. The primary and moment photo signs are captured at the starting of the PSA. At to begin with, a denotative meaning is gotten within the to begin with photo sign, e.g. Figure 1 appears buildings and high rises that meant the picture of the city. The denotative meaning of the photo portrays that the city has numerous buildings and high rises. The city as a place for people to have the opportunity to work also adds new meaning so that the connotative meaning obtained from PSA is that the city is considered a broad and modern job opportunity that can provide opportunities for people, especially those who live in their hometown, to get more relevant and profitable jobs.

In accordance with McIlwain (2007), Figure 1 presents a natural reality of a city. There is no manipulation or human intervention so that people who watch the PSA are able to understand the denotative meaning of the image. Then, from the peoples' emotions and interpretations the extend meaning of the image, the connotative meaning was provoked (McIlwain, 2007).



Figure 1. Image of the City



Figure 2. Calendar

The second photo sign within the PSA is appeared within the composed list of months counting the year and date, which implied the picture of a calendar in Figure 2. The denotative meaning or the connotative signifier is the calendar that appears days, weeks, and months of the year. In addition, several national holidays can be seen, including Eid al-Fitr, which are celebrated by the Moslem all over the world. From the photograph sign, the denotative message or the literal meaning in the ad can be understood easily by the marked two days in the calendar.

Moreover, based on peoples' emotions and interpretation of the denotative meaning, a connotative meaning from the photograph of a calendar in the video means the two days of Eid Holidays are crucial. *Lebaran* is very important for people in Indonesia to celebrate with family. It is a culture for Muslims in Indonesia that has been passed down from generation to generation.

The third photo sign in Figure 3 appears the symbol and trademark of Kemendikbud as the signifier and an picture of the symbol as the implied. This first-order signification produced a denotation, which appears the profile of Kemendikbud.



Figure 3. The Profile of Kemendikbud

The Kemendikbud profile and its new website, namely: bersamahadapikورونا.kemdikbud.go.id, infer a connotative meaning that Kemendikbud indication is seeking to encounter COVID-19, by making this public service announcement.

Written Language Sign

The written language signs within the PSA were within the frame of a transcript of the discussion between Bagus, who stays within the city and his mother in the village. The transcription is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The Transcript of the Conversation between Bagus and his mom

Bagus	: <i>Assalamualaikum, Bu.</i>
His mom	: <i>Walaikumsalam.</i>
Bagus	: <i>Bu, mau ngabarin. Kemungkinan lebaran Bagus belum bisa pulang.</i>
His mom	: <i>Lho? Mosok lebaran gak pulang?</i>
Bagus	: <i>Bagus pulangnya nunggu virus korona selesai dulu ya Bu.</i>
His mom	: <i>Ya makanya kamu pulang sekarang. Di kampung aman ko, Gus.</i>
Bagus	: <i>Kalau Bagus pulang sekarang, bisa saja Bagus kena virus dalam perjalanan.</i>
His mom	: <i>Ya tapi kan kamu masih muda. Pasti kamu kuat.</i>
Bagus	: <i>Mungkin Bagus kuat, Bu. Tapi kalau Bagus tularin ke Ibu dan tetangga-tetangga gimana? Bagus tidak mau melihat Ibu sakit. Mohon restu yo, Bu.</i>
His mom	: <i>Ya Allah, semoga virus ini cepat selesai. Izinkan anak saya biar bisa cepat pulang.</i>
Bagus	: <i>Iya Bu. Amin.</i>

The conversation in the PSA tells the story of Bagus who told his mother in the hometown that the current COVID-19 pandemic situation forced him not to be able to return home. Initially, Bagus' mom could not accept the news told by her son due to his physical appearance as a young and strong man, thus she believed that he would not get infected by the disease. Even, she assured that the situation in the hometown described by his mom was safe from the coronavirus. Additionally, his mom regretted if this Eid al-Fitr was missed gathering with her son. However, Bagus gave another reason for his decision not to return home. He explained to his mom that he was afraid of contracting the disease while travelling, then transmitted it to his mother and neighbors, and he did not want to see her mom be sick. After hearing Bagus' reason, his mom then understood and prayed for the pandemic to be over soon so she could meet her son.

All the expressions from Bagus and his mother within the PSA contained denotative and connotative implications. The word usages are meant by the strict

meaning of the words themselves making denotation. The denotation at that point amplified unreservedly to referents that show up, by association, or analogy, to have something in common with the denotatum to make connotation. For example, the term *pulang* or *mudik* mentioned frequently in the conversation indicated the activity of returning to the hometown during the Eid holidays. This denotation then enlarged to the *mudik* as a cultural and traditional aspect. Based on these findings, the connotation here is that Bagus could not return home on the Eid days, even though it has become a culture and tradition to be carried out every year.

The phrase *kampung aman* mentioned by Bagus' mom is also signified that there was small or zero cases of the diseases in the hometown. This first-order signification refers to Bagus' mom that might did not know about the risk of virus transmission from the activity of travelling to the hometown in which it could allow for an increase in COVID-19 cases at hometown. Hence, the second-order signification is Bagus' mom suggested her son to return home because she did not know that has the potential to cause the spread of COVID-19 even though conditions in the hometown are considered to be safe .

Within the final scene appearing the conclusion of the phone call, Bagus' mother implored to God that this widespread would conclusion before long so that her son could return domestic within the following opportunity. This denotation amplified to Bagus' mother who missed assembly her child, at that point the connotative sign is made, that Bagus' mother supplicated to God that the widespread would conclusion before long so that she seem meet her child.

