2.1 SEMIOTICS

Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols. How these signs and symbols are interpreted is studied under semiotics. Advertisements have many hidden signs and meanings in it for example brand name, logo, package design, colour, punch line and trade mark etc. The objective of semiotics is to learn and interpret the message which is conveyed in advertisements. The different elements of advertisements can be interpreted at two levels. First, the outside level and second is original level. The outside level uses signs creatively to create an image or character for the product. These signs can be images, words, fonts, colours and slogan. The original level is made up of different unseen meanings. The arrangement of images, words, colours, and slogan must be interpreted by the audience or consumer.

According to Eco (1983), “A linguistic sign is not a link between a thing and a name, but between a concept (signified) and a sound pattern (signifier). The sound pattern is not actually a sound. For a sound is something physical. A sound pattern is the hearer’s psychological impression of a sound, as given to him by the evidence of his senses. This sound pattern may be called a material element only in that it is the representation of our sensory impressions. The sound pattern may thus be distinguished from the other element associated with it in a linguistic sign. This other element is generally of a more abstract kind: the concept.”

“The key to advertising analysis is the process of understanding the signifier and the signified in the advertisement. The signifier is the thing and the signified is the psychological thought. A product has both, a signifier and a signified. In an advertisement the signifier is the colour, brand name, logo, design, technology and punch line. The signified has two meanings which are known as denotative and connotative. The meaning of the product is denotative meaning. A television’s denotative meaning would be have different definition. The connotative meaning is the profound and secret meaning of the product. A connotative meaning of a television advertisement would be also different.”
Semiotics is the philosophical theory of signs and symbols which helps in interpreting the signs and symbols. It is a meaning making process in advertisement. This study includes the interpretation of signs and the process of sign, indication, likeness, analogy, metaphor, symbolism, signification, and communication. Semiotics is closely related to the field of linguistics, so that it studies the structure and meaning of language more specifically. The Semiotic tradition explores the study of signs and symbols as a significant part of communications. Apart from linguistics, “semiotics also studies non-linguistic sign systems. Semiotics often is divided into three branches: Semantics: relation between signs and the things to which they refer; their meaning, Syntactics: relations among signs in formal structures, Pragmatics: relation between signs and sign-using agents.”

As the audience today have become more aware, advanced and like new things. They switch mood very shortly. So the advertisers has started using innovative techniques and creative ideas to make attractive advertisement. They use semiotics for making an advertisement more effective. In the last five-six years sign and symbols have been used in advertisement very frequently.

2.2 History of Semiotics:

“The importance of signs and signification has been recognized throughout much of the history of philosophy, and in psychology as well. Plato and Aristotle both explored the relationship between signs and the world. These theories have had a lasting effect in Western philosophy, especially through scholastic philosophy.”

More recently, Umberto Eco, in his *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language*, said that ‘semiotic theories are implicit in the work of most, perhaps all, major thinkers’.

As per Marcel Danesi (2004), “The broad study of signs began in Latin with Augustine culminated in Latin with the 1632 *Tractatus de Signis* of John Poinsot, and then began anew in late modernity with the attempt in 1867 by Charles Sanders Peirce to draw up a “new list of categories.” Peirce aimed to base his new list directly upon experience precisely as constituted by action of signs, in contrast with the list of Aristotle’s categories which aimed to articulate within experience the dimension of
being that is independent of experience and knowable as such, through human understanding."³⁶

Peirce’s distinction of an interpretant from an interpreter, with the further qualification that the former need not be “of a mental mode of being” not his demonstration that sign relations are perforce irreducibly triadic, as is commonly assumed in his following so far as the followers continue the modern tradition of ignoring the Latin Age of philosophy’s history, was his most revolutionary move and most seminal contribution to the doctrine of signs.

According to Daniel Chandler (2007), “Semioticians classify signs or sign systems in relation to the way they are transmitted. This process of carrying meaning depends on the use of codes that may be the individual sounds or letters that humans use to form words, the body movements they make to show attitude or emotion, or even something as general as the clothes they wear. To coin a word to refer to a thing, the community must agree on a simple meaning, within their language, but that word can transmit that meaning only within the language's grammatical structures and codes. Codes also represent the values of the culture, and are able to add new shades of connotation to every aspect of life.”³⁷

To explain the connection between semiotics and communication studies, communication is defined as the process of exchanging data from a source to a receiver. Therefore, communication theorists build models, which are based on codes, media culture and contexts to explain the meaning, psychology, and perceptions involved in the messages. Both, semiotics and communication studies also recognize that the practical process cannot be separated from the, that the receiver must decode the data, and be able to distinguish the data as salient, and construct meaning out of it. This implies that there is a necessary overlap between semiotics and communication. In fact, many of the concepts are common but in each field the importance is different. In Messages and Meanings: An Introduction to Semiotics, Marcel Danesi (1994) suggested that “semioticians' priorities were to study signification first, and communication second”.³⁸

Semiotics is different from linguistics. It generalizes the definition of a sign and includes signs in any medium or sensory modality. Thus it broadens the range of
sign systems and sign relations, and extends the definition of language in what amounts to its widest analogical or metaphorical sense.

