

The Color of the Year:
A Textual Analysis of Pantone's Color Communication Techniques
through the Application of Barthes' Semiotic

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Dedication

For God,
For South Korea
&
For my family,
at home and abroad

This thesis is dedicated to
my grandmother, Chun Ho Kim, the bravest woman,
my father, Jong Koo Lee, the most admired man,
my mother, Myung Soon Kang, the most brilliant woman,
and my brother, Dong Hyun Lee, the most precious man
in my life.

Lastly,
for my grandparents, Ho In Lee, Chae Lan Shin, and Ja Hwa Kang,
who eternally encourage me from heaven.

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Abstract

This research analyzes the content of Pantone's color of the year in 2000, 2002, 2009, 2014 and 2015 utilizing Barthes' semiological system from a communication perspective. This study scrutinizes the announcement of Pantone's color of the year as well as its color story to discover the purpose and the effectiveness of the verbalized nomination. The result reveals the significance of the semantic nature, which directs individuals' viewpoint and creates a new connotation to alter their preconception. Also, Pantone's color of 2014, Radiant Orchid, verified that the consolidation of the visual image and verbal content can maximize the influences that the sender desired. In discussion, after the emphasis of verbalized notation and the choice of oral structure (written color), the last chapter explains the system concerning who creates new visual experience, establishes it as a trend, and follows it. Although Pantone's color communication is a relatively new phenomenon, this research completely states that the written content, which is provided with the photographed images, is accepted as other visual features, directs individuals' perspectives, and it eventually associates with the economic value that Pantone aims to achieve.

Keywords: Pantone's color of the year, Barthes' semiological system, Fashion system, color story, visual media, communication techniques, semiotics, color, marketing, written code, compelling context, persuasion

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Introduction

Pantone declared 2015's color of year as Marsala, which is a deep red wine or terracotta hue. It forecasts that Marsala color will pop up everywhere, such as in fashion, home décor, cosmetics, and graphic design. Pantone's executive director Leatrice Eiseman said that Marsala is an attractive shade which is warm and enriches individuals' souls (Pantone LLC, 2014b, para. 1). Although Pantone has introduced its color of year for the last fourteen years, magazines and blogs are just now introducing ways to enjoy Pantone's color of 2015.

Pantone started its business as a commercial printing company in the 1950s. In 1963, the founder of Pantone, Lawrence Herbert, created a standardized color reproduction system, which is known as Pantone color matching system. It solves the problem of color communication and also allows to produce accurate color matches in the manufacturing and graphic design industries. For instance, Starbucks coffee company specifies that the green color of its logo must visually match PANTONE® 3425 C for consistent color reproduction.

Since then, Pantone has developed its color matching system to other color-involved industries, including marketing, display, design, advertising, and retailing. They globally conduct a color communication, recommend specific colors for brand identity, and forecast color trends because they believe that the effective application of color will make people or brands distinguishable. According to their study, color increases the ability of "learning, retention, and recall by 55% to 78%" and 80% of human experience is filtered through the eyes; thus, the choice of color is critical, powerful, and remarkably influential for the day (Eiseman, 2006, p. 74).

At the start of the new century, Pantone announced a color of the year that excellently "encapsulate[d] the spirit of the times" and mostly anticipated to show up everywhere, including

fashion or daily life (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 108). In Europe, Pantone yearly hosts a secret meeting of representatives from various nations' color standards groups. After two days of the presentations and debates, Pantone narrows numerous colors down from two thousands to one and eventually declares a particular color as a color of the year, with a color story of the specific color. For instance, Pantone's colors of 2002, 2004, and 2009 reflected the "spirit of the time" (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 108). The color of 2002, "True Red," relates to the 9/11 attacks, the color of 2004, "Tigerlily," a shade of orange, boosts the warmth mood against the Iraqi and Afghanistan war, and the color of 2009, "Mimosa," a shade of yellow, is influenced by Barack Obama, the first African American president of the United States (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, pp. 109-113). Thus, according to Pantone, the colors of the years, which are reflected by historical changes or social phenomenon, intend to evoke positive emotion and an uplifting atmosphere.

Many know that there is a color trend; however, it is doubtful that Pantone's color of the year is accepted as a must-have color in a variety of industries. In 2013, Pantone announced the 2014's color of the year as a "PANTONE® 18-3224 Radiant Orchid," which is a pinkish purple shade (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 115). Additionally, Pantone introduced Radiant Orchid color as a "surprisingly versatile shade" that can be worn by both males and females (Pantone LLC, 2013, para. 5). For example, in the fashion field, Emerson by Jackie Fraser-Swan, Juicy Couture and Yoana Baraschi presented Radiant Orchid hue into men's and women's clothing and accessories throughout 2014 spring and summer collections (Kim, 2013). American actress, Krysten Alyce Ritter, who is known for her roles as Jane Margolis on the AMC drama series *Breaking Bad*, dressed with a radiant orchid (Pantone's color of 2014) gown for Van Cleef & Arpels New Exhibit Opening Night Reception held at The Bowers Museum in Santa Ana,

California (Kim, 2013). Also, interior companies release Orchid colored furniture, such as ABC Home, one of the American furniture companies, introduced the bed with that-trendy shade.

