Task 2 – Observational Writing

In present-day society we are surrounded by *predictive advertising* (Gaia, 2020), idealisation and *clickbait* (Frampton, 2014) which can distort our feelings, decisions and experiences. Yet, does this effect our capability to determine what is true and genuine? By applying ideology of others and the theory of semiotics this text will deconstruct an image.

The founder of semiotics, F. de Saussure compares language to a piece of paper, “one cannot cut the front without cutting the back at the same time”, he goes on to demonstrate this is like “one can neither divide sound from thought nor thought from sound”, the sound (the signified) and the thought (the signifier) has a different relationship based on the individual, for instance experience, culture and context will all have different impacts on how the signifier is interpretated to be. The signified does not need to be sound; it can be from any faculty of senses, words or images. However, the signifier is meaningless without interpretation. In addition to this, one signified can have more than one signifier, the word ‘me’ will mean something different every time someone new says it. Peirce`s theory on sub-sections in semiotics (icon, index and symbol) breaks down semiotic into three main categories. The signified could be a dog the signifier would be a picture of a dog (icon), barking (index) or the letters d, o and g (symbol).

This advert is from a Dior campaign for lipstick released in September 2015. It focuses on femineity and empowerment, with the main focal point being a woman dressed in a pink dress, wearing pink lipstick. Society has chosen the colour pink to represent the female gender. The heavy, dark business chair the model is sat on signifies that she is a businesswoman. When put together it can be interpreted as female empowerment. This advert is using the ideology of beauty, people society want to buy into this image of beauty because they think it will make them more attractive.

https://www.gaia.com/article/neuroscience-in-advertising-when-does-it-become-mind-control

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-34213693

Saussure course in general linguistics

Decoding advertisements: ideology and meaning in advertising. Professor Judith Williamson