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Manifestation of Cultural Values in Advertisements: A Semiotic Analysis of International Advertisements Based on Barthes' Theory

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in English (Linguistics)

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Declaration

We hereby declare that the substance of our dissertation, entitled "The Manifestation of Cultural Values in Advertisements: A Semiotic Analysis of International Advertisements Based on Barthes' Three Modes of Signification", presented for the degree of Master II in English (Linguistics), under the supervision of Mrs. Amira METIDJI, is entirely the results of our investigation and has not been submitted, in whole or in part, to any institution for assessment purposes.Further, we have acknowledged all sources used cited in the reference list.

We are aware that any practice of plagiarism will lead to failure of the dissertation and will be subject to disciplinary sanctions. Therefore, we are completely responsible for the content of this dissertation.

Date: 2022-06-18

Signed:

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Asmaa AGRED

Dedication

In the name of Allah, most Gracious and Merciful

I address praise to Almighty Allah who gave me the strength and patience to finish this humble study.

I dedicate this work to my loving family members:

To my dear Mother, who has never stopped encouraging and motivating me.

To my beloved Father for his endless trust and prayers.

To my sisters, for their love and support.

To my husband, who has been a constant source of support and encouragement during the challenges of completing this study.

To My beloved friends:

Siham and Selma for all the good times and memories we shared during the past five years.

To everyone who has helped and encouraged me during these years.

Sabrina BENLAKEHAL

Dedication

All Praise to ALLAH the Almighty, for giving me the blessing, the strength and the constancy to complete this journey.

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To the one and only, my husband Younes thank you for your support

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To my sister who is always by my side

To my mother who taught me that faith in God is the key to success

To my father who never deprived me from anything

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Abstract

Advertising has progressed beyond the use of simple techniques for announcing the availability of products or services. It has ventured into the domain of persuasion and conveying social messages embedded in advertisements. The present study is concerned with a semiotic analysis of four advertisements, two by MacDonald's, and two by Coca-Cola. The study's objective is to highlight the manifestation of cultural values in the advertisements taken from international brands. The researchers aim to apply Barthes' theory of visual semiotics, which consists of three levels of signification. The researchers analyzed the four chosen advertisements according to Barthes' three levels of signification, which are: denotation, connotation, and myth, to extract the cultural values embedded in each advertisement. To carry out the research, the study is based on a descriptive qualitative research method and uses observation and description as the research instruments. The study's findings revealed certain cultural values that differ due to cultural differences and cultural contexts embedded in the advertisements.

Key Words: Advertising, Semiotics, Culture, Cultural values, Ideology.

ملخص

لقد تطور مجال الإعلانات الإشهارية إلى ما هو ابعد من استخدام الوسائل البسيطة للإعلان عن تونر المنتجات أو الخدمات المعروضة لقد صار يخوض في إقناع و نشر الرسائل الاجتماعية النوعية متضمنة في الإعلانات التجارية بشكل خفي.تهتم الدراسة الآنية بالتحليل السيميائي ألربعة إعلانات اشهارية ماخوذة من العالمات التجارية العالمية كوكاكولا و مكدونالد.

تهدف الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على تجليات القيم الثقافية في الإعلانات الاشهارية المأخوذة من العالمات التجارية السابق ذكرها.يهدف الباحثون إلى تطبيق نظرية بارت عن السيميولوجيا البصرية التي تتكون من ثالثة مستويات للدلالة على الإعلانات.لقد حلل الباحثون الإعلانات ألربعة المختارة وفقا لمستويات بارت الثالثة للدلالة و هي الدلالة المتضمنين والخرافة الستخراج القيم الثقافية المضمرة في كل إعلان على حدة إلجراء البحث. تستند الدراسة الحالية إلى منهج بحثي نوعي وصفي هذا و قد كشفت نتائج الدراسة عن وجود قيم ثقافية مختلفة و هذا راجع الختالف الثقافات بين الشعوب و الختالف السياق الثقافي لكل إعلان نعم بين القيم الثقافية المستنبطة نذكر ارتداء المالبس التقليدية الالقة و المحتشمة االحترام الوحدة و الترابط المساواة اإليثار و المشاركة .

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General Introduction

General Introduction

The general introduction of this research establishes the context for this dissertation. It is dedicated to present the study's background and stating the research problem. It, then, demonstrates the research objectives and questions, followed by the hypotheses and the significance of this study. It also explains the dissertation structure and concludes with the definitions of certain key words.

1. Background of the Study

The term advertising is a message that is published or aired in the mass media. It is intended to convey information that will assist in persuading people to acquire or accept goods, services, and ideas.

In this regard, a message is created with many codes that aim to influence consumers to buy advertised products. Thus, the code interpretations in advertising are recognized as semiology, which Umberto Eco defines as being "Concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign" (Chandler, 2007, p. 16).This term became more popular as a new approach for decoding signs.

The use of semiotics in advertisements is critical since it helps to capture the attention of the desired audience, which might include youth, adults, men, and women. The way particular phrases, visuals, colors, and other signs are employed is critical to the effectiveness of an advertising. It is also worth mentioning that the usage of semiotics in advertising differs according to the product being advertised.

In addition to Umberto Eco and other important figures as Ferdinand De Saussure and Charles Peirce, Roland Barthes was also interested in semiotic studies. His work led semiotics to be a key method in cultural studies. In visual semiotics, he adopted the notion of Saussure's signifier and signified to examine the motion of images, photography, and advertisements.

In this way, Barthes introduced his theory of visual semiotics analysis used to analyze semiotic signs, particularly in photography and advertisements. In his theory, Roland Barthes developed three levels of signification; denotative, connotative, and myth which are usually used to detect embedded ideologies.

2. Statement of the Problem

Advertisements are a powerful tool used to support social messages and reinforce certain ideological beliefs embedded in the promotion of products and services. Advertisers intertwine a certain nation's cultural values to create an everlasting impact on viewers because a nation's culture has a profound influence on an individual's psychology, shaping their way of thinking and vision of the world. Therefore, advertisements need to be analyzed to comprehend the reflection of culture on advertisements. Furthermore, it is critical to decode the signs into different levels to expose the underlying ideologies and cultural values embedded in the advertisements.

3. Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this research is to apply Barthes' semiotic theory of analysis to four selected advertisements from McDonald's and Coca-Cola. The study aims at depicting the cultural values that are embedded in each one of the selected advertisements. Furthermore, it seeks to discover how advertisements reflect the cultural values of different societies.

4. Research Questions

Based on the foregoing objectives, this study aims to address the following essential questions:

1. To what extent can Barthes' theory be applicable to reveal the cultural values embedded in the advertisements of McDonald's and Coca-Cola?

2. What are the cultural values conveyed in the advertisements of McDonald's and Coca-Cola?
3. How do advertisements reflect the cultural values of different societies?

5. Research Hypotheses

To address the research questions, this work suggests the following hypotheses:

1. Barthes' theory of visual semiotics analysis would be relevant to reveal the cultural values expressed in the advertisement of McDonald's and Coca-Cola.
2. The advertisements carry different cultural values of different societies.
3. Advertisements reflect the cultural values of different societies by focusing on people's life styles, religious practices, daily activities and behaviors.

6. Significance of the Study

The present dissertation provides researchers with knowledge about Roland Barthes' theory of visual semiotics analysis and the way to apply it to highlight the manifestation of cultural values within advertisements of international brands. In other words, this research will give contribution to the ones who are concerned with the study of semiotics and the notion of advertisements and cultural values. Moreover, the findings of this research will show how certain ideologies are embedded in advertisements and the way to decode them by using the theory of Barthes.

7. Structure of the Dissertation

The present study consists of a general introduction, three chapters and a general conclusion.The introduction begins with a general background of the study, which includes the study's problem, research questions, aims, and significance in addition to the definition of some key terms.

The first chapter dealswith several definitions of advertising, then moves on to different types of advertising and the strategies utilized in advertisements. It then delves into the link between culture and advertising. Besides, it includes an overview of semiotics as well as de Saussure, Pierce, and Barthes theories. In addition, it sheds light on several previous studies that are relevant to the scope of the research.

The second chapter focuses on the research methods and data analysis. It includes the research design and the corpus of the study, followed by the data collection procedures. It also displays the data analysis procedures. Furthermore, it presents the analysis offour advertisements using Roland Barthes' theory of visual semiotics that consists of three levels.

The last chapter is devoted to the discussion of the results, pedagogical implications, and further suggestions. It tackles a summary of the findings while also connecting them to the research questions. Furthermore, the last chapter highlights the study's limitations and offers further suggestions to students for future research.

8. Definition of key words

For a better understanding of this study, researchers find it crucial to define some key terms related to this research to avoid any unnecessary misunderstanding:

Advertising: According to Cook (2001) advertising is a method of communicating with product users that employs all available media to do so including messages, television, print newspapers, or magazines (p.4).