Colors obviously possess the power, value, and significance in the fashion industry because they visually and emotionally affect the garment or the person who wears it. For this reason, brand marketers significantly consider color psychology because it could establish the brand identification, consumer preference, and purchasing decisions. Color psychology defines the relation between color and human behavior and mostly relies on the specific color and its “presumed impact on behavior,” such as green makes people stay peaceful and relaxed (Elliot, Maier, Moller, Friedman, & Meinhardt, 2007, p. 250). Goldstein (1942) asserts that the disparity of a background color causes differential behavioral effects. He states that a red or yellow background increases disagreeable, upsetting, and expansive behaviors whereas a green or blue background elicits agreeable, stable, and reserved behaviors. Similarly, Soldat, Sinclair, and Mark (1997) state that a single color generally associates with the specific emotion, such as blue creates sadness. Many studies of color psychology conceptualize that different colors relatively link to the specific “emotional behavior, personality differentiation and the indirect influence of observable behavior traits” (Schaie, 1966, p. 512).

On the other hand, Elliot, Maier, Moller, Friedman, and Meinhardt (2007) propose that the influence of color is based on both biological and contextual cues and pose the problem that the study of color psychology tends to generally center on innate factors. Their general model of color and psychological functioning recognizes that color contains “specific meaning,” which is grounded in “learned” meaning with experiences or biologically innate meaning (Elliot et al., 2007, p. 251). The perception of a color automatically conducts “evaluative processes” by the individuals perceiving, and the personal evaluation causes the color-motivated behavior (Elliot et

al., 2007, p. 251). If an individual perceives the positive meaning from the color, he or she will show affirmative behaviors. This model also acknowledges that colors unconsciously affect people in general; however, the last principle of Elliot and his colleagues' model notably contemplates the contextual aspect that color meaning and effect communicate in different ways by "lexical, contextual, and relational stimuli" (Elliot et al., 2007, p. 253).

To sum up, color psychology believes that color contains the specific meanings, which refer to common human perceptions. However, this study assumes that depending on communication techniques, the notion of a certain color could be transformed to the sender's intended meaning. Although visual media has evolved tremendously during the internet era, this study asserts that the written content is still a fundamental factor to conduct effective communication when individuals aim to increase the influence of the message. Therefore, this research will center on the textual analysis to examine the association between Pantone's color of the year and its color communication techniques, and it expects to contribute to the study of semiotics and persuasive communication.

In this contemporary society, visual media has exploded at "an unprecedented rate," and visual communication has been developed into a refined and dominant research field (Huang, Le, Paine, Khorrami, & Tariq, 2014, p. 4). The visual technology and internet enable individuals and companies to communicate visually more now than ever before. Individuals buy and utilize visual tools, such as digital cameras in mobile phones or pocket camcorders, which are more available and less expensive than twenty decades ago. Also, the internet, specifically social media, has extended visual communication regardless of geographic locations. People take pictures with a mobile phone or compact camera, share those to Facebook or Instagram, and communicate with their friends or unknown people who award a feedback by clicking a 'Like'

button or leaving a comment. Also, companies aggressively adapt the visual communication in order to affect consumers' behavior, reactions, and decisions towards social media, creating a Facebook or Instagram page, which relies on visual messages more than verbal contents (Shain, Campbell, & Langton, 2011). Furthermore, the old media or legacy media, such as newspapers, magazines, radio stations, and television stations, utilize "a full range of multimedia tools to attract viewers to their websites" (Kenney, 2008, p. 15). For example, CNN or Fox news allows viewers to share their news video clips or photos with a variety of social media, and viewers could report to TV stations concerning breaking news with real-time photos or videos. Thus, a contemporary society recognizes the increasing significance of visual communication and the greater power of visual messages.

Visual communication comprises colors, signs, layout, graphic designs, illustrations, typography, and "artistic styles" (Smith, 2005, p. 123). According to the media aesthetics theory, color is one of the fundamental elements of television, film, and computer-generated media. Color mainly performs three functions in visual media: (a) It adds more information about objects and events to differentiate among them, (b) It can conduce to "the visual balance of a screen image," and (c) It can create the specific mood or atmosphere that will be perceived by viewers (Smith, 2005, p. 369). In other words, color on recognizable images (people or objects) emphasizes their appearance, reveals their intentions, and directly leads viewers' attention. Also, a bright and highly saturated color, such as red, green, or blue, creates high-energy atmosphere combined with the intense situation, like a football game or automobile race (Zettl, 2014). Thus, the surrounding colors of the image greatly affect individuals' perception and establish an intended mood. For instance, a black background color portrays an image of death while a white background color provides a positive atmosphere.

In the same manner, the power of color became a more prominent study in the field of nonverbal communication as well. Although nonverbal communication still centers on personal behaviors, such as gestures, postures, facial expressions, eye movements, or vocal behaviors, the influence of “nonhuman factors” on interpersonal communication gradually draws scholars’ interest (Knapp & Hall, 2014, p. 62). “Nonhuman factors” indicates the environments, which could influence individuals while they conduct the conversation, and those factors include “the furniture, architecture style, interior decorating, lighting conditions, colors, temperature, additional noises or music” (Knapp & Hall, 2014, p. 62).