Peirce's definition of semiotic is “the study of necessary features of signs also has the effect of distinguishing the discipline from linguistics as the study of contingent features that the world's languages happen to have acquired in the course of their evolutions.”

2.3 VISUAL SEMIOTICS

Semiotics is a philosophical approach that tries to interpret messages in terms of signs and form of symbolism. “The study of semiotics originated in a literary or linguistic context and has been expanding in a number of directions since the early turn-of-the-century work of C.S. Pierce in the U.S. and Levi Strauss and Ferdinand Saussure in France.”

A sign can be a word, a sound, or a visual image. Saussure explains that “a sign divided into two components—the signifier (the sound, image, or word) and the signified, which is the concept the signifier represents, or the meaning.” As Berger points out, “the problem of meaning arises from the fact that the relation between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary and conventional.” In other words, signs can represent anything. We have the same opinion that signs mean something, but they can mean different meaning to different people.

Pierce categorized the patterns of meaning in “signs as iconic, symbolic and indexical. An iconic sign looks like what it represents—a picture of a dog, for example. The meaning of a symbol, like the flag or the Statue of Liberty, is determined by convention.” In other words, their meaning is random. It is based upon harmony and experience which we have learned from the past. In language words are used as symbols that have to be learned. An indexical sign is a clue that links or connects things in environment. For example, smoke is a sign of fire, ice is a sign of cold and red colour is a sign of danger etc. In visual communication visuals, images, video and other types of signs are used.

Most signs function on numerous levels like iconic as well as symbolic or indexical, which shows that visual semiotic analysis is addressing a hierarchy of meaning rather categories the different elements of advertisement and constructing the
meaning. As Eco explains, "what is commonly called a message is in fact a text whose content is a mutilevelled discourse."¹⁴

The broader concept of text and dialogue encourages for additional research into how visual communication operates to create meaning. Deely (1982) explains that "at the heart of semiotics is the realization that the whole of human experience, without exception, is an interpretive structure mediated and sustained by signs."¹⁵ Semiotics now considers a variety of texts, using Eco's terms that is “to investigate such diverse areas as movies, art, advertisements, and fashion, as well as visuals.”¹⁶ In other words, as Berger explains, "the essential breakthrough of semiology is to take linguistics as a model and apply linguistic concepts to other phenomena--texts--and not just to language itself."¹⁷ Anthropologists like Grant McCracken and marketing experts like Sydney Levy have even used semiotic interpretations to analyze the rich cultural meanings of products and consumer consumption behaviors as texts.

Visual texts are an important part of analysis for semioticians and particularly for scholars who are working in the field of visuals like print advertising and television advertising because visuals are very important part of mass communication sign system.

Structures of meaning are analyzed by looking at cultural and communication meaning and then by looking at the relationship among these cultural signs. The categories of signs and the relationships between them create a system. Barthes discussed this system and has analyzed “the fashion system and classified the system of communication through fashion into two categories: image clothing and descriptive clothing.”¹⁸ Similarly, an advertisement has its own structure of meaning.

Beyond the most basic definition of semiotics, which is the study of signs, there is significant difference among leading semioticicians. One of the main definition is “semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as sign. Semiotics involves the study not only of what we refer to as sign in everyday speech but of anything which stands for something else. In a semiotic sense signs take the form of words, image, sound, gestures and objects”¹⁹ given by Umberto Eco. Contemporary semioticians study signs not alone but as a part of semiotics sign-
system such as a medium or genre. They study how meanings are made and how reality is represented.

According to Chandler, “Theories of signs and symbols appear throughout the history of philosophy from ancient times onwards. The first explicit reference to semiotics as a branch of philosophy appearing in John Locke’s essay Concerning human understanding (1960).”20 However two main traditions in semiotics terms are given by respectively from Swiss Linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) and the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914).

Saussure said, “semiology was a science which studies the roles of signs as a part of social life.”21 According to philosopher Charles Peirce semiotic “a formal doctrine of signs, which was closely related to logic is semiotics.”22

Meaning of advertisement is not transmitted to its target audience. In fact the audience keenly create it according to a multipart interplay of codes or conventions. They are normally unaware from that meaning. Becoming aware of such codes is both naturally mesmerizing and mentally empowering. From semiotics, we learn that we live in a world of signs. So we have to understand anything except through signs and the codes into which they are organized.