Semiotics: Chandler (2007) referred to semiotics as the study of signs, which includes logos, gestures, and other non- linguistic signs. Semiotics refers to how meaning is generated and how it is created (p.2).

Culture: According to Kluckhohn (1951), Culture consists in patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols,

constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional(i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values (p.86).

Cultural values: As defined by miller (2001), cultural values are the core principles or ideas that an entire society or community revolves around, embedded in a culture's values include a society's tradition, rituals, and beliefs. Cultural values refer to what is judged as right or wrong, they refer to issues of morality (p.151).

Ideology: According to Teun Van Dijk (1998), ideology is the fundamental frames of social cognition held by members of social groupings that comprise relevant sociocultural values selection and that are arranged into an ideological schema that represents a group's self-definition (p.135).

Chapter One: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Chapter One: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

Introduction

The first chapter of this research covers the theoretical framework and literature review. It starts with a variety of definitions of advertising, and then it mentions types of advertising, and the techniques used in advertisements. It proceeds with exploring the relationship between culture and advertising. This chapter provides a general summary of semiotics along with de Saussure, Pierce, and Barthes theories. At the end, this chapter reviews some previous studies that were found to be relevant to the scope of this investigation.

1.1. Advertising

Being a component of the marketing umbrella, advertising is any form of paid public announcement intended to drag people's attention towards specific merchandises, services, or ideas. It is a strategy used by companies and brands to convey socially relevant messages, publicize a product or a service, attract new customers, and maintain a solid relationship with the existing ones. Bovée and Arnes (1992) define advertising as being "the nonpersonal communication of information usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature about products, services, or ideas by identified sponsors through the various media'' (p.07).

In addition, the meaning and role of advertisement are different from advertising. It is a paid promotional tool packed by an identified sponsor to call public attention to an offering or a brand, giving information to the potential buyers interested in seeking information about the product. The role of an advertisement is to persuade, manipulate, or influence a targeted category of people in society with a specific offering or a product to increase the rate of sales and create a good brand image, which by time turns to become a competition between firms to gain the trust and loyalty of costumers.

Besides, Srivastava (2017) states that "Avertissements also shape the perception of the customers either in the positive or in a negative way. People can perceive the quality of the products by gathering the information, which they usually get through advertisements. The perception of the quality, awareness of the product and consumer opinion drives the consumer buying decision'' (p.24). Accordingly, advertisements have eager rules and this is due to their different types.

1.2. Types of Advertising

Advertisements play a very important role in shaping the consumers opinion about a specific product or a service, while advertisers aim to reach the largest possible number of people throughout different means of communication. As the modern world is witnessing a great revolution in technology, methods and ways of advertising became more diverse and creative, hence there are four major types of advertising to be distinguished: Print Advertising, Broadcast Advertising, Outdoor Advertising, and Covert Advertising.

1.2.1. Print Advertising

Print advertising was the most effective type of advertising in the 19th and 20th centuries, but it has been steadily declining since the introduction of the digital age. Weilbcher (2003) states that with the shift to new media such as the internet, the print advertising industry is on the lookout for advertising innovations that will ensure consumer attention and thereby ensure the effectiveness of prints advertising campaigns.

Print advertising encompasses newspapers, periodicals, pamphlets, and brochures printed on a hard copy such as paper intended to target a specific group of individuals, usually dedicated readers.

Because it gives verified and truthful information, print advertising establishes credibility and generates confidence. People read printed newspapers and magazines

more than digital ones because the reader is more concentrated and can intentionally read the advertisement.

1.2.2. Broadcast Advertising

Broadcast advertising dates back to the 1920s and the 1930s, when Television and Radio shows first become popular. Because it was the new trend at the time, companies and brands used it to promote their products and make them more popular by sponsoring those shows and programs, having a Thank you message delivered either at the beginning or at the end of the show.

Broadcast advertising is any kind of commercials paid for by advertisers to the broadcasters in order to airs on radio stations, shown on television, and on social media and are usually called an advertising spot, which runs from 45 to 60seconds.

According to Liaukonyte et al. (2015), people spend an average of five hours every day behind the Television screen because it is one of their favorite pastimes. Therefore, using broadcast spots is not always for the promotion of a product or merchandise; As a result, using broadcast advertisements is not necessarily for the sale of a product or commodity as it promotes ideas and raise public awareness among people as well.

Cyprus (2022) ascertained that free public service announcements are standard broadcasting fare on television and radio, despite the fact that most broadcast advertising is paid. Broadcasters give charitable organizations and the government a limited amount of free slots to promote public safety messages and information. Anti-drug messaging or instructions about what to do in the event of an influenza outbreak may be included in public service announcements.

1.2.3. Outdoor Advertising

Outdoor advertising, also known as out-of-home advertising, is any type of advertisement that is painted or attached and placed in public places such as streets,

highways, subways, the sides of buildings, and in or on various modes of public transportation in order to reach consumers in a more impactful way on a daily basis.

Outdoor advertising includes billboards, wallscapes, banners, holdings, and posters that usually aim at dragging the attention of people while they are on the go, walking downtown, driving their vehicles or using public transportation.

Besides, Outdoor Advertising Association of America (2011) declares that the CPM (cost per mile) of outdoor advertising is historically one of the lowest- second only to radio priced media for advertisements, for advertisers that means reaching more people with less cost.

Chris Gadek, the vice president of growth at Adquick L.A(2020), states that transit advertisements provide high visibility as they travel from one place to another, positioned where consumers are not likely to ignore them(para.2).

1.2.4. Covert Advertising

Covert advertising is a type of advertising in which products and brands getspromoted in a non-direct manner, usually by embedding them in films and television shows in a creative way that allows the endorsed product to stand out without a clear statement or direct indication.

Moreover, covert advertising is a recent development in the field of advertising and is widely used by filmmakers and producers. Advertisers pay a fee for their products to be within a project, and that is to achieve a lucrative situation for both the directors and endorsers. Advertisers use covert advertising as an undercover tactic to build a positive brand image for their products, making them more familiar and memorable to the targeted audience and to outperform competitors. Furthermore, advertisers use specific techniques in their advertising campaigns to make them more effective and persuasive.

1.3. Techniques used in Advertising

Advertisers tend to straighten their advertising campaigns by making them more appealing to consumers. As a result, advertisers employ a variety of techniques and methods that are both convenient and creative. Some of these approaches rely on persuasive language, which functions as a key component in gaining the audience's trust and influencing their thoughts, while others rely on visual elements.

1.3.1. Alliteration

It is a language device derived from Latin. It means letters of the alphabet in which the repetition of the same consonant sound or letter occurs at the beginning of adjacent. Poets and authors use this stylistic writing technique in their poems and literary works to create rhythm, mood, and tone within their writings making it more interesting and enjoyable to read.

The use of alliteration in the field of advertising can help create a memorable jingle that will stick in the audience's mind and motivate them into action since they are catchy and easily recognizable; they are special even without the visual cues and semiotics. There are some famous examples of alliterations in brand names, such as Coca-Cola, Dunkin Donuts, Blackberry, etc. The use of alliteration can also be found in slogans, for instance in:

- Jaguar: Don't Dream it. Drive it.
- Land Rover: The best four by four by far.
- Country Life Butter: You'll never put a better bit of butter on your knife.

1.3.2. Emotive Language

Emotive language refers to words and phrases that are intended to elicit an emotional reaction or provoke an emotion in relation to a specific subject. It can evoke either positive or negative feelings.

By using emotive language in their advertisements, advertisers set a strong emotional connection between the consumer's personal values and emotions and the products and services offered to promotion. The New Mexico Media Literacy Project (NMMLP,2001) states "This persuasion technique tries to link a product or a service with something already liked or desired by the target audience, such as fun, pleasure, intimacy, fear, etc. The media message does not make explicit claims that you will get these things; the association is implied.'' (The language of Persuasion, p.2).

1.3.3. Bandwagon Advertising

Bandwagon advertising is a type of propaganda that employs persuasion, to convince people to purchase a product or service in order to avoid being left behind. Advertising campaigns try to encourage people to be part of something popular or follow a trend and create a sense of togetherness. There are several well-known brands that employ adjectives and imperative command in their advertising campaigns .For example: Nike uses Imperative command in their slogan 'Just Do It', while Colgate campaign slogan 'Try our favorite new toothpaste now!' uses both imperatives and inclusive language, which creates sense of unity and togetherness for the potential consumers.

Bandwagon advertising is one of many techniques to get people interested in a particular product or a service. It works when the company provessuccessfulness in the market by establishing a secure fan base of loyal consumes.

1.3.4. Testimonials

Testimonials are a statement given by a supporter, approving positive comments about a product or a brand. Testimonials aim at creating trust and strengthening brand credibility. Kean, C. (2022, March 4) A Common example of testimonial advertising, from Garnier offers a positive feedback on a before-and-after

comparison where consumers differentiate between how their skin became, as they demonstrate the progress in their life style and social confidence after the use of the product. This product, use hyperbole to grab the consumer's attention through exaggeration and promote this product.