During interpersonal communication, color can be the most recognizable element among other environmental factors because it determines the overall atmosphere compared to details of the environment, such as furniture or lighting. According to Satyendra (2006), individuals generally make a decision “within 90 seconds of their initial interactions” with other people and the “62% to 90 percent” of evaluation is solely grounded on colors (p. 783). In addition, most people might be less sensitive to minute factors or have less knowledge concerning interior decorations; thus, they may not be affected by those objects. Color does not require professional knowledge because individuals will perceive or interpret the color by their own thoughts, experiences, or values. Conversely, if the communicator desires to conduct an effective color communication, he or she must utilize compelling colors to stimuli others. Although individuals subjectively define the meaning of color, they also share a common perception of the color in general.

For instance, the McDonald’s corporation, the world’s largest chain of hamburger fast food restaurants, utilizes the red and yellow color in its brand logo and shop interior because scientifically, the red or yellow color stimulates an appetite and grabs customers’ attention, more

than any other color (Satyendra, 2006). In other words, the McDonald's brand color leads attention and evokes consumers' emotions, rather than its restaurant furniture or interior decoration. Indeed, McDonald's designed their restaurant chairs with stiff plastic material to subconsciously force customers to leave faster. However, the combination of red and yellow colors promptly and effectively extract the customers' reaction, which is intended by its marketer (communicator).

Similarly, the clothes that individuals wear can intentionally or subliminally influence their interpersonal communication. The study of clothing is one of the basic forms of nonverbal communication because it can illustrate individuals' personality, economic status, culture, authority, level of confidence, generation, or interests (Forbes, 2012). If a person is covered in designer logos, he or she wants to "broadcast wealth in order to be treated well by others" (Forbes, 2012, p. 2). This person can strongly affect people who are sensitive to an economic status or a fashion because they might be distracted by the person's garments more than the conversation. However, prior to recognizing the details of individuals' clothes, people will react to the dress color. A dominant color of apparel can provide instant comprehension, draw fast attention, construct an identity, and explain the characteristics of an individual (Eiseman, 2006). Thus, color communication cannot be only more effective than the verbal communication, but also more powerful in a brief space of time than the other elements of nonverbal communication.

According to the above studies, color is one of the significant areas to expand a range in visual media and the nonverbal communication field; however, the study of color tends to limit the idea that one color possesses the certain meaning, and individuals simply perceive the message from the color alone. Eiseman (2006) points out that a color can have both positive and negative meanings, and "negative is a relative term" (p. 5). In other words, the negative message

of the color could alter to the positive message depending on context. A different context concerning the same color can provide a new way to organize individuals' thinking and obtain a better perspective from them. This idea is related to the storytelling technique, which is increasingly utilized in business, marketing, and advertising today. Guber (2011) asserts that a compelling story can offer a challenge to a human's general view, subliminally reducing people's skepticism and eventually obtaining the purpose of story. Also, Appel and Richter (2007) insist that stories could be powerful and durable persuasion, which transform the story receivers' beliefs, culture, attitudes, or experiences. To synthesize ideas, individuals will imperceptibly accept a new definition of color from the convincing color story, and the story transforms their certain norms to an intended meaning of the storyteller.

Post-structuralism also includes in conjunction with the proposal that one single color could be multifaceted depending on the given context. Czepczynski (2008) explains that "Post-structuralism rejects the idea of a text having a single purpose, a single meaning or one singular existence" (p. 31). Namely, the context can possess more than one meaning, shift the coherent concept in relation to many variables, and allow people to reproduce new knowledge. Structuralism centers on the "concept of self" or "coherent entity" of language, while post-structuralism does not limit the language in a linguistic or structural system (Czepczynski, 2008, p. 31). Belsey (2002) demonstrates the post-structuralism as a relationship of "human beings, the world, and the practice of making and reproducing meanings" (p. 5). Specifically, humans experience the world, create a meaning and control language. The specific terminology does not always possess the meaning; however, the surrounding context could determine the identity. Therefore, every text can produce a variety of perspectives and deconstruct the "traditional

paradigms organizing personal and social identity, community, and the linear experience of space-time” (Oswald, 2015, p. 34).

After overviewing the idea of storytelling and post-structuralism, the similarity is discovered in Pantone's color communication. Specifically, Pantone believes that color is a powerful language in many areas, and the various contexts will produce the different power of the color. Thus, a study of Pantone's color of the year and its impact, defined as globally, “best encapsulates the spirit of the times”, is important for several reasons (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 108). First, color became a significant element in the field of visual media and nonverbal communication. People depend on visual media more than traditional media, and it causes individuals to experience images more than texts. Yet, the text is still provided with the image towards visual media, for instance, people usually write a comment with their photo or hashtags in their social media posts. And, although an image may be a prior reason for publishing, the emphasis of the image is revealed in the text. There are many studies concerning the power of the color itself, but the study concerning the consolidation of color and communication techniques is sparse and elusive. Therefore, this study contributes to the inadequate part of communication by finding the association between visual and verbal communication. Second, to study how written contexts influence individuals' color perception, Pantone's color communication is one of the admirable examples that utilizes the marketing of color. This study believes that Pantone's color communication techniques allow a printing company to be a color marketing company, which designates the trend color in the world and affects multiple design areas, including fashion, cosmetics, and home interiors. Third, the study will also delve, in hindsight, into who originally created the color of the year, which represents the world, why industries and individuals are intrigued by Pantone's announcement, and how Pantone persuades

various companies and consumers with one certain color. Thus, the purpose of this analytical study is to explore the marketing techniques of Pantone and discover the indwelling semiotics in its color communication. Epure, Eisenstat, and Dinu (2014) propose that “the application of semiotics techniques in marketing has evolved with considerable momentum” because semiotics allows understanding of the framework of marketing and the progress of how companies generate the signs, transmit to individuals, and persuade them (p. 592).