Here, the literal meanings that contained in the written language signs were extended so that they have meanings associated with signs that called as connotation. The word *mudik* and the phrase *kampung aman* now have at least two meanings.

Spoken language signs (narration)

In the last scene showing the narration of Bagus as the narrator, he said "*Hari ini saya belajar berkorban untuk orang tua yang saya sayangi*", meaning that in this situation, he learns how to sacrifice for his beloved parents. This sentence is signified by the word 'sacrifice' indicating that give up temporarily what is valuable to others. The meaning from the spoken language sign tells the sacrifice given by someone for the sake of his beloved parents is an admirable action. Therefore, the decision made by the narrator in the PSA is considered an admirable and responsible action due to the sacrifice for the sake of his beloved parents. The connotation from the spoken language then was formed

Moving images signs

The findings on this sign system in this PSA are straightforward because they only show the perspectives from two characters in the videos, namely Bagus who is living in the city, and his mom who is living in the hometown, although the images moved with a different linguistic sign. In addition, these signs even can still be analysed using based on Barthes' theory on first-order and second-order signification.

Figure 4 is signified by the gesture of Bagus' mom who was elated with smiling while receiving a phone call from Bagus by answering *waalaikumsalam*. The smile shown by his mom and her utterance indicates that she was extremely happy while receiving a phone call from her son. Therefore, the feeling of his mom while receiving a phone call from her son can be proven from the facial expression and the utterance.



Figure 4. The Image and Linguistic Sign Form of Bagus' Mom



Figure 5. The Image and Linguistic Sign Form of Bagus

Meanwhile, Figure 5 shows the scene of Bagus living in his house in the city who said “Kemungkinan lebaran Bagus belum bisa pulang”, indicating that Bagus notified his mom that he could not return home on this occasion, which is the Eid holidays. In addition, this scene also shows the sad face of Bagus while calling his mom. The image and linguistic signs signified that he was miserable, concerns with his utterances and his facial expression. Therefore, the connotation from this moving image is that Bagus' sorrowful feeling was caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic situation, even it still occurred on Eid al-Fitr. Hence, it forced Bagus to stay in the city for a while.

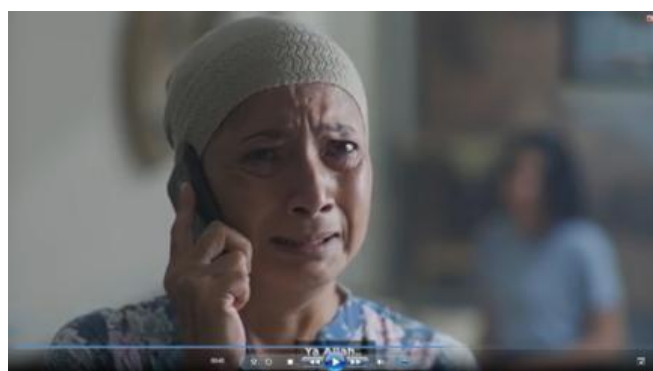


Figure 6. The Image and Linguistic Sign Form of Bagus' mom

The moving picture in Figure 6 appears the expression of Bagus' mother, which gradually changes from upbeat to pitiful. Usually seen from both picture and etymological signs. She begun to whimper and said Ya Allah (O God). This denotation

follows with the following pictures, that has been talked about within the written language sign, that Bagus' mother supplicated to God for the widespread to conclusion before long. In conclusion, Bagus' mother was dismal, confronting Eid day without her child. In any case, she empowered herself and supplicated to God so that the COVID-19 widespread closes before long so that she can meet her cherished child.



Figure 7. The Image and Linguistic Sign Form of Bagus

Figure 7 shows the manifestation of Bagus' sadness, as the expert mentioned denotation is the basis and the main meaning (Sukyadi, 2011). He scowled his forehead and said *iya Bu. Amin.* (Yes, Mother. Amin) listlessly. This denotation relates to Bagus himself who was tolerating the circumstance since the celebration of Eid al-Fitr is continuously anticipated by Muslims in Indonesia to visit and accumulate with their family at hometown. The sign showed by the scene of Bagus accepting and confirming his mom praying is the second-order signification of this moving image. The connotation of the moving image was also made by linking connotative signifier and connotative signified (Sukyadi, 2011).

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of Kemendikbud's public service announcement, it can be affirmed that Barthes' theory of connotation and denotation can be applied in the semiotics approach on the advertisement. The viewers of the advertisement, particularly the PSA, can get the messages passed on by paying consideration to the four sign frameworks displayed within the advertising. The obvious signs such as photographs, written and spoken language, and moving images are denotation. In the interim, the connotation revealed to the communication between the signs and the feelings of viewers/readers. In this result, the passionate recommendations of the watchers towards the signs influenced the production of connotation. The photographs, written and spoken language, and moving images created connotative implications within the advertisement.

This study presented a semiotic understanding of the signs in the public service announcement of Kemendikbud regarding a public appeal about staying at home and not travelling during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study found an overview of the benefits of PSA in informing the public about the importance of staying at home and being healthy and caring for others during the COVID-19 pandemic. It also contributes to helping advertisers to convey their message using McIlwain's four advertising sign systems. However, the discussion on the signifying order of semiotics and four advertising sign systems is limited. Thus, further research is expected to apply the Saussure tradition, the task of semiotics is to look beyond certain texts or practices to find a system, which

operates within it, finding the underlying conventions, differences, and significant opposition in finding category patterns such as syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations (Sukyadi, 2011).

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