In Semiotics- The basics, Chandler said, “Saussure’s model of sign is in the dyadic tradition. Focusing on linguistic signs such as words Saussure defined a sign as being composed of a ‘signifier’ and a ‘signified’. Contemporary commentators tend to describe the signifier as the form that the sign takes and the signified as the concept to which it refers.”23

Saussure makes the distinction in these terms. He found, “A linguistic sign is not a link between a thing and a name, but between a concept (signified) and a sound pattern (signifier). The sound pattern is not actually a sound but a sound is something physical. A sound pattern is the hearer’s psychological impression of a sound, as given to him by the evidence of his senses. This sound pattern may be called a material element only in that it is the representation of our sensory impressions. The sound pattern may thus be distinguished from other element associated with it in a linguistic sign. This other element is generally of a more abstract kind.”24
In visual semiotics visuals symbolizes an object. In contemporary advertising visual semiotics is very much used as one visual represents the whole message of the advertisement. In print media, display advertisement is the best example in which visuals conveys the complete information.

2.4 CODES

The concept of the code is very important in semiotics. Saussure dealt with the general code of language. He said that “the signs are not meaningful in separation. They are interpreted with relation to each other”. It was another linguistic structuralist, Roman Jakobson, who emphasized that, “the production and interpretation of text depends upon the existence of codes and conventions for communication.”

Codes are very important in advertising communication as a code is an established meaning across the society. For example “Dood si safeedi nirma se aaye”. It informs that milk is a symbol of ultimate whitening and this meaning is same in all cultures. So there is zero probability of its misinterpretation.

2.4.1 Types of codes

The concept of codes is essential in semiotics. Saussure said that, “signs are not meaningful in isolation but when they are interpreted in relation to each other, they become meaningful.” As per Edmund Leach (1976) “All the various non-verbal dimensions of culture, such as styles in cooking, village layout, architecture, furniture, food, cooking, music, physical gesture, postural attitudes and so on are organized in patterned sets so as to incorporate coded information in a manner analogous to the sounds, words and sentences of a natural language. It is just as meaningful to talk about the grammatical rules which govern the wearing of clothes as it is to talk about the grammatical rules which govern speech utterances.”

The conventions of codes represent a social aspect in semiotics. A code is a set of practices familiar to users which operating in a broad cultural framework. According to Stuart Hall (1973), “there is no intelligible discourse without the operation of codes.”
Semioticians treat signs as any objects or actions, which have different meaning to people of the cultural group, in search of the rules or conventions of the codes which underlie the production of meanings within that culture. Understanding those codes, their relationships with culture and the context in which they are appropriate, is part of meaning making process. What the signs mean to a member of a particular culture is also very important. Codes are not simply conventions of communication but it is a technical systems of related conventions which operates in positive domains.

Semioticians seek to identify codes and the unspoken rules and constraints which motivate the production and interpretation of meaning in each code. Semioticians found it suitable to divide codes into groups. A variety of typologies codes may be found in the literature of semiotics. Here we explain only those codes which are given by Daniel Chandler in his book (2007) “Semiotics- the basics.” Daniel codes are widely mentioned in the context of media, communication and cultural studies.

2.4.2 Social codes

According to Chandler, “verbal codes (phonological, syntactical, lexical, prosodic and paralinguistic sub codes), bodily codes (bodily contact, proximity, physical orientation, appearance, facial expression, gaze, head nods, gestures and posture), commodity codes (fashions, clothing, cars), behavioral codes (protocols, rituals, role playing, games)” are included in social codes.

In culture, social separation is over determined by huge social codes. We communicate in the society with the help of our social identities. Apart from this, other element are also help us in interpretation of codes. For example, the work we do, the way of talking, the clothes we wear, our hairstyles, our eating habits, our family environments and many more. Language apply acts as a key marker of social identity. In informal communication restricted code was used and was characterized by a reliance in situational context. As per Hall (1973) “Certain codes may be so widely distributed in a specific language community or culture and be learned at so early an age, that they appear not to be constructed. The effect of an articulation between sign and referent but to be naturally given. Simple visual signs appear to
have achieved a near universality. In this sense though evidence remains that even apparently natural visual codes are culture specific." However this does not mean that no codes have intervened rather that the codes have been deeply naturalized.

In advertising learning these codes involves adopting the values, assumptions and worldviews which are built into them without normally being aware of their intervention in the construction of reality. An amazing example of this relates to color codes. Generally accepted rule is red color is used for energy or danger.

2.4.3 Textual codes

According to Chandler (2007), “Scientific codes, including mathematics, Aesthetic codes within the various expressive art(poetry, drama, painting, sculpture, music etc.) including classicism, romanticism, realism, genre, rhetorical and stylistic codes like exposition, argument, description and narration etc., Mass media codes including photographic, television, filmic, radio, newspaper and magazines code both technical and conventional (including format)” are textual codes.