Among the multitude of semiotics theory, the study applies Barthes' semiotic theory to understand the connotation and denotation concerning Pantone's color of the year, to discover the underlying relationships with colors and marketing, and lastly to examine the effectiveness of Pantone's color communication. Particularly, Barthes' mythologies will analyze that how Pantone created the illusion of color (connotation) that could break the cultural perception of color down and produced a new visual experience and the color direction to various industries.

To accomplish this, this study will textually analyze Pantone's five colors for the years, 2000, 2002, 2009, 2014, and 2015, among a fifteen-year period, and evaluate the effectiveness of each color story (written content), grounded on Barthes' semiological system. Specifically, Barthes' connotation and denotation semiotic theory informed the researcher to how Pantone has conducted color communication throughout the year, especially how they combine the color and its color story to persuade individuals. Moreover, the results of textual analysis will exhibit how Pantone's color of the year creates its power, significance, and value from one of the existing shades. Lastly, the research questions will be answered: (a) How does Pantone present the color of the year through their phraseology to create a link of equivalence between a certain color and its concept in 2000, 2002, 2009, 2014, and 2015?, (b) What is the significance of the semantic

nature of the links between Pantone's color of the year, the marketing field, the color-related industry, and consumers?

More literature on semiotics and its use in marketing will be discussed in the following chapter. Subsequently, the research design of this study will be addressed, followed by the research findings, discussion, suggestions for future research, and a conclusion will be provided concerning the significance of a semantic nature in the color-related industries as well as in the communication field.

Literature Review

The study of color is largely prosperous, potentially critical, and has an aspect of the field of communication. First of all, individuals are exposed to various colors of natural view or artificial images, such as advertisements daily on television or internet sites. People not only see colors, but they also filter and extract colors. We all have a color preference and choose the specific color of the garment among several different colors and remarkably notice a few colors from several hundreds of shades of product packages in stores. People can utilize an identical color for printing or crafting goods simply to conduct the primary function regardless of shades, which would be more efficient than printing numerous colors. However, and this is a second rationale to study colors, individuals or companies utilize colors to stimulate others' eyesight and to indicate an identification. Historically, some specific colors identify status, gender, religion, or ages. Red was the color of majesty in the Middle Ages, as well as in most Asian dynasties, such as China, Korea, and Japan. Also, people usually have a perception of gendered color, such as pink and blue. Menswear companies will produce blue apparel more than pink items because men often perceive pink as a female's color. Thirdly, colors are utilized as forms of communication; thus, it is pertinent subject matter for communication researchers to study because colors associate with messages and meanings, which could be theoretically analyzed in semiotics, including semantic, syntactic, or pragmatic. They also incorporate with the area of visual media or visual marketing as one of the significant communication vehicles to deliver desirable and/or useful messages. In addition, colors conceivably apply to the field of nonverbal communication because they could subliminally influence individuals' moods or thinking and effectively support the accompanying verbal messages. Lastly, the analysis of color could portray how reality is socially constructed. The choice of color could be concerned with power,

dominance, status, or hierarchy. For instance, the color Marsala was simply one of the existing colors before Pantone declared this color as the color of 2015; however, now this color or Marsala-colored garments, cosmetics, or home interiors has become trendy because it is the color of this year. Therefore, Marsala has become powerful as the color of 2015.

The above rationale briefly provides the significance of studying colors and colors in the communication field. The first section of the literature review will attempt to examine further reasons to study colors as a form of communication underlying historical, psychological, and sociological perspectives. The study will investigate how the colors were utilized through human history, and then how previous research analyzed a color itself or the applications of a color. The unlimited use of colors will support the tangible importance of this study and identify the relationship between the three domains and communication.

In the second section, this researcher explores Peirce, Saussure, and Barthes' semiotics because this pedant believes that semiotics explicitly provides the theoretical frame regarding colors. Also, this study will examine how three different semiotics perceive and interpret colors within their scope. Eventually, the overview of three different scholars' semiotics will determine the most appropriate theory, which could contribute to analyze Pantone's color communication techniques.

The last section will stress what exactly should be studied concerning semiotics and Pantone. This researcher will indicate the differences of this study comparing to the above two sections of the literature review and also suggest the demanded study, which is meager and sparse in previous research. Specifically, this study hypothesizes that the compelling context of colors creates new power, value, and meaning, recognizing that colors possess potential power, thereby altering prevailing preconceptions of colors.

Color in Historical Context

When scrutinizing the antiquated history of garments and its relationship to color, colors were one of the signs that identified individuals' status and power. In medieval and Renaissance Europe, vivid hues, such as "strong blue, yellows, oranges, and greens," were "a mark of high status" and "a code for power," while subdued colors, such as gray and beige, were "the colors of poverty: only the poorest of the poor" (Greenfield, 2005, p. 9). Among the bright colors, especially red was the most powerful symbol in many countries until 1900, not only in Europe (Greenfield, 2005). In classical times, red garments clothed the shah of Persia, the high class of South of the Sahara, the emperors of China, and the "coccianti," which means the city's most powerful man who wears red, of Rome (Greenfield, 2005, p. 3).