1.3.5. Experts Vs Endoresements

According to the Economic times; "Endorsements are a form of advertising that uses famous personalities or celebrities who command a high degree of recognition, trust, respect or awareness amongst the people. Such people advertise for a product lending their names or images to promote a product or service".

Advertisers usually hire actors, football starts or famous influencers to be part of their advertising campaign sincs they have a huge fan base from around the world and many people consider them as role models which leads to the increase of the sales rate.

Experts endorsement can be defined as an individual who possesses knowledge and utilizes that to endorse product within their area of expertise . Soliha and Zulfa (2009). Experts hired in an advertissement are usually doctors, dermatologists, scientists that give accurate numbers and support their arguments with scientific facts as they are licensed and certificated to backup by their knowledge and experience which make it a very strategic way to establish true credibility and trust in consumers. For instance; a consumer would trust a sunscree cream more if it was endorsed by dermatologist.

1.3.6. Logos

According to the Houston Chronile; "Alogo is a visual representation that appears on company signs, paper and advertisements that customers use to identify the company. The logos offer more than simple identification; they also give customers a sense of the company's character and value".

A logo is a graphic and typographic mark or emblem, symbol and a brand icon that commercial enyetrprises use to make their brand visually identified and straighten their public recognition.

Acorrding to small-business advertising consultant; Julian Shaw; “Alogo is an important part of company’s mission and values. It keeps the company ever-present in the consumer’s mind when it is easily recognized and used consistently on all company advertising and communications”.

1.3.7. Slogans

“A slogan is a short catch phrase, used in marketing materials to establish a brand and increase its awarness and engagements with target audience”.Kean,C.(2022,March4).

“A slogan is a catch phrase or small group of words that are combined in a special way to identify product or company”. “While logos are visual representations of a brand,slogans are audible representations of a brand. Hence,both of formates grab consumers’nattention more readily than a company’s name or product”.

The famous brand L’oreal paris uses the slogan “Because worth it” ;aims at encouraging women by making them believe in their own beauty in order to achieve a day when, it heard “We are worth it” , and women everywhere will replay; “we never doubted it for a moment”.

1.3.8. Pictures and Colors

Barnard(1927) sets the importance of the image by stating“A picture is athousand words”.Color is a key element of signage used by succesful compaigns as it mirrrors the tone and the right mood of the advertisement. In addition to this, it is associated with the emotions of the potential consumers with the products and services being promoted. Incorporating colors make products stand out and look more attractive. Hence, this will improve user’s navigational ease. According to an article published

by the College of Arts and Media of Grand Canyon University in 2019, Colours are meaningful and unique as each color has several associations that can be summrised in the following:

- **Red:** is associated with energy, love and passion. It is attention grabing and vibrant. Red may also be associated with danger, anger, and confidence. Dating companies may use red in their brandig to emphasize love and passion restaurents may use red to signify warmth or spiciness. In America; red represents Valentine's day, while in China it represents luck and fertility.
- **Orange:** is most often associated with a friendly, cheerful atmosphere. It has a few of the same characteristics as red but tends to remind consumers of youthfulness and vitality. Orange also signifies affordability, friendliness, and humor. Children's business may use orange as a way to attract kids and to evoke the feeling of fun.
- **Green:** Companies wanting to associate themselves with nature and the environment may use green in their branding. Green has many different associations in color psychology including health, wealth, and balance. As believed in United Stated. Green is a shade of green in their branding.
- **Blue:** Likely, because of its association with water, the color blue is known to evoke feelings of calmness and tranquility. Blue can also signify peace and relaxation. Certain shades of blue may trigger feelings of sadness. Blue is also commonly associated with trust, therefore you see many banks using blue in their branding. For example, American banks use blue in their logos because it represents Trust and confidence.
- **Purple:** Because purple is not commonly seen in nature, it has more association that is mysterious. Purple is often associated with royalty and luxury. Mystery, wealth, and spirituality are also psychological connections people make to the color purple. Financial planners may use the color purple in branding to evoke feelings of wealth

1.4. Advertising and Culture

When a brand or an organization expands its products and service offering outside their home market to include one or overseas markets, this is referred to as internationalization. In other words, it occurs when a firm or a brand moves from localized advertising in a single country to globalized advertising.

According to Cateora, et al (2010), global marketing is considered as the conducting of an organization's activities to consumers who are scattered over different places and nations, in order to make profit. Additionally; in modern world business, competing globally and serving international customers has become a fact for many companies that hope to stay ahead of their competition. This has urged companies to look for innovative and creative ways to promote their products in the global market and design campaigns that take into consideration cultural differences and tap into consumers' beliefs and shared values. While advertising is all grabbing the attention of consumers and creating a memorable and a unique brand image in the mind of consumers by encouraging them to take action of purchase, the successfulness of an advertising campaign is associated with how it is perceived by different societies, Abokhoza et al, (2019).

This has led international companies to structure their advertising campaigns in relation to the culture of the society they are targeting. Hence; it is critical to have strong understanding of the general attitude and characteristics of that particular society in order to create a message that resonates with the needs of its individuals. In this way Keegan (1989), highlights the importance of understanding different cultures in the realization of a successful advertising campaign by stating that: "The emergence of international advertising parallels with the growth of the global market, and understanding cultural differences is often considered as a perquisite for successful international advertising".

In this regard, Hoftsede (1996) defined culture as a collective programming of the mind distinguishes members of one category of people from those of another. Hall (1987) defined culture as the means and values which arise among distinctive social groups and classes based on their given historical conditions and relationships, through which they handle and respond to the conditions of existence.

Culture serves as a significant influence on the behavior of individuals as it shapes their way of thinking. Hall(1966) states that "No matter how hard man tries, it is impossible for him to divest himself of his own culture"(p.188).People cannot act or interact at all in any meaningful way except through the medium of culture" . Hence paying attention to culture in advertising is extremely important for brands that work on a global scale, especially if the brand is working in markets that are culturally different to where they are based. Messages, symbols, rituals, and even colors can have significantly different meanings and messages across cultures.

Most sales messages are built upon shared cultural or ideological beliefs systems when they create advertisements Leis et al (1990).In order to drive customers to purchase, it is vital to consider cultural codes and how each society views the idea behind the advertisement. Reid (1995) regarded that; it is a necessity to develop efficiently the understanding of foreign cultures to help positive influence the cultural techniques, maximize profit, and enhance productivity in both local and foreign operations. The cultural climates plays very important role in the success of advertisements, technological advancements have closed the huge gap that existed between different nations of the world, keep people close, and related. Culture is therefore fundamental to global marketing strategy and companies should know how to take an objective perspective on views, communication, negotiation, and social behavior. So advertising not only tells consumers about products we consume but it also tells them what those products signify in their culture. Stern (1992)

In order to see how advertising works to report and reinforce certain ideological beliefs it is important to deconstruct the deeper meanings of advertisement and learn how to take a part the cultural or ideological messages Williamson (1978). Advertising theorists supporting the specialization of commercial messages suggest that advertising is one of the most difficult marketing elements to standardized, sometimes because of the legal restrictions that require changes in copy, or make certain media unavailable, but more often because of cultural differences. Culture is viewed as all pervasive Barbara Muller (1986, p4).

For that reason semiotic theories and methods are used to analyze advertisements to understand and interpret meaning that can be misleading and confusing somehow from one culture to another if it does not adapt with the cultural values of the country that is being promoted in. In other words, advertising campaigns should be specialized for each country separately as culture differs from one country to another Wang and Yang (2011) supported that by declaring that in advertising adaptation, the advertisement should be adapted by considering differences in culture, economic situation, legal conditions, and media (p.27).

1.5. Overview on Semiotics

The most basic definition of semiotics by Chandler (2007) is "The study of signs and symbols, individually or combines into sign systems" (p.2). It identifies how meaning is generated or constructed. Semiotics study of scientific study of sign systems and is associated with the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce as the founder of the science of signs. In the meantime, semiology focuses on the science of signs as well and is identified with the Swiss linguist Ferdinand De Saussure and some prominent people whom are associated with semiotics, including Barthes, Jacobson, Greimas, Morris, Hjelmeslev and Eco.

The term semiotics is derived from the Greek words semitokos; semio (interpreter of the sign) and tikos (pertaining to) that were firstly coined by

Hippocrates and translated to English later on. The term Semiotikos was also introduced by early precursors of semiotics like Plato and Aristotle (428-322 BCE) who initially related it to bodily signs and medicine Cobley (1999.p.7).

According to Umberto Eco "Semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign." Therefore, a sign is any motion, gesture, image, sound, pattern that conveys meaning. Cook (1992.p,4)Defines a sign as "The smallest unit of meaning", and is divided into; signifier and signified. However, semiotics is not only about signs of speech, it can be found almost everywhere like in images, sounds, and gestures. Semiotics is now used to incorporate both systems and explores the relationship between meaning and text in its broadest sense including television, movies, radio, programs, and works of arts.