Every text is an arrangement of signs organized according to the codes and sub-codes. This arrangement reflects the certain values, attitudes, beliefs, assumptions and practices. Codes go beyond the single text and linking them together in an interpretive framework. Such type of system is used by advertisers and interpreters. In the process of text or message production advertisers select and combine signs, which are related to the codes. Target audiences are familiar with these signs and codes. Codes help to make simpler phenomena to understand the message and make communication experiences easy. While reading texts in advertisements, viewers interpreted signs with reference to codes, which seems to be appropriate for them. This helps to limit the possible meanings of the message of advertisement. “Social convections ensure that signs cannot mean whatever an individual wants them to mean. The use of codes to guide us towards Stuart Hall’s preferred reading and it is different from Umberto Eco’s aberrant decoding. Though media texts do vary in the extent to which they are open to interpretation.”

Textual code play a very significant role in advertising. Advertisers can’t present all the information in text as they don’t have such budgets to make such a large advertisement and the readers too don’t have too much time to read such large
text advertisements. It gets boring and doesn’t generate interest in large advertisement messages. So, the trend in today’s advertisement is use of more textual codes to increase its readership and enhances interest. Such type of textual codes are used which becomes popular very soon and are remembered by people throughout the society like pichku for magi.

2.4.4 Interpretive codes

According to Daniel Chandler, “perceptual codes for example visual perception, ideological codes-more broadly these include codes for encoding and decoding texts for example individualism, liberalism, feminism, racism, materialism, socialism, capitalism, progressivism”\textsuperscript{34} are interpretive codes.

Interpretive codes are related to perception. In advertising such codes are very useful to convey its message to its target audience because the codes help in understanding the perception of the target audience and use it as an appeal in the advertisement. For example, raymonds the complete man depicts that the man is complete in all his relations.

These above types of codes related broadly to three key kind of information required by the viewer or the interpreters. These are the word (social information), the medium and the genre (textual information), the relationship between the word and the medium (modality judgements).

2.5 VISUAL COMMUNICATION

Visual communication is the communication through visual aids. It is the delivery of ideas and information in forms of images or text, that can be read or looked upon. According to Martin and Felizitas (2000), “Primarily associated with two dimensional images, it includes signs, symbols, art, typography, drawing, graphic design, illustration, color and electronic resources. It exclusively relies on vision. It is form of communication with visual effects. It explores the idea that a visual message with text has a great power to inform, educate or persuade a person.”\textsuperscript{35} Visual communication presents information through different visual forms. There is mixture of ways to present information visually like through signs, symbols, gestures, body language, face expression, video and images. These are very important elements of visual communication. Contemporary research in visual communication has paying
attention on web designing and graphically oriented usability. Advertisers as well as Graphic designers are also frequently used different elements of visual communication in their professional practice.

Visual communication is very popular in advertising as visuals are used for communication of the advertisement message as the visuals are easy to understand by the audience. Illiterate people can also understand the message which is communicated through the visuals. We can present those emotions through visuals which we cannot express through text.

2.6 PRINCIPLES OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION:

The process of communicating, transmitting, imparting and exchanging thoughts, ideas, opinions, sentiments and information is termed as communications. We communicate with others through spoken words and silence, body postures, gestures, facial expressions or with written words and graphics and other creative forms of expressions. As basic to all human performance and interaction, communication refers to transmission of thoughts, information and commands by employing the sensory channels. The message should ideally be conveyed undiminished and without distortion. The process of communication is both an art and a science. Communication has its roots in the principles of psychology. In communication process technology is also used to communicate with others, so it is a science also. The ability to communicate depends upon following factors;

1. Understanding the fact that communication is not a monadic but a dyadic concept for ex; a two way process.
2. Appreciation of the principles, of psychology e.g. ; human nature, stimulus-response.
3. Thinking skills- ability of lateral thinking, creativity, co-relation and analysis.
4. Expressions skills-ability to visualize, create graphics and prepare software for the ideas.
5. Media utilization skills-The ability to employ different audio visual materials.

A communicator’s attitude plays an important role in communication. There are three aspect of attitude; first-towards others. Second- towards the subject. Third-
towards oneself. Attitude towards others should be positive like a sense of respect, understanding and confidence. One should demonstrate ones liking for the subject and its relevance. The attitude towards self implies self confidence, convection and believing in what one says or does.

2.7 **VISUAL ANALYSIS AND IMAGE ANALYSIS**

The visual analysis of the advertisements is the analysis of the elements of the advertisements like- sign, symbol and image etc. Visual analysis helps us to find out how visuals communicate and which element of advertisement is more communicative.

Analyzing advertisements on visual basis involves a number of tasks like- identify the visuals and linguistic elements in advertisements, to find out how the signs are organized by typical and synatagmatic selection and note how the signs relate to each other through different coding system.

“Most major forms of advertising have both visual and verbal elements, but visual images often have more favorable attitudes towards, both the advertisements and the brand. Visual also tends to be more easily remembered than verbal copy.”

2.7.1 **Image Analysis:**

This approach seeks to break down the elements of a given image and to find out now the meaning in the image is constructed into it. In fact, there is often more meanings in the image than there seemed to be at first.