In the Middle Ages, red was the color of majesty, particularly "scarlet," which is a bright red with slightly orange hue, and "crimson," which is a strong and deep red color, signified "majesty" or "authority" corresponding to majesty (Greenfield, 2005, pp. 24-25). For instance, Charlemagne, a medieval emperor who ruled much of Western Europe, wore "scarlet leather shoes" as a symbol of authority when Pope Leo III (750-816) crowned him as an emperor of the Romans (Greenfield, 2005, p. 24). King Ferdinand of Spain wore scarlet robes, and many other medieval monarchs "proclaimed their majesty" by dressing with saturated and luminous reds from head to toe (Greenfield, 2005, p. 24). Similar to the scarlet, crimson was utilized to "enhance the overall glory of the monarch"; Richard II of England dressed in crimson shoes, hose, and gown for his coronation. In France, "royal magistrates were entitled to wear scarlet gowns, while the king's chancellor dressed in crimson" (Greenfield, 2005, p. 25). In Christianity, "from the late 1100s, the Church adopted red as a symbol of its authority," and cardinals, especially, of the Roman Catholic Church wore red robes (Greenfield, 2005, p. 22).

Red not only symbolized the majesty in Europe, but it was also signified as a king's color in Asia. For example, Imperial China considered red as a noble color; thus, it was utilized in the gates of imperial palaces, all court ceremonies, coronations, sacrificial offerings, and royal family's weddings (Yan, 2008). In Korea, kings of the Gorye and Joseon dynasties always wore a dragon robe, which is called a Gonryongpo, and the color of Gonryongpo was mostly red (Wikipedia, 2015b). According to the portraits of Sejong the Great, Yeongjo, Cheoljong, and Gojong, the kings of Joseon, and these kings dressed in red robes (Wikipedia, 2015f; Wikipedia, 2015c; Wikipedia, 2015d; Wikipedia, 2015e).

Along with the red hues, purple, especially the color "Tyrian purple" or "imperial purple," which is "shades of amethyst and violet," was another sign of "power and prestige in the classical world" (Greenfield, 2005, p. 20). In fact, imperial purple was perceived as a royal color earlier than red: "[I]n the early first century, wealthy Romans preferred purples," and imperial purple was in the superior comparing to crimson or scarlet in Rome (Greenfield, 2005, p. 21). In the Byzantine Empire, purple demonstrates the political power; thus, "[e]mpresses gave birthing in the Purple Chamber....Bishops of the Byzantine church" dressed in white robes "with bands of purple" while government official wore "squares of purple textile to display their positions," and even the cover of imperial documents and "gospel documents" contained Tyrian purple (Smith, 2014, p. 21).

The significance of this above historical research is what gives red or purple its power and authority. Color psychologists assert that the shade itself does have the power of royalty; however, the hidden truth is that "the exclusivity concept attached to purple [or red] came out because of affordability and availability" (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000; Greenfield, 2005; Eiseman, 2006, p. 45; Eiseman & Cutler, 2013). For instance, in case of imperial purple, 336,000

Murex snails were needed to extract one ounce of dyestuff; thus, “a pound of the best imperial purple cloth was worth 50,000 *denarii*,” which is a tremendous amount comparing that “stoneworkers earned only 50 *denarii* a day (Greenfield, 2005, p. 20). Due to the problem of lavish expense, royalty or wealthy only could afford the imperial purple garment, and this established people’s perception that imperial purple is “the provenance of kings, queens, nobles, and wealthy, powerful patrons” (Eiseman, 2006, p. 45). Moreover, in Byzantium, the imperial court dominated the production of purple to restrain the coloring of silks for future consumption (Jacoby, 2004). In the fourth-century, Roman emperors also controlled imperial purple cloth, and they only authorized “senators and other great leaders” to wear it “on holiday and feast days” (Greenfield, 2005, p. 21).

In the same manner that contemporary fashion changes the trend color by the season or the year, the imperial color shifted from purple to red. Although purple was the predominant color in the early first century of Roman emperors, crimson and scarlet were regarded as symbols of prestige after Rome perished, and they remained as “color[s] of great significance throughout the old empire” (Greenfield, 2005, p. 21). In the classical times, same as imperial purple, red garments were extravagant commodities that were unaffordable to less than royal classes because “red dyestuffs were so scarce” as well (Greenfield, 2005, p. 27). At that time, the natural ingredients that could yield red dye were sparse, and some of them were even inappropriate or complicated to use on garments (Greenfield, 2005). However, according to European history, people continued discovering the perfect substances of red dyestuff; madder, the dye plant, enabled to extract red from its roots: but this oldest method “required great precision and a certain amount of luck, because madder roots varied greatly in quality” (Greenfield, 2005, p. 28). In Renaissance Europe, although dyers also tried to produce a rich red dye, which is not