Thus, a semiotic analyses, studies the role of signs and their function in a social and cultural scale. It started out as an academic investigation of the meaning of words. Then, it moved into examining people's behavior anthropology and psychology, then evolved to become an enquiry into culture and society as in sociology and philosophy, following that it moved into culture as sociology and philosophy, following that it moved into assisting with analyses of recently became a methodology for researching and analyzing consumers behavior and brand communication.

1.5.1. Ferdinand De Saussure (1857-1913)

A Swiss linguistic scholar and semiotician, widely regarded as the father of modern linguistics (Structuralism. He pursued synchronic linguistics that contributed to the formation of new fields of inquiry; he subsequently classified linguistics as a sub discipline of semiotics and introduced the term semiology.

His book entitled "Cours De Linguistic Generale" was compiled in 1915 after his death by his students Charles Balley and Sechehaye from the notes on lectures given by the linguist himself at the university of Geneva, finally those works or

masterpieces became a high-impact source of linguistic theory or linguistic as the book was judged as the revolution of language.

De Saussure's primary focus is the theory that emphasized language as system of sign, according to Cobley (1999 p, 10). Saussure defined the linguistic sign as a two-sided entity, the first side is called the signifier or the verbal signifier, which he referred to as the sound image, whereas, the second is called the signified that is the mental image /concept. Thus, this notion of signifier and signified made by Saussure contributed in semiotics use to inform the reader of what interpretation he/she make in regards to the sign and that link will help the reader or writer to interpret the cultural and social meaning associated with signs.

1.5.2. Charles Sander Peirce (1839-1914)

Charles Sanders Peirce, an American scientist and logician, noted for his workon logic of relations and pragmatic as a method of research. As cited in Cobley(1999.p,23)Peirce is well known as a pioneer of pragmatism doctrine who has provided the basic in the general theory of signs through all his writings. Peirce introduced the term of "semiotics" that he relates to logic, and a triadic model of sign, he therefore classified the sign into three aspects (representamen, interpretant, and object).

First, the representamen is something that stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity, it is similar to Saussaurian signifier, it is the form taken by the sign and called and is called the sign vehicle. Second, the interpretant that is also close to Saussure's signified; called the sense made of the sign. Third, the object called referent as well; it refers to something that is exemplified by the sign Chandler (2007. p, 40)

Additionally, Peirce distinguished three modes of signs; iconic, symbolic, and indexical. First, iconic is a sign that is linked to its object by qualitative characteristics, for instance, a map is an icon because it shares some quality with its

object, a photograph or a sign road are iconic because they are linked to their object . Second, symbolic has no qualitative or physical link to its object , it is conventional; third, indexical; denotes its object by being physically linked to it, for instance smoke is an index of fire, and a knock is an index of someone's presence on the other side. Chandler (2007. P, 44) argues that a sign cannot be completely symbolic, iconic, or indexical a sign can be all together.

1.5.3. Roland Gerard Barthes (1915-1980)

Roland Barthes is a French literary theorist, critic, philosopher, and semiotician whom as a result of his work, semiotics started to become a major approach to cultural studies in the late 1960 s. Barthes considered semiotics as a part of linguistics precisely; the part that covers signifying unities of discourse. He stated, "Semiology aims to take in any system of signs whatever their substances and limits like; image, gestures; musical sounds and objects". Barthes 1968.

Additionally, Barthes was generally known for his analysis of sign systems mainly deduced from western culture, as he made significant contributions in many fields such as literature, philosophy, and culture studies. In addition to this, he is best recognized for his essays collection "Mythologies"; it is a collection of 53 essays taken from "Les LettresNouvelle" where he focused on ideological and criticism of modern cultural phenomenon to create myths he adopts De Saussure's system of signs, yet he added second level where he elevated signs to the level of myth.

Barthes is known with his essay "The Death of The Author" (1967) as well, in where he was against traditional literary criticism's practice of relying on the intentions and biography of an author to definitely explain the ultimate meaning of a text. In the field of semiotics, he was mainly interested in the verbal and non-verbal side or the visual image as used semiology to analyze the image on media, advertisement, and photography and picture motion. Chandler (2007. P, 143) In line

with this, Barthes introduces a visual semiotic theory of signs that consists of three levels of signification: denotation, connotation, and myth.

Denotation: is the linguistic message or literal meaning of the sign, also named the non -coded message that is all words written in picture or advertisement as denotation designate what the viewer sees, it is representational and self-contained. Cobley (1999. P, 47).

Connotation is the coded message taken from the vast sign system of society. It is the description of the interaction between the sign and the cultural stories thus, it refers to the socio-cultural, and personal association of the sign as it is related to the interpreter's personality, gender, and ethnicity.

Barthes implies that the denotative visual image differs from the connotative one in terms of that it is analytical. According to John Fisk (1992) denotation is what is photographed whereas connotation is how it is photographed, as it demonstrates expressive values that are linked to signs.

In part of myth: It socially refers to beliefs that are sometimes wrong yet in semiotics it does not necessarily mean that, it can be used as metaphor as it can help understand culture. For Chandler (2007) myths express and serve the ideological function of naturalization, they ought to make historical values; attitudes and beliefs seem "Common sense" (p.144). For myth or ideology, the sign demonstrates culturally-variables as feminism, individualism and so on. Thus, the term myth serves to collective meaning that society makes from a semiotic process.

Barthes (1991) considers myth as type of speech derived from the Greek origin mythos (word, speech, and story). It is a "system of communication" a message or a mode of signification" (p, 103). Thus, everything can be a myth because it reflects the meaning of cultural signs and icons. He implies that this type of speech is related not to only spoken forms but written and representations as well.

Therefore, photography, cinema, advertisements are all surrounded to mythical speech which he called pictorial.

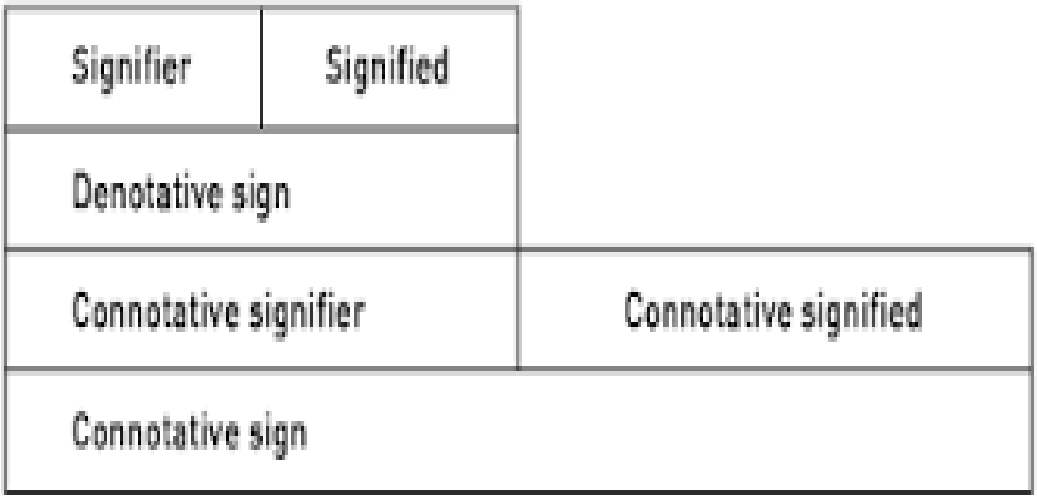


Figure1: Barthes' Meaning Map

1.6. Previous Research Studies

A number of researchers apply Barthes' theory of visual semiotics to read signs and focus on their interpretation by different cultures or societies. Since the present study applies Barthes' theory to highlight the cultural values embedded in the selected advertisements by MacDonald's' and Coca-Cola. This section presents a review of previous related studies that used Barthes' theory to analyze different advertisements. The reason behind referring to those related studies is to show the differences between the present study and the other studies.

A study carried out by Abokhoza, Mohamedand and Narula (2019) in Amity University, Gwalior, India, aims to identify the impact of advertising campaigns in stimulating cultural communication. . The study takes a qualitative approach in reflecting the different cultures of different countries. A comparative analysis

between Pepsi's advertisements from Egypt and Saudi Arabia shows that different advertising strategies were employed, to effectively communicate its product in these two markets. The analysis revealed that Pepsi's advertisement, in Saudi Arabia, used shared values to preserve the national identity within the message of the advertisement to connect with consumers, while Pepsi's advertisement, in Egypt, was entertaining in nature with little to no cultural value. The analysis of both advertisements confirms that Pepsi's advertising campaign, in Saudi Arabia, was more aware of the social and cultural values of the society as opposed to the campaign in Egypt. It also illustrates how companies like Pepsi have been using cultural values in their advertising campaigns taking advantage of its influence on their target audience to boost their sales.