2.7.2 **There are three main elements to any image:**

1. The first one is where the camera was where the picture was shot. This automatically puts us, the viewer in a particular position relative to the object in the image. This position may be significant because, the example, we come to realize that the camera lens is pointing at the bottle of perfume in the advertisement and not just at the sense in general.

2. The second one is, devices used to put the image together. These also affect mis-view of what the image means, at all levels. The use of focus, of lighting, of composition, of framing are all devices which can affect our understanding of what is actually in the picture.
3. The third element is the content of the image the objects that are represented within it for example, a scene from a film may show two people fighting in a room. It is apparently just a picture of two people fighting. But the paper knife behind them on a side board gives new meaning to the image. It suggests that something dire may be about to happen.

So studying the media involves looking for messages and meanings in the material.

Advertising is not only a form of communication, but it is a way of using different forms of communication to achieve desired objectives. In today’s time mode of visual communication are used so frequently in advertising. It is very intentional communication. It includes the visual elements of any advertisement. Visual Analysis of advertising and images will make it clear that they are selling values as well as product and services.

2.8 OTHER USEFUL CONCEPT IN VISUAL ANALYSIS:

2.8.1 Cueing:

In traditional communication studies a message is send by the source, transmitted through a channel and decoded by a receiver. In advertising the message of advertisement is selected by a creative team in words and pictures. Then this advertising message is approved by a client and in last distributed through a mass medium like television or magazines. Generally it is assumed that advertising message gets attention and it is decoded by the targeted audience in same way. In order for the audience to make sense of the message or information, the message has to use appropriate signs and symbols and easy language to motivate the individual's perception regarding buying behaviour.

According to Chandler (2007), “A cue is a signal of something or a reminder of something. It brings to mind something from past knowledge or previous experience that provides a framework of meaning that can be used to interpret the sign. The concept of cueing is very important to visual communication because much of past experience is filed in memory as a visual element. In other words, while cues can and do work on the semantic level for certain types of information, perceptual
psychologists focus more on the tremendous role of visual imagery in the cueing process based as it is on experiential knowledge.\textsuperscript{37}

Advertising uses a shortcut form of information processing with its highly compressed message formats. During association with the advertisement, usually two thoughts are connected in the mind, first is the product and second is the selling message. If the target audience think about the selling message with its visual cues and recall the product and vice versa, it means advertisement works successfully. This message strategy is seriously dependent on the successful performance of the cueing process. Simply there is not much time in most advertisements for elaborated message in few seconds, so the copy writers of the advertisement depend upon the cues to draw the associated meanings. In other words, cueing drives the process of association of different meanings in advertisement. Visual cueing, is essential than other cuing, for successful decoding of the messages in advertisements.

2.8.2 Symbolic Meaning

In order to understand how visual sign construct meaning, we need to understand how symbolic meaning is produced. The source of much of the analysis of symbolic meaning is a field of research and theory known as semiotics. In semiotics, a sign is something that stands for something else. Ferdinand de Saussure explains, “the sign process involves a signifier--a word, sound, or object that represents a signified, which is the concept, idea, or thought that you want to communicate. In other words, a drawing of a car and the letters C A R (the signifiers) can both be said to represent, or signify, the shiny, steel vehicle with four wheels (the signified) that sits in the driveway.\textsuperscript{38} In above example, both the drawing and the signified are products of visual imagery.

The link between the signified and its signifiers is established through the process of cueing, but how meaning is signalled and the role of cueing in semiotic interpretation is less well understood. One of the early semiotican Charles S. Pierce, categorizes the type of signification as “iconic, symbolic, or indexical and these categories are useful in framing a discussion of cueing. An iconic sign, for example, looks like what it represents--a picture of a rose, for example, has visual patterns and details that resemble a real life rose. Iconic signs are literal and representational. An
indexical sign, in contrast, is a clue that links or connects things that occur simultaneously in nature. Wilted leaves, for example, may signal that a flower needs watering; smoke signals a fire.”

However, a symbol is more difficult in terms of its cueing processes. “A symbol is something that represents something else by convention or by association.” For example, a white colour is a symbol for peace and a red colour is a symbol for danger. We have learned these things from society and agree upon the meaning of both of these symbols by convention.

Generally, symbols are socially and culturally determined and the meanings of these symbols can change between groups and across time. According to Chandler (2007), “A flower is a symbol of love on Valentine's Day. During the Sixties, however, the flower came to be a symbol for war protest and at that time--and even now for people who lived through those days--can arouse incredible combative emotional responses. Symbolic meanings, because they are so culturally derived and dependent on learned meanings, are less well anchored in iconographic representation and are most subject to personal and idiosyncratic interpretation.”

The signal or a cue stimulates the production of meaning in a receiver's mind. This process is particularly very important in understanding symbolic meaning in advertising messages. The cue is more than just a simple representation at the symbolic level, because it elicits a difficult formation of meaning based on earlier encountered networks of relations or associations.