“sensitive to both alkalinity and temperature,” the process required “three or four months to complete,” including “more than a dozen steps” (Greenfield, 2005, p. 28). They also attempted brazilwood, the lichen archil, and the insect laccifer lacca; however, the red dyestuffs extracted from those substances usually tended to fade (Greenfield, 2005). Eventually, European dyers discovered the perfect source to produce “the most vivid and lasting” red from oak-kermes, a genus of scale insects (Greenfield, 2005, p. 29). The crimson garment dyed by kermes dyestuff was “nearly twice as much as green dye and over three times as much as yellow or light blue” in the Renaissance era (Greenfield, 2005, p. 31). Also, in the fifteenth century, Spain’s conquistadors found the tiny fluffy insect, cochineal, which produced a perfect scarlet; however, it was very expensive and still high priced in this century (in 1992, “a kilo of cochineal costs 500,000 pesos,” which is equal to 166 US dollars) because “it is very difficult to collect this little insect that is destroyed by the wind, the blowing of the wind, and the rain” (Wood, 2008, p. 62).

Thus, in history, the elusive and expensive substances increased the value of purple and red, and the attached context to these colors, which were identified as the emperors’ colors, formed people’s perception that purple is “visionary, royal, prestigious, and subduing” and red is “elegant, cultivated, rich, and refined” (Eiseman, 2006, p. 47, p. 10). Also, in classical times, the apparel of emperors was most desirable and trendy and such that commoners were not able to wear, and sometimes wealthy people also were not allowed to dress in the same way as the imperial family (Greenfield, 2005). That is why rich people aimed to possess red or purple cloth: “[I]n fabulously wealthy Venice, rich young aristocrats gloried in their scarlet wool gowns, while those who wore the best crimson silks were said to dress [in the way of prince]” (Greenfield, 2005, p. 25). Moreover, some patrician families adorned “their walls in tapestries shot through with red silks,” and the new rich classes of the Renaissance enjoyed dressing in “scarlet and

crimson garments,” while “they flouted sumptuary law” (Greenfield, 2005, p. 26). Thus, the context of red, such as imperial, authoritative, valuable, royal, wealthy, powerful, or desirable, significantly influenced individuals’ viewpoint at that time. According to the fashion history of the Renaissance era, even the peasants also attempted to wear “the cheaper orange-red and russet” cloth (Greenfield, 2005, p. 24).

Color in Psychological Context

“Chromadynamics (the study of the physiological effects caused by observing color)” explains that specific colors influence individuals’ “vision, hearing, respiration, and circulation” because scientists have discovered that individuals’ emotional, physical, and psychological changes occur when their brain deciphers certain colors (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000, p. 184; Pantone LLC, 2015b). Thus, according to this theory, “colors can stimulate, excite, depress, tranquilize, increase appetite and create a feeling of warmth or coolness” (Pantone LLC, 2015b, para. 7). For instance, Chromadynamics demonstrates that white hue causes a positive mood, such as “purity, cleanliness, virtue, crystal, innocence, or joy”; but on the other hand, black hue generates a negative mood, such as “sadness, unhappiness, death, or decay” (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000, p. 185). Some colors contain both positive and negative moods, such as red, orange, or brown. Red hue could lead to the mood of “excitement, happiness, vitality, vivaciousness, energy, [and] fun,” but also contains the negative mood, such as “anger, rage, hostility, defiance, [and] sin” (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000, p. 185). Orange hue could encourage either “excitement” or “distress,” as well as brown hue could cause either “protection” or “disappointment” (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000, p. 185). The reason why these colors create antithetical moods is because they have numerous shades and tones, and the same color with different shades could change the mood.

Analogous to Chromadynamics, the process of color psychology is also concerned with individuals' sensory organs and behaviors. To be specific, sunlight consists of three spectrums, which are "light, ultraviolet, and infrared," and human eyes only perceive the "light spectrum," which generates "wavelengths" (Caputo, 2010, p. 2). The wavelengths contain a different range of lengths, which are absorbed by objects and reflected to human eyes to interpret as a different color (Caputo, 2010). In the end, the brain receives "information" from the eyes, and 20% of the information transmits to "the pituitary gland which releases various hormones into the body" (Caputo, 2010, p. 2). Thus, colors perceived by the pituitary gland are translated into certain information, and then they generate the individuals' reactions, such as emotions or activity (Color psychology, 2007).

The reactions from colors could be individually different relying on "many factors and variables"; therefore, some researchers of color psychology assert that colors could be subjective depending on cultural and ethnic background, sex, age, personal experience, or individual characteristics (Caputo, 2010, p. 2; Color psychology, 2013). However, others still insist that certain colors universally generate a certain mood and meaning because it is "deeply rooted to [individuals'] psyche" (Caputo, 2010, p. 2; Color psychology, 2013). In other words, humans' "first interaction with color was primal" because humans perceive colors from the natural world, like a sunset, volcano, or wood (Caputo, 2010, p. 3). For example, prehistoric people recognized brown hues from the woods, which utilize a material of shelter; thus, people commonly feel stable and safe from the objects of brown hues (Caputo, 2010, p. 3). From the above notion, researchers distinguish colors into "warm shades," including "reds, oranges, and yellows," and "cool shades," including "blues and violets" (Color psychology, 2007, p. 45). "Warm shades" evoke the feeling of "excitement and warmth" and produce an active and creative atmosphere

(Color psychology, 2007, p. 45). Conversely, cool shades, which are “on the blue side of the spectrum,” represent calmness, “peacefulness, and tranquility” (Color psychology, 2007, p. 45; Color psychology, 2013, para. 9). In terms of green, while warm shades of green could create an atmosphere of “pleasantness, softness,” or warmth, cool shades of green could strengthen a feeling of “coolness, cleanness, or freshness” (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000, p.185; Color psychology, 2007). Similar to Chromodynamics, color psychology views “neutral colors, [such as] white, black, browns, and grays,” as “stability and balance” (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000, p. 185; Color psychology, 2007, p. 45).