Mirza Denic's article, entitled "The semiotics of contemporary advertising messages: Decoding visuals" offered a semiotic analysis about the discourse of advertising. The study adopted Barthes' denotative and connotative meaning in contemporary advertisemenets and reveals the connotative meaning representation of the overall message created by the ad in order to show the mythical meaning of the sign by the use of image. The study also reviews the importance of images and representation in the construction of advertisements and that text plays an important role in enhancing the role of the image used in the ad. In this way, the article demonstrates Barthes' ideologies in decoding the messages of advertisements. The researcher concluded that the goods advertised are implicitly or explicitly through denotation and connotation process. Hence, persuasion plays an important role in advertisement success.

Besides, Zhang and Gelb (1996) in an empirical study investigated product use conditions and their impact on the effectiveness of different advertising appeals across contrasting cultures. Specifically, they explored the effectiveness of advertising appeals matched to culture in the United States and China for an advertised product used in a private setting versus one used in a socially visible

setting. The United States and China were chosen to provide maximum cultural contrast. Eighty university students from each country studied two magazine advertisements for a 35 millimeters camera and two for a toothbrush along with filler advertisements in a booklet. The test advertisements reflected individualistic and collectivistic appeal. Students completed a questionnaire indicating their responses. Results indicate that although culturally congruent appeals were more effective in general, product use condition moderated the effectiveness of culturally incongruent advertising appeals. Specifically, the Students' reactions to the appeal were more positive when the appeal matched the product use condition than when the appeal did not match either the culture or the product use condition.

The work made by shahin, kalliny & shahin (2019) in golf university, and rowan university “cultural values in magazine advertising: a comparative study of the Arab world and the United States “aims to investigate the differences and similarities in content and appeal in magazine advertisements in the Arab world versus United States. The examination demonstrates 12 cultural differences in both advertisements; the Arab culture reflects more appeals to ads of happiness, freedom, and taboos. The study's findings suggest that some cultural changes occur in the Arab world, which is undergoing rapid change that affects consumers' perceptions and behavior. Globalization requires Arabic advertisers to consider this change.

Another research was made by Mueller (1986) who compared between the advertising in Japan and in the United States to determine if commercial messages reflect the cultural values of a particular society, thereby indicating the need for specialized campaigns, or whether advertisements are relatively similar in content across cultures allowing for the standardization of international campaigns. A sample of print advertisements from both Japan and the United States were analyzed. Mass circulation magazines of two types were examined, one a general interest news magazine, and the other magazine targeted at the female audience .The results shown numerous differences between Japanese and American advertisements. However,

differences observed were in degree and not in kind. Advertisements in both countries implemented to some extent the same ten basic advertising appeals.

A look at previous studies makes it clear that the researchers used different approaches to analyze different advertisements. None of the aforementioned studies employed Barthes' theory as the principle research methodology, the thing that the present dissertation tries to offer .Thus, the researchers contribution in this field is to apply Barthes' theory of analysis in semiotics on the selected TV advertisements as the main research tool, highlighting the manifestation of cultural values in advertisements.

Conclusion

The theoretical framework and literature review are presented in the first chapter of this study. This chapter provided the definition and types of advertising, and then it discussed the language used in advertisements. It then goes on to look at the connection between culture and advertising. This chapter presents a general overview of semiotics as well as the theories of de Saussure, Pierce, and Barth. This chapter concluded with a discussion of some earlier research that was determined to be relevant to the scope of this examination.

Chapter Two: Research Methods, Procedures and Data Analysis

Chapter Two: Research Methods, Procedures and Data Analysis

Introduction

The fundamental objective of this study is to highlight the manifestation of cultural values in advertisements. This chapter focuses on the methods and procedures employed to conduct this research. It first deals with the selection of the research design. Then, it presents the corpus of the study, followed by the data collection procedures. Furthermore, it demonstrates the data analysis procedures.

Besides, this chapter represents an analysis of four advertisements; two advertisements from Macdonald's while two others are from Coca-Cola. The four selected advertisements are analyzed separately by using Barthes's analytical theory of visual semiotics. The first part of the analysis covers the denotative meaning of each advertisement individually, while the second part processes the coded message underlying advertisement's connotative meaning. The final step of the analysis delves into the mythical level of the four chosen advertisements.

2.1. Research Design

Research design is the overall strategy for integrating different components of the study and data analysis in a logical and coherent way. Sellitz (1962) defines research design as being "the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure '' (p.50).This latter enables researchers to employ the most appropriate approaches for their research. It can be either quantitative, qualitative, or a mixed approach.

This study is based on a descriptive qualitative research method. Qualitative research focuses on narrative and well-documented data sources. Thus, it excels in understanding the thoughts, behaviors, and opinions of individuals regarding several

phenomena. Additionally, the qualitative research strategy requires an in-depth study of participants, questioning motivations, beliefs, and feelings.

In this regard, Creswell (2013) sees that the qualitative strategy is important as it reveals the behaviors and perceptions of people concerning particular issues. It is also essential in studying individual reactions and changes in consumption patterns due to certain variables (p.70). For that reason, the researchers believe that this is the most appropriate approach to derive the cultural values used in Coca-Cola and McDonald's advertisements. Hence, the qualitative method enables researchers to understand the proper role of culture in advertisements using Barthes' visual semiotic analysis.

Additionally, Franklin (2012) demonstrates that qualitative research helps in understanding complicated issues by going in-depth and unraveling the intentions, motivations, and opinions of participants. As a result, qualitative methods can simplify societal issues relating to the manifestation of variables.

This research is carried out on the basis of analyzing four advertisements taken from MacDonald’s and Coca-Cola, by using Barthes’ visual semiotic analysis theory that is based on three levels:

- The denotative level is the literal interpretation of what the signifier represents, as it describes what the viewers literally see.
- The connotative level is the emotional associations that the viewers make with the signifier, as it might be an idea or a feeling that is invoked by the literal meaning.
- The mythical level is the combination of the denotation and connotation levels of meaning to construct ideology in the form of myth that shapes viewers perception of reality.

2.2. Data Collection Procedures

2.2.1. Corpus of the Study

The corpus of this study consists of four video advertisements from two well-known brands, MacDonald's and Coca-Cola. The first analyzed advertisement is entitled "McArabia: True to Traditions". It is a video retrieved from the official YouTube channel of MacDonald's branch in the Middle East, under the name of McDonaldsArabia, and published on August 24th, 2014.The second analyzed advertisement, entitled "McDonald's: We have more in common than we think", is a video retrieved from the official Facebook page of MacDonald's branch in the United States of America, under the name of McDonald's, published on September 25th, 2018.The third advertisement, entitled "A Coke for Christmas – Official 2016 Christmas Advert from Coca-Cola", is a video retrieved from Coca-Cola's official channel on YouTube, published on September 2nd, 2016. The fourth analyzed advertisement, entitled "Sounds of Ramadan with Coca-Cola", is a video retrieved from the official Facebook page of Coca-Cola Egypt, under the same name, published on May 9th, 2021.The researchers chose two advertisements from McDonald's because it is a well-known brand, and the fast-food company is multinational, which means it has branches all over the world. As a result, the researchers believe that the first advertisement is a suitable choice for emphasizing Arab cultural values, whilst the second advertisement highlights American cultural values.

Meanwhile, the rationale for choosing two Coca-Cola advertisements is that the American beverage giant is worldwide and uses its advertising campaigns to convey a message of diversity, equity, and inclusion. As a result, the researchers conclude that the third advertisement is appropriate for conveying Arab (Egyptian) cultural values in a religious cultural setting, whereas the fourth advertisement portrays American cultural values in a religious cultural setting.

2.2.2. Data Analysis Procedures

Semiotics as a field of study has a variety of theories that can be applied to analyze data. Because of the researchers' interest in analyzing advertisements, they chose to employ Barthes' theory of visual semiotics as the framework for this study. According to Barthes' visual semiotics theory of analysis, which uses photography as an example of analysis, the three levels of signification are as follows:

- The denotation of a photograph depicts what was in front of the camera when the image was captured, and that is what the researchers referred to in depicting the denotation of the analyzed advertisements, as they divided the videos into scenes and described exactly what they saw.
- The photograph's connotation is determined by the genre of photography and creative alteration. The researchers identified the cultural values present in each scene and explained what they mean.
- Barthes uses myth in his semiotic analysis of culture and any ideological critic. As the myth's examination was centered on the second level of semiotic system, meaning at this level is dependent on shared cultural values and beliefs. As a result, the researchers deduced the myth that motivates the commercial from the scenes, revealing cultural values and hidden ideologies.

2.3. Data Analysis

2.3.1. Figure 2: Scenes from the Advertisement of McArabia: True to traditions 2014.



Scene 01 Scene 02 Scene 03



Scene4



Scene5



Scene6



Scene7



Scene8



Scene9



Scene10



Scene11



Scene12



Scene13



Scene14



Scene15





Scene16

Scene17



Scene18



Scene19

1. Denotative level

A family is sitting around a table in a restaurant; two girls, one little boy, a wife wearing a black Abaya and a scarf, a grandparent wearing a white Qamis and a shemagh, and a father with his older son carrying the trays of food for the ones sitting.

