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Meaning of Creative Campaign in Arief Muhammad's Billboards 'Ready to be Number 1' (Roland Barthes Semiotics Analysis)

Stevani^{1*}, Patricia Robin²

¹Bachelor Program of Communication Science, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Bunda Mulia University, Tangerang

²Lecturer of Communication Science, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Bunda Mulia University, Tangerang

Corresponding Author: Stevani stevanii.stevani@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Billboards are one of the outdoor promotional media used to convey information or notifications to the public, which are usually used by many legislative candidates to carry out political campaigns. One of the viral billboards that was in the spotlight in 2020 because it looked like it was carrying out a political campaign, was when Arief Muhammad's face was surprisingly complete with the words 'Ready to Be Number 1' emblazoned on a street corner located in Bintaro, South Jakarta, which was interpreted by the public will plunge into the world of politics in Indonesia. The purpose of this study is to focus on how a billboard can support marketing performance through a creative campaign that is packaged with a guerilla marketing strategy using Roland Barthes' semiotics, to produce denotative, connotative, mythical meanings, along with the findings of the ideology of capitalism and nationalism on these viral billboards. The results of this study indicate that all verbal and nonverbal signs on the billboard 'Ready to Be Number 1' are interpreted as a form of Arief Muhammad's seriousness in acquiring, promoting, and making Prepp Studio the number 1 men's fashion brand in Indonesia, under his leadership with Dimas Mairyan's. The researcher concludes that the 'Ready to Be Number 1' billboard tries to take advantage of the momentum of the 2020 Regional Head Election campaign to support the campaign so that it becomes stronger with political overtones

INTRODUCTION

Advertising has now become a part that can never be separated from human life. In fact, from waking up to deciding to go back to sleep, we will always encounter ad exposure. Moriarty, Mitchell & Wells (2011: 6) defines advertising as a type of marketing communication that refers to all forms of communication techniques used by marketers to reach and convey messages to consumers (Sept yana, 2021). In this case, the marketer can be said to be the party whose job is to plan and manage how the potential for advertising can be well received before Nielsen Indonesia also revealed that this potential is a great opportunity for brand owners to use and maximize the use of outdoor media, such as billboards because these media have a wide enough reach to market and promote a product or service. services (Nielsen, 2019).

One of the public figures who caused a stir in October 2020 due to the appearance of billboards, was Arief Muhammad's. The reason is, in the midst of the rumble of a political year that is close to the Regional Head Elections, which are planned to be

finally being communicated to a wide audience through media intermediaries, such as television, radio, newspapers, social networks, to billboards that are plastered on the side of the road.

Based on the results of research by Nielsen Consumer Media and View, a global national measurement and analysis research company, it has successfully conducted research on 11 cities in Indonesia which shows that when they are active outside the home, the average consumer spends 1 hour 18 minutes while traveling. In these findings Hellen Katherina, as Executive Director of Media held simultaneously on December 9, 2020 in several provinces and districts/cities in Indonesia, Arief Muhammad's photo suddenly appeared on a billboard located in Bintaro, South Jakarta. Billboards themselves are usually used as a political propaganda tool in outdoor media campaigns, as the most effective medium for political actors to convey messages to the public, by influencing the attitudes and behavior of prospective voters (Priana & Wijayanti, 2020).



Figure 1. Arief Muhammad's Upload Response to His OWN Viral Billboard

Source: Instagram @ariefmuhammad (2020)

In addition to highlighting a public figure who is known for having "genius" ideas in carrying out marketing strategies, the billboard also reads 'Ready to Be Number 1' plus the academic title 'Arief Muhammad, S.H.'. This 'Ready to Be Number 1' billboard seemed to attract public attention and went viral on social media, because the billboard was allegedly a sign of the birth of Arief's desire to become a politician, which was supported by stylish appearance and gestures like a political official who wanted to become a politician campaign.

The researcher suspects that the existence of the 'Ready to Be Number 1' billboard is not a campaign aimed at promoting "new faces" of political officials who are "ready" to run for the General Election, but rather that the campaign is wrapped in a more creative way, namely by incorporating political nuances in inside, in which Arief Muhammad's was "ready" to carry out something that was still kept secret at that time and to further dramatize the billboard also included the academic title 'Arief Muhammad, S.H.', so that the campaign could "get more politicized" in the 2020 political season.