2.8.3 Metaphoric Meaning:

The process of symbolization is very broad. It helps us in meaning production process, both visually and verbally. However, a more complex type of symbolic communication is derived from metaphoric thinking. For analyzing this type of meaning, we have to do literary analysis also. Daniel said, “Metaphors point out similarities or commonalities between two things. They evoke meaning by transferring qualities from a referent to a new object through implied comparison, the resemblance being based on analogy. Visual metaphor can also involve a function of transferring certain qualities from one sign to another.” In relation to advertising this has been explored by Judith Williamson in her book, “Decoding advertisements”
(1978). So this is the duty of advertisers to differentiate related products from each other. Advertisers do this by linked a product with a particular set of social values in semiotic terms.

One thing is likened to another by being spoken of in verbal language. This same process operates visually by presenting an object or event in what the context or form usually associated with something else. The comparison can be implicit verbally, which is common in metaphors, or stated by using the word like as in a simile, which is a specific type of metaphor. However, there is no visual equivalent to the word like, therefore most visual communication that uses analogical thinking is referred to as metaphoric.

Kaplan says, “A metaphor is a combination of two ideas presented in relationship to one another such that one idea is used to organize or conceptualize the other.” He explains that, “the meaning of the metaphor results from this relationship between the two ideas.” He further explains that, “there are two additional conditions required for metaphorical meaning. First is some features of the two ideas are shared between them and second is the attempt to map one idea onto the other must violate linguistic norms or beliefs to the extent that a measure of tension is created. So there is both a condition of similarity (shared features) and a sense of incongruity (tension) which determines the effectiveness and appeal of the metaphor.”

A metaphorical expression in a sense is a "category mistake" because it challenges the reader to make sense of something that doesn't quite fit. At the same time metaphors are generative because they expand the conventional way of seeing things and this can produce a variety of individual meanings.

Metaphoric analysis is important because symbolic imagery is such an important meaning carrier in advertising, and mainly in television advertising. As Kaplan (1943) have found that, “metaphor is the most convenient form for transferring abstract qualities like value and durability to products. Any given object of perception could be categorized in a variety of ways rather than in terms of a single objective hierarchy. The categories applied are depends on some common factors like experience, roles and purpose. This raises the issues of interpretation.” For example
looking an advertisement featuring a child’s face, some audience might suppose that the image stood for children in general, other assumes that the child represents a particular type, role or group and yet others might recognize the child as particular human being. In order to know the appropriate level of abstraction in relation to interpreting an image would depend mainly on familiarity with the relevant cultural codes.

2.8.4 Meta-Codes:

In semiotic theory, codes hold the patterns of meaning together. A code is an agreed upon set of rules that guide the meaning making. Berger explains that "people carry codes around in their heads, highly complex patterns of associations that enable them to interpret symbolic and metaphoric communication correctly." 47

The interpretation of a code is based on some other subsystem of codes, and then a message is supposed to operate with a Meta code. For example in advertising the message is interpreted according to codes and meta codes. Some of the common meta code systems which are working in advertising includes fashion, high society, mall culture, lifestyle, fiction or science, medicine, fitness, and high technology. As Banks and Coulter explained in a paper on the images of women used in fashion catalogs that, “gender with all of its historical, sexual, and social meanings, functions as a meta-meaning system that influences how fashion advertising is understood. This meta-code is expressed functionally in visual cues such as lighting, colour, setting, and composition and nonverbal cues such as facial expressions and body stance, and social cues indicating roles and active/passive or dominant/submissive relationships.” 48

The concept of meta-code is similar to the concept of genre. It is essential in understanding how people interpret the message of an advertisement. In other words, audience have expectations about the advertisement’s meaning based on their knowledge with the form of advertising and their understanding related to that product or service.
2.8.5 Denotation and Connotation

Denotation and connotation in semiotics are the terms describing the relationship between the signifier and its signified. According to Daniel, “An analytic distinction made between two types of signified. First is denotative signified and second is connotative signified. Meaning includes both denotation and connotation.”

Denotation tends to be described as the definitional, factual, clear or common sense meaning of a sign. The denotative meaning in the case of linguistic signs, is that which the dictionary attempts to provide. According to art historian Erwin Panofsky (1970), “the denotation of a representational visual image is that all viewers from any culture and at any time would recognize the image as depicting.”

The connotation term is used to refer to the socio cultural and personal associations like ideological and emotional aspects of the sign. These are usually related to the interpreter’s class, age, gender and so on. Thus the connotation is context dependent. Signs are more open to interpretation in their connotation than their denotations. Wilden (1987) said, “Denotation is sometimes regarded as a digital code and connotation as an analogue code.”

Connotation and Denotation are frequently described in terms of levels of representation and level of meaning. Denotation describes the picture content. We can make a detailed description of every single item in a single advertising image about what it means and how it works. Connotation refers to the possible meaning of the content.