The trays are placed directly on the wife's side of the table, and she begins to distribute the meals by naming each one (kofta-chicken-crispy-crispy). When his mother hands him his (crispy) meal, the little boy rushes to plug the juice pipe and pour the French fries packet over the dish.

The boy begins to unwrap his meal, on which the following is written in white and black on the packaging "Mac Arabia iktachef el taam / Mac Arabia unwrap the flavour" and the word "Halal" in a circle on the side, with a yellow (M) at the bottom, indicating the brand name.

The boy is about to take his first bite, but gets surprised by an elbow poke from his older brother, who gives him a warning look by rolling his eyes towards the grandparent who looks like having difficulty in plugging the pipe in the juice cup, while the little boy displays indications of impatience to start eating.

The grandparent continues to empty his French fries packet on the plate with slow movements in the middle of the anticipation of the family members sitting around the table. The writing "Mac Arabia iktachef el taam / /Mac Arabia unwrap the

flavor" is shown for the second time on the grandparents' meal while he unwraps it.

The little boy prepares himself to eat but gets disappointed as the grandparent is putting the napkin on his lap. After that, the grandparent finally takes his first bite while the rest follows him.

The ingredients of the McDonald's sandwich are displayed whilea man's voice in the background says**:**

"Old traditions, new choices, enjoy it all, as McDonald's brings you a delicious selection of the Mac Arabia, made with authentic Arabic flavors. Mac Arabia, true to tradition". The advertisement ends by showing the restaurant logo and the slogan I'm lovin' it.

2. Connotative level

The connotation that is contained from scene one to scene nineteen is presented in the following points:

- In the first three scenes, the clothes of the main characters signify that they are from the Middle East. Wearing the shemagh and Qamis is a sign of male status. A man who wears them is assumed to be able to uphold the obligations and responsibilities of manhood. The black Abaya and the veil of the woman signify her religion, which is Islam.
- In the first scene, holding the trays by the father and his older son while the rest of the family members are sitting represents a man's obligation to his family and his role as protector and provider for his family members.
- The second and third scene shows the husband putting the tray directly to the side of the wife; it implies the responsibility of a wife toward her family members where she knows the preferences of each one of them.

- The third scene indicates that the elderly are the ones that get the priority in the Arabic culture.
- The fourth scene, where the child ruches to unwrap his meal, depicts the modern generation's excitement, speed, and impatience.
- In the fifth and sixth scenes, the poke of the older brother to the little boy symbolizes a warning for the little brother to wait for the grandparent to start eating.
- In the seventh scene, the grandparent struggles to plug the juice pipe and gradually unwrap his meal, indicating that he is from an older generation and that fast food is unfamiliar to him because he grew up eating traditional food, but in McArabia, people maintain their traditions while being open to new choices.
- The eighth scene, in which the family members are all waiting for the grandparent so they can start to eat, indicates that the grandparent is the one who gets the greatest amount of respect and that it is the Arabs tradition to wait for the head of the family to eat first.
- In scene nine and four, the Arabic and English writing on the sandwich raping indicates that they are Arabs while the word “Halal” indicates that they are Muslims.
- In scene seventeen, all the family members are eating and smiling while the logo of MacDonald’s is showing on the juice cups and on the wall indicates that MacDonald’s is the reason for their happiness and unity.
- In scene nineteen,the logo of McDonald's is the yellow arches of the letter M on a red background. Yellow represents happiness and warmth while the red background increases heart rate which helps in jump-starting the appetite of consumers. Thus, it is a strategy that MacDonald’s uses to drag more clients.

3. Mythical level

The myth associated within this advertisement is that it reflects a number of principles that are pointed in the following:

- The first principle is related to the cultural value of wearing traditional clothes of the Middle East which are the shemagh and the Qamis while the veil of the woman indicates their religion which is Islam.
- The second principle is the cultural value of respecting the elders. Not eating before the head of the family is one of the traditions that Arabic societies see as highly significant in establishing mutual respect among family members.
- The third principle is the cultural value of unity and togetherness .The act of maintaining family ties is an obligation in the Islamic faith. This is having good relations with one's relatives, to love, respect and help them.
- The fourth principle is related to the value of patience and steadiness. Old people teach youngsters that being patient improves their ability to accept setbacks and enjoy life much more.

2.3.2. Figure 3: Scenes from the Advertisement of Macdonald's America: We have more in common than we think 2018.



Scene 01 Scene 02 Scene 03



Scene 04



Scene 05



Scene 06



Scene 07



Scene 08



Scene 09



Scene 10



Scene11



Scene12



Scene13



Scene14



Scene15



Scene16



Scene17



Scene18



Scene19



Scene20



Scene 21



Scene 22



Scene 23



Scene 24



Scene 25

1. Denotative Level

A truck driver receives his salary from what appears to be his supervisor, who adds, "Have a good one." The truck driver nods his head, his hand on the brim of his cap. He then drives across a haystack field.

A young man is going quickly through the streets. He appears hurried, saying "Sorry" as he passes people in narrow alleyways.

A woman is driving her car, waving to her two sons, who are dressed in red and white baseball jerseys. She pulls over and gets out of her vehicle, wearing a green nursing scrub, she says: "Ooh!"It's Okay".

The truck is in his cabin driving through a field of hay stacks.

The young man arrives at an outdoor basketball court. He meets up with his 3 female friends who point out to the watch as he says: "I'm so sorry there was a lot of traffic".

Through the rear-view mirror, the driving woman notices that her sons are gloomy. She suddenly smiles when she spots the McDonald's billboard.

The truck driver pulls over at a MacDonald's restaurant.

As the McDonald's emblem appears on the entrance, the young man enters and leads the way to his friends by lowering his hand with an open palm. They proceed to an ordering machine, while a song is played in the background with the following lyrics: "Only difference between you and I, is everything and nothing at all".

Then, all the characters are shown to be sitting in different places eating the same meal. They dip the French fries in the sauce and all eat at the same moment with smiles.

The final scene of the campaign shows the truck driver eating while the McDonald's logo is displayed at the restaurant's display window and the following sentence is presented: "We have more in common than we believe", followed by the McDonald's slogan "I'm lovin' it" displayed in full screen.

2. Connotative level

The following points present the connotation that is contained from scene one to scene twenty-five:

- From scenes one to three, the paycheck of truck driver indicates the earnestness of the trucker, while the haystacks field that the trucker drives through implies the countryside.
    - In scenes four and five, the quick steps and stress of the young man show that he is worried of getting late for something or someone.
    - From scenes six to eight, the green scrubs that the woman is wearing determines her occupation as a nurse, while the sadness of the boys implies that they lost the baseball game.
    - Scenes nine and ten signifies the hardship of the work that the driver is doing, as he passes big fields of haystacks in empty roads that indicates that he is driving in early morning.
    - Scene eleven signifies youth, and the lateness of the young man who had an appointment with his friends.
    - In scene twelve, thirteen and fourteen, the MacDonald's logo displayed in the road indicates the widespread of the brand and its familiarity for the nurse.
    - In scenes sixteen and seventeen, the young man's actions towards his friends determines that he wants to make them satisfied and apologizes for being late by taking them to MacDonald's.
    - From scene, eighteen to scene twenty-three, there is an indication of being the same despite the differences. As despite the existing differences between people's backgrounds and living circumstances, they all have something in common which is the love that they hold for MacDonald's, for being the source of happiness to them at all for all the problems they might face .
    - In scenes twenty-four and twenty five, the MacDonald's logo and slogan are displayed as they indicate the brand, which implies that because of MacDonald's, people find a way to happiness regardless of everything.

3. Mythical level

The myth associated within this advertisement is that it mirrors a number of principles that are presented in the following points:

- The first principle is related to the cultural value of hardworkingand earnestness, as for the Americans, hard work is sacred because it is a symbol of pride and self-satisfaction.
- The second cultural value depicted is antiracism, as people from different backgrounds and different occupations are totally equal.
- The third cultural value is related to punctuality in appointments. Americans place a great importance on time management. As they consider time as valuable as money.

2.3.3. Figure 4: Scenes from the Advertisement of Coca-Cola: A coke for Christmas, U.K 2016



Scene 01



Scene 02



Scene 03



Scene 04



Scene 05



Scene 06



Scene07



Scene 08



Scene 09



Scene 10



Scene 11



Scene 12



Scene 13



Scene 14



Scene 15



Scene 16



Scene17

Scene 18



Scene 19



Scene 20

1. Denotative level

A small town is covered in snow, while red lights are coming out from houses, a boy looking through the window, watching his neighbor who seems to be disturbed with the tangled string lights. The boy smiles and gets out of his house's garage dragging a small cart filled of ice cubes and Coca-Cola bottles.He then sneaks and puts a bottle of Coca-Cola in the decoration box of the neighbor, who gets surprised by seeing the Coca-Cola, tied to the wires.