Color therapy, which is also known as Chromotherapy, is based on the relationship between certain colors and humans' physiological reactions. It began with ancient cultures, including the Egyptians, Indian, and Chinese, utilizing colors as a healing tool of the human mind and body (Color psychology, 2013). Briefly, red boosts circulation by stimulating the body and mind; yellow clears the body by stimulating the nerves; orange treats the lungs by developing energy levels; blue releases pain by relieving illnesses; and indigo appeases skin problems (Color psychology, 2013; Milford, 2013). Along with this concept, some researchers state that a blue wall may generate feelings of calm and help individuals “perform better”; a yellow wall may increase feelings of depression; and a pink wall assist prisoner to “calm inmates” (Color Psychology, 2007, p. 44). Theoretically, in 1867, Augustus Pleasonton introduced how blue can improve the growth of crops and livestock and can treat humans' diseases in his book, *“The Influence of the Blue Ray of the Sunlight and of the Blue Color of the Sky, in Developing Animal and Vegetable Life; in 100 COLOR research and application Arresting Disease and in Restoring Health in Acute and Chronic Disorders to Human and Domestic Animals”* (Whitfield & Whelton, 2015, pp. 100-101).

However, the notion of color therapy that colors heal physical, emotional, spiritual, or mental aspects of humans may contain exaggeration (Color psychology, 2013). On the other hand, previous studies, which believe that colors only have the power to alter an individual's mood and impact on a performance, may ignore that humans' "psychological and emotional reactions to certain shades" are simply what "humans have long understood intuitively" and may ignore "many factors and variables" surrounding colors (Pantone LLC, 2015b; Richmond & McCroskey, 2000; Color psychology, 2007; Caputo, 2010 p. 2; Color psychology, 2013; Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 7; Whitfield & Whelton, 2015).

According to Eiseman (2006), the executive director of Pantone, although colors could contain "the psychological messages and meanings," those can be modified by "the application and context of color":

Please bear in mind that "negative" is a relative term. For example, among other attributes, red is suggestive of fire and danger which may be viewed as negative. Fire burns; fire is red hot. Used in the proper context, such as the packaging for a new super-spicy salsa, red is clearly an evocative choice. It can be dangerous (to the palate) and that is the primary selling point as any lover of spicy foods is well aware.

So, when perusing the positive-negative connotations, always think of context. In real estate, it's about location, location, location. In graphic design (as it is in all design disciplines), it's about context, context, context. (p. 4-5)

Following this idea, when delving into the history of fashion and its relationship to black, it is obvious that the thought of black is completely changed by context over time. Black was "the total negation of color" that signified death, the devil, underworld, or sin and also was recognized as the color of depression, fear, oppression, mourning, or menace (Greenfield, 2005;

Eiseman, 2006, p. 62). In Medieval paintings, the devils are usually shown covered with vivid black skin, hair, or wings (Zuffi, 2012). According to Greenfield (2005), even in the nineteenth-century, people solidly perceived black as “the sinister and diabolical” color (p. 257).

However, the compelling context dramatically converted the thought of black to the contradictory meaning; in other words, black, the symbol of death and the color of poverty (in Renaissance Europe, underprivileged classes wore black cloth because of the inexpensiveness to dye subdued colors and the ease with which to hide dirt) evolved into the icon of fashion (Greenfield, 2005; Eiseman, 2006; De Young, 2009; Eiseman & Cutler, 2013). In 1862, *La Génie de la mode*, a French tailors' magazine, assessed black as “the poverty of this costume next to the brilliance, richness, and simplicity of women's dress, becomes more and more shocking” (Steele, 1988, p. 95). Also, in 1866, “*La Mode illustrée* editor Raymond noted that nothing was more fashionable than black,” and followed that “the first page of the *Grands magasins du Louvre* department store catalogue” introduced “twenty-six different black silks for sale—more than any other color and in more types of fabrics” (De Young, 2009, p. 104).

In the twentieth century, black eventually was signified as “chic, classic, sexy, and then existential in the hands of Gabrielle Coco Chanel,” who “created her first black dress, drastically altering its association with mourning” (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 5, p. 106). By her “Little Black Dress, which became a wardrobe staple across the globe,” black was regarded as “classic, prestigious, modern, stylish, ... worldly-wise, and sophisticated” shades in the modern fashion industry (Eiseman, 2006, pp. 63-65). Moreover, Givenchy added the “glamorous” context to black in the movie, *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 106). Audrey Hepburn, who acted in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* as a main character, Holly Golightly, dressed in Givenchy's tight long black dress, which presented Golightly's “glamorous aspirations” and “visually

conveyed an elite status,” including her desire to live “an extravagant life” (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 106). In the 1980s, the Japanese designer Yohji Yamamoto generated authority context from black garments, demonstrating “[b]lack is modest and arrogant at the same time” (Menkes, 2000, para. 6)

As a result of the new context of black, created by the designers and magazines, the previous psychological meanings of black, such as “sadness, unhappiness, death, or decay” is destroyed, and the new perception, such as “power, potency, masculinity, or stylish” is added to the current psychological meanings (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000, p. 185; Eiseman, 2006, p. 63). The meaning of color can be modified by context, and the different combination of context and colors can generate various individuals’ emotional, physical, and psychological reactions. Thus, the psychological meanings of colors that color psychologists studied might be the sum of how humans have historically perceived the color in certain meanings in certain times.