2.8.6 Anchorage:

It describe those elements which anchor the main meaning. Often it is a caption which ties down, what the advertisement is about, especially when it does not have the product in it. A visual element may anchor meaning, especially if it dominates the picture in some way. For example, for quality of the product advertisers use 'soft and gentle' for a brand of soap.

2.9 MEDIA LITERACY

Media literacy is measuring the meaning in any message and organizing that meaning by adapting to our changing world by being skilled and then building
messages to convey that meaning to others so that it is useful. So the idea of literacy encompasses different skills. Few media types promote the development of one set of skills, while others help in the development of another set of skills. To become more literate on large set of skills that help with any type of messages in any medium. The tools that help in gaining control over cognitive programming is known as Skills. Skills today are very important in understanding advertising and media messages.

Definition of media literacy—According to W. James Potter (2013), “media literacy is a set of perspectives that we actively use to expose our self to the mass media to interpret the meaning of the messages we encounter. We build our prospective from knowledge structures. To build our knowledge structure we need tools, raw materials and willingness. The tools are our skills. The raw material is the information from the media and the real world. The willingness comes from our personal locus.”

There are three building blocks of media literacy. “These are personal locus, knowledge structure and skills. These three are necessary to build a person’s wider set of perspectives on the media. Personal locus is the energy and plan. The knowledge structure are the raw materials and the skills are the tools.”

For studying advertising, study of media literacy is also very important as advertising is one part of mass media. With the help of media literacy we can find out the understanding level of viewers regarding different elements of an advertisement. Advertising is very speedy communication. Advertisers are supposed to communicate their message in few seconds only and it is expected that viewers understand the message of the advertisement instantly. Interpretation of an advertisement by its viewers would depend on three main elements of media literacy. These are explained below;

2.9.1 Personal Locus:

W. James Potter in his book ‘Media Literacy’ explains media literacy as personal goals and drives of an individual. “The goals shape the information proceeding tasks by determining what gets filtered in and what gets ignored. The more one is aware of his goals, the more he directs the process of information seeking. The stronger the drives for information, the more effort we will expand to
attain our goals. If our locus is weak as in when we are not aware of particular goals and our drive energy is low, we will go the wrong way to media control where we will allow the media to exercise a high degree of control over exposures and information processing.” Being media literate does not mean that the locus is always fully occupied. No one can maintain a high degree of concentration continuously. This is an impossible task. Media literacy is a process of understanding the media content. It is not a product. Hence becoming more media literate means that a person uses the more locus and uses it more enthusiastically.

“The locus works in two modes. First is conscious and second is unconscious. When the locus works in the conscious mode, we are aware of options and can make our decisions. In contrast, when the locus operates in unconscious mode, the decisions are made outside of our awareness and control. In both modes, knowledge structures can get formed and elaborated. However when we are consciously using our locus, we are in control of the information processing and meaning making. But when our locus is operating in unconscious mode, the media exert their most powerful effect.”

To understand advertisement messages, personal locus of the viewers is very important. If the viewer has a strong personal locus he will filter the information more effectively and choose the content of his own requirement out of the complete message set.

2.9.2 Knowledge Structure:

Knowledge structures are the sets of organized information in a person’s memory. Knowledge structures do not occur suddenly. It must be built with care and accuracy. It is not just a set of facts but these are made by crafting pieces of information into an overall design carefully.

According to Potter (2013),”Information is the essential ingredient in knowledge structures. But all information is not equally useful to building a knowledge structures. Some information is rather superficial, such as the names of television shows or the melodies of popular music. If a person recognizes the surface information like lyrics of television show theme songs, names of the characters and actors, settings for show, it means that person is operating a low level of media literacy because this type of information addresses only the question of ‘what’. The
more useful information comes in the form of the answers to the questions of ‘how’ and ‘why’. But first we need to know something about the ‘what’ also.  

Information is consists of facts. Facts alone are not knowledge. Messages are consist of two kinds of information. First is factual and second one is social. In information, a fact is something raw, natural and context free. For example when we watch the news and hear messages of stock market, those messages are composed of facts. Another example is Narendra Modi was elected the Prime Minister of India. This statement also contains facts. Facts are separate bits of information such as names of people, date, title, character etc. 

Social information consists of accepted beliefs which cannot be verified by authorities in the way the factual information can. Though, it doesn’t mean that social information is not valuable or less real to people. Social information is a set of techniques which people learn observing social interactions. Examples of social information are guidelines on how we learn to eat, walk and act are the examples of social information.

For media literacy, Potter said that “we need strong knowledge structures in five areas. These are media effects, media content, media industries, the real world and the self. With knowledge of these five areas people are become more aware during the information processing tasks and therefore more able to make better decisions about seeking out information, working with that information and constructing meaning from it. The information that makes this awareness resides in knowledge structures.”