The boy drags the small cart further and then places a bottle of Coca-Cola on the window stool of a young lady's kitchen, who is wearing an apron and whisking a large bowl intensely. The young lady smiles when she holds the bottle, then she is shown laughing while she carries the tray of food to the table where the family members are clapping for her.

The boy stops at a crowded gift shop, where a young lady is serving two lines of clients alone. The boy puts a Coca-Cola bottle on the shops' counter table. The lady gets surprised and drinks the Coca-Cola while the boy smiles, watching her behind the shop' window front.

The boy remains with one bottle of Coca-Cola in the small cart. He carries the bottle in his hand and smiles while he stands in a street full of Christmas decorations.

A white-bearded old man in a red suit, wiping sweat from his brow, drops a red bag on the floor. The old man smiles when he sees a bottle of Coca-Cola on a table next to a note saying "Santa." Then, while holding the Coca-Cola, he winks at the reindeer outside the house. The advertisement ends with the display of the company logo and the slogan "Taste the Feeling" while the old man is drinking Coca-Cola.

2. Connotative level

The connotation that is contained from scene one to scene twenty is presented in the following points:

- In the first scene, snow indicates the season of winter and coldness. The high buildings indicate the British architecture
- In the third scene, the interest that the boy shows toward his neighbor indicates solicitude between members of community and reflects the boy' kindness.

- The third, fourth and sixth scenes, indicates that they are celebrating Christmas, as the boy' house is decorated with garland on the house columns whereas Christmas wreath is hanged on the door while the neighbour is surrounded by decoration boxes and string lights.
- The seventh, eighth and ninth scenes, indicates unity and bonding as Christmas brings family members close to each other by having a dinner together which is one of the cultural values of celebrating Christmas.

- Scenes from ten to thirteen represent diligence at work regardless of the pressure and the crowdedness during holiday season. The exchange of presents and gifts in Christmas is a tradition, when people are generous and happy to gift their love ones as a wish for them before a New Year starts.
- The fourteenth scene indicates the Christmas atmosphere and spirit, where streets are decorated with string lights and other decorations, covered with snow, while people are carrying gifts to celebrate the special holiday.
- In the fifteenth and sixteenth scene, the boy remains with one bottle of Coca-Cola but refuses to drink it which demonstrates that true happiness is not always about getting what people want for Christmas; rather, it's about being able to spread joy through sharing and making a difference in others.
- Scenes seventeen, eighteen and nineteen, the image of the legendary figure Santa Claus and his reindeer symbolizes happiness, gift giving and fun that are the essential part of Christmas celebration.

- Scene twenty illustrates that Coca-Cola is the source of happiness and energy for many people, including Santa Claus, who is considered the main source of happiness at Christmas, and that Coca-Cola is the permanent companion that shares with people their celebrations and special moments.

3. Mythical Level

The associated myth within this advertisement reflects a number of principles that are demonstrated in the following:

- The first principle is associated with the cultural value of celebrating Christmas. It is a religious festival celebrated by Christians every year. By giving gifts, holding family gatherings, and decorating houses and streets
- The second principle is that Christmas generates the sense of unity and bonding among people, which are essential values for Christian people. Families unite for dinner, as it is one of the basic traditions that Christians do.
- The third and most essential value presented in the advertisement is Altruism and sharing. The boy spreads happiness, love, by sharing Coca-Cola among people that have different worries and responsibilities as he tries to make them feel happy and cheer them up so they can proceed with their activities.

2.3.4. Figure 5: Scenes from the Advertisement of Coca-Cola: Sounds of Ramadan with Coca-Cola.



Scene 01



Scene 02



Scene 03



Scene 04



Scene 05



Scene 06



Scene 07



Scene 08



Scene 09



Scene 10



Scene 11



Scene 12



Scene 13



Scene 14

1. Denotative level

The advertisement starts by, the doorbell rings and a lady enters wearing blue jeans and a white blouse, the lady holds a big bottle of Coca-Cola with a white bond in the wrap written on it “A litre as gift”. Then the lady does some actions as lightens the garland and puts on the table cloth. Meanwhile, some scenes of food preparation are seen where only a woman’s hand are shown who cuts salad and pepper, prepares Mulukhiya,noodles and tomato sauce. Then, the food is prepared and a group of friends organize the table putting on the cooked dishes such as macaroni with béchamel, platter of meat, stuffed pigeons and a variety of food, and the bottle of Coca-Cola is the last to put on the table.

Then, the entire group sits together, they were eight sitting around the table; two men and six girls four of them are veiled and the two others are not, they set down at the same time when the canon was fired. The Coca-Cola bottle was the first to be opened and a woman untied the ribbon of the bottle so it became a gift wrap decoration. The woman who wore a beige veil and white blouse poured the drink in the cups for the others. Another woman with curly hair drinks the Coca-Cola and laughs, and finally all were enjoying their time in the garden at the sunset.

2. Connotative level

The connotative meaning of the first scene reflects that the lady is a guest who might be invited to share dinner with her friends which signifies a cultural value of Arabic Islamic values that calls to honor guests because this a good quality that all Muslims should do in Ramadan in order to gain reward from people’s Iftar.

The scene number two and three reveals that the lady feels welcome and helpful as she putdown the table cloth hence, that type of cloth signifies cultural value of Egyptians who always put it in weddings and in Ramadan mainly because for them Ramadan is a celebrity and month of happy moments.

The connotation embodied in the scenes number four, five, six, and seven portrays the preparation of dishes that would be eaten like Mulukhiya, which is a sign of traditional food liked by Egyptians, always present in special occasions and the noodles as well, in addition to the tomato sauce making the sound of boiling, and seems delicious.

The connotative meaning depicted in scenes seven, eight, and nine highlights traditional dishes such as meat, stuffed pigeons, and macaroni with béchamel, which became a popular dish especially among youth, as it depicts the value of generosity during this magical month, when some of these dishes may not be cooked at home but brought by neighbors or family members, also a sign of the cultural heritage of sharing.

The reflected connotations from scenes number ten and eleven is the Egyptians spirit as well as the feelings of goodness and compassion that gather families, friends and neighbors. From this scene it proves that it is Ramadan and they are fasting as it shows cultural value of firing canon from the top of the fortress that they are always to hear although it might not be heard everywhere today, many still enjoy this habit.

The associated connotation with scene number twelve, thirteen, and fourteen is pleasure and joy which it is highlighted in this unique month as it encourages people to quit arguing and deflecting for instance the lady with curly hair seems so happy and pleasured. In addition, the company's contribution to this special occasion was an extra liter, which added more happiness to their lives.

3. Mythical Level

The advertisement is motivated by the myth of Egyptian generosity, guest honoring, where people exchange invitation, and appreciate togetherness. Moreover, women in Ramadan always compete with each other in preparing different types of dishes especially traditional ones. Moreover, Ramadan in Egypt reflects well on

Islam as they accompanied it to their cultural values where they took from their religion the principle of welcoming gusts and helping each other.

Conclusion

This chapter tackled the methods and procedures followed in this research. The researchers adopted a descriptive research design, which explores Barthes' theory of analysis on the selected corpus by employing a qualitative approach. The researchers have clarified the process of gathering data and have explained the stages of the analysis of the selected advertisements that the study went through. Moreover, the chapter applied Barthes' visual semiotics theory to two advertisements by McDonald's and two advertisements by Coca-Cola. The analysis dealt first with the description of the denotative level of each advertisement. Then it translates the connotative level placed in each advertisement. Finally, the analysis has extracted the mythical level that each advertisement hides.

Chapter Three: Discussion of the Results, Pedagogical Implications and Further Suggestions

Chapter Three: Discussion of the Results, Pedagogical Implications and Further Suggestions

Introduction

This chapter discusses the key findings presented in the previous chapter, providing a summary of the findings concluded from this study as well as reconnecting them to the research questions. The data gathered from the advertisements is discussed relying on Barthes' approach to visual semiotics analysis, which consists of three levels: denotative, connotative, and myth. This chapter also proposes a set of pedagogical implications and recommendations. At the end, it presents the limitations of this study and gives suggestions for further research.

3.1. Discussion of the Results

3.1.1. Summary of the Findings

Barthes (1977) notes that, both the emission and reception of the message lie within the field of sociology. Thus, big brands and campaigns found that cultural study is important in attracting consumers (p.15). As the analyzed advertisements reveal several cultural values, this section attempts to discuss the results of data gathered in the previous chapter through the application of Barthes three orders of signification.