According to Werner J. Reinartz and Petter Saffert in one of the general magazines owned by the Harvard Business Review (2013), creativity in an advertising concept can be seen from the extent to which the ad can display something new, different, unique, and unusual like most advertisements. in general. Therefore, the 'Ready to Become Number 1' campaign can be said to be part of a creative campaign that utilizes billboard promotional media with quite high creativity. The appearance of the 'Ready to Be Number 1' billboard, which has a creative concept, also evokes humor, is unexpected, and surprises the public, which is also in line with the guerilla marketing strategy (Subroto et al., 2021), where the billboard is placed on one of the main roads. in Bintaro, where the location is quite strategic, plus Arief Muhammad's is also often called "Governor of Bintaro" by his colleagues and followers.

Talking about the signs on the viral billboards, researchers managed to find several signs, both verbal and nonverbal, that seemed to have a hidden meaning behind the campaign that Arief was carrying out. The verbal sign on the billboard is in the visual text that reads 'READY TO BE NUMBER 1' at the top and the academic title 'Arief Muhammad, S.H.' at the bottom of the billboard. Meanwhile, his nonverbal signs can be seen in terms of choosing a blue long-sleeved shirt, his pose when raising his right hand in line with a smile showing teeth, wearing accessories in the form of caps, watches and glasses, as well as the background showing red and white behind Arief's pose. Mohammed. So, it can be said that the nonverbal signs on the viral billboards are part of Arief Muhammad's supporting instruments to show his seriousness in 'Ready to Become Number 1' whose meaning will be examined more deeply in this study using Roland Barthes's semiotic analysis.

The purpose of this study is to find out the denotative, connotative and mythical meanings behind the collection of hidden signs on Arief Muhammad's 'Ready to Become Number 1' billboard in the middle of the 2020 political season, which will then be continued to find out the ideology formed from the viral billboard phenomenon this, and to find out the meaning of the creative campaign contained in Arief Muhammad's billboard 'Ready to Be Number 1' can be applied using a guerilla marketing strategy.

METHODS

The research method is a scientific way that aims to obtain valid data by finding, understanding, and proving it through science, so that the resulting data can be useful for anticipating similar phenomena in the future (Sugiyono, 2016: 2).

In this study, researchers used qualitative research methods, because their research seeks to explain a single phenomenon, namely by describing, describing, and expressing the meaning behind a phenomenon, without trying to connect facts, variables, or causation in it. This is in line with Moleong's definition which reveals that qualitative research aims to understand a phenomenon, which

comes from behavior, perceptions, motivations, and actions which are descriptively in the form of words and language which are formulated using the scientific method (Moleong, 2010:6).

Data collection is the most strategic step in conducting research. The data used to support this research are as follows:

a. Primary Data

Primary data is data obtained directly from the first data source on the research object (Bungin, 2017). The primary data source for this study was obtained from documentation of billboards depicting Arief Muhammad's 'Ready to Be Number 1' displayed on one of the streets in Bintaro, South Jakarta.

b. Secondary Data

Secondary Data is the type of data obtained from the second data source from the data we need (Bungin, 2017). Secondary data sources in this study were obtained by researchers by searching, reading, and studying data related to research problems, starting from various sources of books, e-books, journals,

papers, theses, and information through social media and the internet related to problems study.

The data analysis technique used in this study is semiotics proposed by Roland Barthes. The researcher analyzed data from the components of verbal and nonverbal signs on Arief Muhammad's billboard 'Ready to Be Number 1' which went viral in October 2020 using two orders of signification to get denotative and connotative meanings based on Barthes' sign map. If the analysis of the first and second level has been obtained, the researcher will try to interpret the myth to find out the shift in meaning that occurs behind the 'Ready to Be Number 1' billboard. The data generated is based on an analysis of denotations, connotations, and myths, then will be re-interpreted to draw conclusions using Jay Conrad Levinson's Guerilla Marketing theory. After obtaining the data as a whole, in the final stage the researcher will put forward the ideology of capitalism and nationalism which is formed on the phenomenon of the 'Ready to Be Number 1' billboard.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results Analysis Two Orders of Signification Roland Barthes

In this research, Arief Muhammad's advertisement billboard 'Ready to Be Number 1' will be analyzed through a semiotic approach based on Roland Barthes' sign map. Signs according to Barthes certainly don't stand alone, so he divides signs into two levels, namely denotation and connotation. Denotation sign is the first level of significance system, which consists of the signifier and the signified. Meanwhile, connotation sign is the second level of significance system, which is divided into connotative signifier and connotative signified.

