CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Generally, our life is surrounded by signs. Signs are everywhere. We can easily find signs in our daily lives, such as: signs on our shirts with pictures, on the cover of the DVD, on the books we read, on the design of food products, on the board advertisement with text/ pictures, or advertisements in magazines, newspapers, televisions, and websites.

However, one of the most common signs we can find are in advertisements. Advertisement is "a notice, picture or film telling people about a product, job or service" ("Advertisement, def. 1). Hence, the main purpose of advertisement is to introduce products, jobs, or services to the public. Moreover, advertisements are used to influence people. In fact, sometimes advertisements have more and deeper meaning than just simply an introduction of a product, a job, or a service. In other words, they may contain hidden meanings.

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Nowadays, advertisements are becoming even more popular to introduce a new product, so companies use advertisements to attract people's attention to buy their products. To reach their goal, they dare to use offensive messages, sexy or even vulgar pictures. Sometimes what people see in an advertisement can also change people's perception on things, or construct a certain kind of concept in the people's mind.

In this thesis, I choose to analyze an advertisement of *Fan di Fendi* and *Versace Fragrance* advertisement, which contains a hidden meaning of female objectification. The concept of female objectification is seen in both of the advertisements. Hence, I choose to analyze those advertisements for my thesis as they have the same concept of objectification in the advertisement. The male model is seen as someone who ignores the female model; while the female model is seen as someone who is submissive. I took the advertisement from *theperfumegirl* website, a website that tells us about all kinds of perfumes from a number of brands.

The title of my thesis is *Semiotic Analysis of Female Objectification on Fan di Fendi and Versace Fragrance Advertisement*. The significance of my topic is to make people more aware of and critical in accepting messages or observing the pictures in an advertisement as it can influence their minds.

A branch of linguistic tool that I will use for analyzing the thesis is semiotics. Semiotics is the study of signs and the way they work (Chandler, 2002). Semiotics involves not only what we refer to as 'signs' in everyday speech, but anything which 'stands for' something else. In short, signs are not limited to written texts

only, but apply to everything which stands for something else. Therefore, signs can also be visual signs.

Ferdinand de Saussure, the one who introduces semiotics, says "semiotics is a science which studies the role of signs as a part of the social life" (Chandler, 2002). He divides signs into two parts: the signifier and the signified. Signifier is the physical form and signified is the concept that evokes from the signifier. The second theory that I will use for analyzing the thesis is the connotative sign system by Roland Barthes. He says that the sign in the first order system (the denotative sign) will become a signifier in the second order system (Barthes, 1972).

Another theory that is used for the thesis is taken from female objectification. Our society has had a certain state of mind in which gender plays part in our lives. A man has always been known as someone who is dominant, masculine, and independent; on the other hand, a woman is seen as someone who is weak, sensitive, and dependent (Basow, 1986, as cited in McKay, 2013). The objectification of women starts when people own a particular perception. Finally, when the sexual objectification has engrossed in people's mind, it will eventually lead to self-objectification. Self-objectification is part of female objectification in which a woman sees herself as an object for men's pleasure. In other words, they are lowering themselves.

As mentioned before, advertisements can influence people whether it is on people's mind or action. Therefore, I hope by analyzing the advertisements, the readers of this thesis will be more critical in reading advertisements. I hope they

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realize that advertisements are not always about pictures or introduce products. They have a message that they want to convey to the readers or even a hidden message behind them.

Furthermore, by reading this thesis, the readers are expected to be more aware when reading advertisements and to get the idea that advertisements may have a deeper meaning than what it is shown. I hope they will be able to analyze it through semiotics theory to understand the message and not be influenced by the advertisement containing a bad message.

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1.2 Statement of the Problem

In the thesis, I would like to discuss:

1. What are the denotative meanings of *Fan di Fendi Pour Homme Fragrance* and *Versace Pour Homme Fragrance* advertisement?

2. What are the connotative meanings of *Fan di Fendi Pour Homme Fragrance* and *Versace Pour Homme Fragrance* advertisement?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

In the thesis, I intend to show:

1. the denotative meanings of *Fan di Fendi Pour Homme Fragrance* and *Versace Pour Homme Fragrance* advertisement

2. the connotative meanings of *Fan di Fendi Pour Homme Fragrance* and *Versace Pour Homme Fragrance* advertisement

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1.4 Method of Research

I used four steps for writing the thesis. First, I searched and read the theories that are relevant to the topic. Second, I searched and selected some perfume products in the Internet and a number of magazines that could support the theories. Third, I analyzed the denotative and connotative meaning of *Fan di Fendi* and *Versace Fragrance* advertisement. Finally, I wrote my research report.

1.5 Organization of the Thesis

I divide the thesis into four chapters. The first chapter is introduction which consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, method of research, and organization of the thesis. Chapter Two contains theoretical framework. Chapter Three is analysis of the advertisement. Chapter Four is conclusion of the analysis. The thesis ends with bibliography and appendices.