According to the findings, the analyzed advertisements include several hidden ideologies that reflect a variety of cultural values that are significant in the cultural context of each advertisement, which can be summarized in the following points:

- The first analyzed advertisement of "McArabia; true to tradition", reveals certain values of the Arabic and Islamic culture such as the maintenance of wearing traditional and decent clothes, as well as the value of respecting the elders who are always given the main priority within the family and the establishment of mutual respect between family members. Another value

reflected in the advertisement is unity and togetherness. The act of maintaining family ties is an obligation in the Islamic faith. In addition, patience and steadiness are embedded in the advertisement where old people teach youngsters that being patient improves their ability to accept setbacks and enjoy life much more.As a result, the advertisement emphasizes family connection, respect, and the preservation of traditional customs.

- In the second advertisement of MacDonald's:"We have more in common than we think", the findings reveal another set of cultural values. The advertisement focuses on showing people from different backgrounds calling for antiracism. In addition, the advertisement reflects the American values of earnestness and hardworking, as for the Americans, hard work is sacred because it is a symbol of pride and self-satisfaction.Furthermore, punctuality in appointments is reflected in the advertisement becauseAmericans place a great importance on time management. Delays and lateness tend to reflect badly on people, often interpreted as disrespect or rudeness. For the Americans, being three to five minutes early is even better because it shows that you are punctual and looking forward to spending time with the other person.
- The third advertisement of Coca-Cola:"A coke for Christmas" demonstrates the celebration of a religious holiday that is Christmas. The tree and street decorations reflect the atmosphere that is holy and historically significant. The youngster demonstrates altruism and sharing in the special occasion as he tries to make all of his neighbours happy by giving them Coca-Cola as gifts so that they forget about stress and continue working happily. This way, the advertisement emphasises on the values of unity and family bonding which is essential for Christian people.
- The fourth and final advertisement of Coca-Cola:"Sounds of Ramadan "conveys a message that Ramadan in Egypt is holy and unique, in that it

encompasses a wide range of cultural values. The first cultural value is fasting, as Muslims fast during the whole month of Ramadan. Another cultural value that the advertisement reveals is generosity and hospitality, starting with exchanging invitations and making guests feel comfortable and welcome, to the distinctive decoration. Furthermore, when sitting around the table, this scene reflects a set of values including the fire of the canon, the diversity of meals between traditional and modern foods, and lastly the cheerful atmosphere established by the family as one unit. As a result, this advertisement sheds light on the Arab culture more precisely the Egyptian culture.

3.1.2. Reconnecting Findings to the Research Question

The previous discussion of the main findings obtained from the analysis of MacDonald's and Coca-Cola, through the application of Barthes'theory of visual semiotics, helps the researchers to answer the main research questions addressed in this study.

- To what extent can Barthes' theory be applicable to reveal the cultural values embedded in the advertisements of McDonald's and Coca-Cola?

  Barthes theory of visual semiotics analysis succeeded in revealing the cultural values embedded in the advertisements of McDonald's and Coca-Cola
- What are the cultural values conveyed in the advertisements of McDonald's and Coca-Cola?

  The cultural values conveyed in the advertisements of MacDonald's and Coca-Cola are different, since the selected advertisements are taken from different countries and have different cultural values. The two advertisements of MacDonald's reveal the cultural values of: wearing traditional and decent clothes, respect of the elders within the family, unity

and togetherness, antiracism, earnestness and hardworking, punctuality. The two advertisements of Coca-Cola reflected the cultural values of: celebrating Christmas, altruism, unity and family bonding, fasting, hospitality and generosity, as well as cooking traditional food.

- How do advertisements reflect the cultural values of different societies? Advertisements represent diverse countries' cultural values by concentrating on people's lifestyles, religious traditions, everyday activities, and behaviors such as showing the way a specific society celebrate Christmas and the customs they follow as being Christians.

Therefore, the results obtained support the researchers' first hypothesis regarding the applicability of Barthes' framework to the analysis of cultural values in the advertisements of MacDonald's and Coca-Cola. In addition to that, the findings of this study confirm the research second hypothesis which is concerned with having different cultural values in the selected advertisements due to the differences of societies. Furthermore, the findings support the third hypothesis, which is concerned with advertisements reflecting diverse countries' cultural values.

3.2. Pedagogical Implications and Limitations of the Study

3.2.1. Pedagogical Implications of the study

Based on the study's findings, the researchers were able to identify three pedagogical implications. First, culture is an important factor in international brands as global marketing can be enhanced by incorporating cultural values through advertisements and promotional components. Second, this study demonstrates that advertisements have several messages; some are explicit whereas others are implicit, as the study revealed different cultural values because the chosen advertisements are from different cultures and set in

different cultural contexts. Third, semiotics has significant contributions in several fields of study, as well as social and economic contributions. Researchers found Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, which consists of three levels of signification, relevant to analyzing embedded messages utilized in advertisements since the goal of the study is to reveal the cultural values and hidden ideologies transmitted by international brands.

3.2.2. Limitations of the Study

When conducting this research, researchers have encountered several constraints that contributed in making the realization of this work laborious and uneasy to accomplish. First, time was not enough for researchers to extend the number of advertisements to be analyzed. Researchers opt for Barthes' theory of visual semiotics because it is mainly concerned with the analysis of motion pictures. On the other hand, the analysis of verbal signs intends other structural approaches such as Critical Discourse Analysis. This approach is not used because this study is not a multi-disciplinary research.

3.3. Suggestions for Further Research

From the previous analyses, the researchers suggest some point to future researchers who would analyze international advertisements using semiotics theory of analysis:

- Future researchers should conduct quantitative studies using representative samples. Quantitative studies collect more robust and broader that are essential in making generalizations. Thus, researchers using quantitative methodology can effectively make generalizations concerning culture and impacts on international advertisement.

- Researchers can study the influence of culture on gender, thus identifying which gender is more susceptible to cultural ads and other promotion strategies.

Conclusion

This chapter expands on the important findings reported in the preceding chapter, providing a summary of the study's findings and drawing them back to the research questions. The data acquired from four advertisements of Macdonald's and Coca-Cola is explored using Barthes' semiotics theory, which includes three levels of signification. This chapter provides a number of pedagogical implications and recommendations, as well as it offers the limitations and suggestions for further studies.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The present study explored manifestation of cultural values in advertisements. The dissertation analyzed the cultural values embedded in four international advertisements, two by MacDonald's and two by Coca-Cola, based on Barthes' theory of visual semiotics.

The central aim of this research is to apply Ronald Barthes' theory of analysis to the four advertisements by MacDonald's and Coca-Cola. The researches aimed to demonstrate the cultural values contained in each one of the selected advertisements. It also aimed to investigate how advertisements reflect the cultural values of different societies. Three questions were raised at the beginning of this research. The first question examined the extent of Barthes' theory applicability in revealing the cultural values embedded in the advertisements of MacDonald's and Coca-Cola. The second one focused on the cultural values conveyed in each one of the selected advertisements of MacDonald's and Coca-Cola. However, the last question focused on how advertisements reflect the cultural values of different societies.

After introducing a general overview about the topic of research and the statement of the problem, this research tackled three main chapters. The first chapter covered the literature review and theoretical framework, as well as it reviews some previous studies that were found to be relevant to the scope of the research. The second chapter was devoted to the research methods, procedures, and data analysis. It dealt with the selection of the research design, then presented the corpus of the study and data collection as well as it demonstrated the data analysis procedures. Besides, the second chapter offered a semiotic analysis of four advertisements, two by MacDonald's and two by Coca-Cola based on Barthes' theory of visual semiotics. In this regard, the study went through three main phases during the analysis of the selected advertisements .first, it described the denotative level of each advertisement separately, then translated the connotative level

contained in each one of the advertisements and lastly has extracted the mythical level that each advertisement concealed. Finally, the third chapter discussed the findings resulted from the analysis of the four advertisements selected from Macdonald's and Coca-Cola and reconnecting them to the research questions. The chapter also proposed a set of pedagogical implications and recommendations, as well as it presented the limitations of the study by supplying some suggestions for future research.

The overall findings in this research revealed that each one of the chosen advertisements of McDonald's and Coca-Cola included several cultural values that were identified only after using the three levels of signification theory by Barthes. The first analyzed advertisement of "McArabia; true to tradition", revealed values of the Arabic and Islamic culture such as the maintenance of wearing traditional and decent clothes, respecting the elders,unity and togetherness as well as patience and steadiness. In the second advertisement of MacDonald's:"We have more in common than we think", the findings revealed cultural values of antiracism, earnestness and hardworking, and punctuality. The third advertisement of Coca-Cola:"A coke for Christmas" demonstrated the cultural values of celebrating religious holiday of Christmas, altruism and sharing as well as unity and family bonding. The fourth advertisement of Coca-Cola:"Sounds of Ramadan "revealed the cultural value of celebrating Ramadan, generosity and hospitality.

To conclude,this work confirmed the validity of research hypotheses by proving the relevancy of Barthes' theory of visual semiotics analysis to reveal the cultural values expressed in the advertisements of MacDonald's and Coca-Cola.

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