Barthes also revealed that the connotation is identical in relation to "myth" (Roland Barthes, 2009). In this case, the myth here represents the actual representation to reveal the truth hidden behind an actual phenomenon (Budiman, 2001:28). Understanding of verbal and nonverbal signs is also not spared from Barthes' analysis. Verbal signs can be seen through text in the form of writing, while nonverbal signs can be seen on visual displays which usually contain certain codes.

Table 1. Analysis Two Order of Signification Roland Barthes

Signifier	Signified
	<p>Verbal: "SIAP MENJADI NOMOR 1" (In English: "READY TO BE NUMBER 1") is dominated by white writing located at the top of the billboard.</p> <p>At the bottom, the billboard reads "Arief Muhammad, S.H.", which is dominated by white writing on a red background.</p> <p>Nonverbal: Arief's wore a light blue long-sleeved shirt, with a pose raising his right hand, in line with a smile showing teeth.</p> <p>Arief's also wore several attributes, such as black caps, watches and glasses.</p> <p>The background for the 'Ready to Be Number 1' billboard also shows red on the top side and white on the bottom side.</p>
Denotative Sign	
<p>The billboards highlight the figure of Arief Muhammad's as carrying out a campaign initiated by 'Ready to Be Number 1'.</p>	
Connotative Signifier	Connotative Signified
<p>Verbal: In accordance with the equivalent of the word, "SIAP" according to KBBI means it has been prepared, which shows that Arief Muhammad's seemed to have prepared (arranged / managed) and prepared (provided) something seriously, in which form of readiness he informed the public through intermediary billboard promotion media.</p>	<p>Overall, when viewed from the meaning of the verbal and nonverbal signs on the 'READY TO BE NUMBER 1' billboard, Arief Muhammad's does look like he is carrying out a political campaign. However, this viral billboard does not look like the campaign carried out by most political parties when introducing their candidate members, because from the start the billboard did not specifically state the logo of which party Arief's would join. Thus, the</p>

<p>"BECOME" according to KBBI means appointed, elected. In this case, Arief Muhammad's can be interpreted as an elected person, where he will be appointed by one of the parties to represent a matter relating to Arief's field of experience.</p> <p>"NUMBER 1" is a symbol of a calculation, in which case Arief Muhammad's is trying to reach the top or most important position in a position.</p> <p>If the three equivalent words above are combined, then 'READY TO BE NUMBER 1' indicates that Arief Muhammad's has prepared something in accordance with the field of experience that he has been working on so far, by promising to give his best.</p> <p>The inscription "READY TO BE NUMBER 1" is also dominated by white, which means holy, firm, honest, and sincere. This means that Arief Muhammad's "promise" on the billboard will be carried out with sincerity and sincere intentions.</p> <p>"Arief Muhammad, S.H." is a Bachelor of Law degree held by Arief Muhammad's. The writing is dominated again with shades of white, which reflects that Arief Muhammad upholds honesty and the red background behind the name symbolizes Arief's courageous spirit when taking an action.</p> <p>Nonverbal:</p> <p>Wearing a light blue long-sleeved shirt means that Arief's has a reliable personality and is responsible for the obligations he has.</p> <p>Arief's pose when raising his right hand is usually done by politicians when taking pictures, which seems to give greetings and respect to his supporters.</p> <p>Arief's smile that shows his teeth also shows a friendly personality, confident, and eager to do the best job possible.</p>	<p>billboard 'READY TO BE NUMBER 1' is more closely related if linked to the background of Arief Muhammad's who works as an entrepreneur as well as a content creator, who is known to the public for having a myriad of "creative" and "genius" ideas in carrying out stronger marketing strategies in the world digital.</p>
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<p>In terms of the head attributes worn by Arief's, he also uses a black cap, as a symbol of nationalism, a form of loyalty and service to the country. Wearing a watch on the right wrist that is facing up also shows a personality that is spontaneous, honest, passionate, and easy to get along with. Meanwhile, the use of glasses accessories usually gives the impression that the person has a smart, clever, and wise mind.</p> <p>The billboard background, which is red at the top and white at the bottom, represents the fluttering of the "Red and White flag" which symbolizes the honor of the Indonesian people. The white color on the flag means holy. Meanwhile, red means brave. In this context, it means that the illustration of "red and white flag" on the background of the billboard photo expresses Arief Muhammad's enthusiasm to fight for the determination and commitment of 'READY TO BE NUMBER 1' according to the field of experience he has prepared and worked on so far.</p>	
Connotative Sign	
<p>The 'READY TO BE NUMBER 1' billboard is part of a creative campaign carried out by Arief Muhammad's and Prepp Studio, as a men's fashion brand in Indonesia for marketing purposes.</p>	