In order to understand advertisements well, it is important to improve knowledge structure of the viewers. Knowledge structure is a collection of an individual’s experiences related to that situation, product, service etc. So when individual encounter an advertisement, he interprets that advertisement according to his knowledge structure. An infant’s knowledge structure cannot be same as that of an adult. The knowledge structure of all individuals on a particular issue can’t be same. 

2.9.3 Skills:

To construct knowledge structure, we trust on the set of skills. These skills are the tools. When we have selected the facts we require shaping those facts into sets of
information and fitting those pieces of information into their proper places in a structure carefully.

Skills are like muscles, the more we exercise them, and they get stronger. Skills become weaker without practice. The crucial skills of media literacy are evaluation, induction, grouping, deduction, analysis. These skills are not exclusive to media literacy tasks but we use these skills in all sorts of ways in our daily lives.

The process of breaking down of information into meaningful elements is known as analysis. As we come across the media or advertising messages, we simply accept these messages on the surface level and dig deeper into the messages by breaking down into its elements and examine the composition of the elements that make up the messages. For example in a news story, we can accept that what a journalist tells us or analyze the story for completeness. Then we can break the story down into its: who, what, when, where, why and how to determine if the story is complete or not.

The process of making a remark about the value of an element is known as Evaluation. This remark or judgment is made by comparing a message element to some standard. When we encounter opinions spoken by experts in media messages, we could simply memorize those opinions and make them our own. Sometimes we could take the information elements in the message and compare them to our standard. If those elements meet or exceed our standards, we conclude that message and the opinion is good but if the elements fall short of our standard, then it is unacceptable.

Grouping is deciding which elements are same in some way and then determining how a group of elements is different from the other groups of elements. The key of doing this nicely is finding classification rules. We accept the classification rule formulated by the media and end up with the groups they want us to use. However if we make efforts in determining the best classification rules for us for organizing our thinking towards the world, we will settle with groups which have more meaning and more values for us.

Induction is finding out a pattern among a small number of elements and then generalizing the pattern among all elements in a larger set. While examining the result
of public opinion polls, we see that many people use elements of media stories to find out the patterns about real life and it creates false beliefs about life.

Advertising skills are like a game, the more we play, the more we become a better player. Advertising skills can’t work efficiently without practice. The important skills of advertising are assessment, initiation, alliance, assumption and study. These skills are not exclusive to advertising but we use these skills in all sorts of media content.

2.10 ELEMENTS OF MESSAGE STRATEGY:

The creative team of advertisement is responsible for developing creative ideas for advertisements and advertising campaigns. They are in charge for executing them in different media. The creative team develops the message of advertisement according to the information as creative brief and additional research given by account team. This may occur before, during or after the creative process of searching for the big idea.

The message strategy is a simple explanation and justification of an advertising campaign. In general, the creative approach is like what the advertising says, how it says it, and why? The message strategy has three main components according to Potter (2013):

“Verbal- guidelines for what the advertising should says, considerations that affect the choice of words and the relationship of the copy approach to the medium or media that will carry the message.

Non-verbal- Overall nature of the ad’s graphics, any visuals that must be used and the relationship of the graphics to the media in which the ad will appear.

Technical- Preferred execution approach and mechanical outcome, includes budget and scheduling limitations.”

All these three elements of the message strategy are interlinked and they typically change simultaneously. Language of an advertisement affects the images and vice versa. Though, the verbal elements are the starting point for most advertisements and advertising campaigns.

In order to understand the topic of study well researcher has studied all related aspects of advertising, changes in advertising, different components of
advertisements, types of advertising and use of semiotics in contemporary advertising. After going through the above literature researcher has asked questions from the sample regarding contemporary print advertisements.

2.11 SCOPE OF RESEARCH

The present study helps us to understand the visual aspects of the advertisements in print. The study would also be useful for the ad makers as they will also find out the level of visual literacy of readers and viewers from this study.

This research has been done on contemporary advertisement, so that we are able to understand the recent trends of advertisements and how the signs, symbols, images and other visual elements are used in advertisements.

The study would be a beneficial for ad makers, readers and those who works in the field of advertising, visual communication and semiotics studies.

2.12 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. The broad objective of the study is to find out the most liked and popular elements in print advertisements.
2. To find out the main element in print advertisements contributing in its recall value.
3. To find out the role of social norms help in understanding the real context of the advertisements.

2.13 RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. What are the important elements for popularity of an advertisement?
2. Which element influences viewers buying behavior?
3. Which are the main eye catching elements in an advertisement?
4. How long the impact of an advertisement last?
5. How graphical representation help in understanding an advertisement better?
6. Whether special fonts/colour is capable of creating visual image of an advertisement?
7. How strong sign/symbols are in communicating a message of an advertisement?
8. Which form of advertisement creates greater impact?
2.14 HYPOTHESES:
- The sign and symbols are more popular in print advertisements.
- Cultural and social norms help in the interpretation of print advertisements.
- The impact of an advertisement lasts for some hours only.
REFERENCES

3. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid.
58. Ibid.