Source: Processed by Researchers (2023)

Results of Myth

The researcher managed to find that the 'Ready to Be Number 1' billboard is just a myth that seeks to apply the advertising concept in the form of a creative campaign using promotional media for billboards with political nuances to re-promote the men's fashion brand owned by Prepp Studio under the leadership of Arief Muhammad's and Dimas Mairyan's (Kumparan, October 2020). All verbal and nonverbal signs are interpreted as a manifestation of Arief Muhammad's seriousness in carrying out the creative campaign, so that it can "resemble" like a real campaign, in which case Arief Muhammad's is "ready" to make Prepp Studio the number 1 men's fashion brand in Indonesia' after the

declaration he officially acquired the brand on October 20, 2020.

Results of Guerilla Marketing

The researcher also found the implementation of a guerilla marketing strategy which was reflected in the 'Ready to Be Number 1' billboard, because the appearance of the billboard was very unexpected and surprised the public because it presented the figure of Arief Muhammad's like carrying out a campaign (Surprise effect). The billboard also involves a lot of interaction, both from the mass media, responses and comments, especially from Arief's followers and colleagues on social media (diffusion effect), which then supports the 'Ready to Be Number 1' creative campaign to run efficiently to generate publicity. high and more easily viral with lower campaign costs

as the audience knows about the campaign (low cost effect). At the end, when the promotional costs for the 'Ready to Be Number 1' billboard are calculated, everyone's campaign costs will be lower, because there are costs that cannot be calculated, such as increased engagement and additional followers @ariefmuhammad and or @preppstudio.

The guerilla marketing instrument used to support the performance of the creative campaign 'Ready to Be Number 1' uses out of home (OOH) weapons which are conventionally carried out by utilizing billboards on a main road located in Bintaro, South Jakarta. To maximize the ongoing campaign, Arief Muhammad also took advantage of new media weapons, namely by posting several billboards tagging himself on his Instagram account (@ariefmuhammad) to create viral marketing so that more and more audiences would know and be exposed to the campaign.

Ideology

The researcher found that there are images of capitalism and nationalism contained in the creative campaign on the basis of marketing interests for local brands engaged in men's fashion owned by Prepp Studio. The ideology of capitalism here describes Arief Muhammad and Prepp Studio as the owners of capital as the parties that benefit the most from the creative campaign that is running in the 2020 political year. This is because the creative campaign, which was wrapped in the guerilla marketing strategy 'Ready to Be Number 1', not only surprised the public, but also succeeded in increasing followers from @preppstudio, as well as generating considerable engagement from the marketing gimmick that was implemented, because in an instant Arief Muhammad and Prepp Studio managed to become the center of the public with their positive trending viral news on social media. Prepp Studio's operations, which had previously declined due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020,

have finally been able to revive with unique rebranding, produce interesting content, and be different from most fashion brands in general, and finally those who benefit the most from the success of the campaign this is Arief Muhammad, Prepp Studio, along with all the team working behind.

In addition to the ideology of capitalism, the image of nationalism that Arief Muhammad tried to show when he wore a black cap on the viral billboard then also experienced an expansion in meaning whose seriousness was seen as an expression that Arief Muhammad's loved local products, in which case Arief's was proud to be able to promote Prepp Studio became one of the men's fashion brands in Indonesia that he successfully acquired.

CONCLUSION

Billboard Arief Muhammad's 'Ready to Be Number 1' shows how all verbal and nonverbal signs with political overtones can improve a brand's marketing performance, namely by taking advantage of the momentum of the 2020 Regional Head Election campaign to create a creative campaign to re-promote Prepp Studio's men's fashion brand. The advertising concept of the billboard refers to the creative interest campaign, which seeks to arouse curiosity and interest from the audience to find out the meaning behind Arief Muhammad's billboard 'Ready to Be Number 1' which appears to coincide with the 2020 political year in Indonesia. To maximize the ongoing campaign, the 'Ready to Be Number 1' billboard also applies a guerilla marketing strategy through out of home weapons to create viral marketing, without compromising the essence of the soft selling promotion carried out by Arief Muhammad's with Prepp Studio.

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