Color in Sociological Context

The above studies concerning colors in historical and psychological context identify how people perceived colors through human experiences, what was the hidden truth of the power of certain colors, and how a compelling context altered the preconceptions of colors and the confined meanings of colors, which is asserted by color psychologists. This section of the literature review will explain the theoretical significance of colors in communication, especially the social interactions of individuals and organizations, and will introduce the successful applications of the color with compelling context to support this researcher’s hypothesis, that a single color rarely conveys powerful meanings alone but rather in combinations with contexts.

In interpersonal communication, particularly, in face-to-face communication, individuals basically receive messages from communicators’ physical appearances first, and it can determine

their “willingness or unwillingness to communicate with another” (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000, p. 17). Moreover, in initiate interactions or relationships, people tend to evaluate communicators’ abilities and traits by “morphological cues” that could influence their verbal messages, image formation, and impression management (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000; Manusov & Patterson, 2006, p. 325). In other words, an individual’s physical appearances “attribute to [him or her] certain characteristics, predict [his or her] social behavior, and make judgments about [his or her] success, failure, competence, and character in [his or her] professional and personal lives” (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000, pp. 21-22). Thus, the physical appearance is significant in communication, and if individuals aim to build positive impressions or to influence others in certain ways, then they should possess “physical attractiveness” (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000, pp. 18-19).

Richmond and McCroskey (2000) insist that physical attractiveness can yield many advantages in various communication settings. In other words, it can perform as one of the elements to persuade others. For instance, customers’ purchasing decision can be increased when physically attractive people sell merchandise or provide services (Frevert, & Walker, 2014). Similar to sales, in Australia, candidates who have a more attractive physical appearance tend to be elected because voters depend on candidates’ physical attractiveness, rather than “candidates’ personal qualities and political ideology,” especially when lacking detailed information (Riggle, Ottati, Wyler, Kuklinski, & Schwarz, 1992; Frevert, & Walker, 2014, p. 319). Also, in the job interview setting, a better-looking applicant regarded as “more highly qualified” and achieves greater chances than less attractive applicants, despite of the position (Frevert, & Walker, 2014, p. 316). Moreover, Mobius and Rosenblat (2006) assert that better physical appearance can assist individuals to be more successful in every setting than less attractive physical image because it

effectively correlates with their communicating or social skills. The above reasons may compel individuals to consume “remarkable amounts of time, effort, and resources toward modifying outward appearances,” such as being “dressed, painted, pierced, shaved, plucked, injected, molded, stretched, cut, and sewn” (Manusov & Patterson, 2006, p. 325).

Physical appearance includes individuals' height, weight, skin color, hair color, body shape, hair style, and clothing. In terms of clothing, Richmond and McCroskey (2000) believe that individuals' dress can perform two significant roles in physical appearance: delivering influential nonverbal messages and assisting their impression management. Specifically, these researchers explain that “the fabric, colors, textures, and styles adorning [individuals'] bodies send messages about what [they] think, who [they] are, [their] relationship to others, [their] values, attitudes, preferences, goals, and aspirations (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000, p. 39). They also specify that the way people dress contains a great deal of information, such as their characteristics, personality, popularity, liking, rank, status, power, success, or group identification (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000). The information revealed by dress plays several crucial role in interpersonal relationships: first, people tend to assess “demographic characteristics based on dress”; second, in the initiate level of relationship, individuals' “impressions based on dress tend to be most important”; third, the perception of dress continually sticks with others; fourth, people generally prefer to associate and bond with others who dress similar to them; fifth, a group identification appears toward clothing, and individuals usually choose to represent belongings by the design, style, color of garment; sixth, dress denotes individuals' “credibility level,” intention, or expected behaviors (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000, pp. 46-48).

Therefore, clothing is one of the crucial factors of physical appearance to perform positively in interpersonal relationships or social interactions. And among the elements of dress, such as fabric, colors, textures, and styles, colors possess a great power to create nonverbal messages (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000; Manusov & Patterson, 2006). For instance, Frank and Gilovich (1988) conclude that the black uniforms of football or hockey teams are recognized as more combative than other colors; therefore, it can inordinately increase penalties. Another example is how the color of a suit affected the 1960 presidential election in the United States; in the presidential debates, Richard Nixon dressed in a grey suit, and John Kennedy dressed in a black suit, which is more noticeable in a grey background, especially to the black-and-white television viewers (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000). Several researchers evaluated that Kennedy's suit color, which considered the background and type of television of that period, led to his success in that debate because the color of the suit "creat[ed] a favorable impression with the viewers" and made him to more outstanding than Nixon (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000, p. 40). Moreover, the colors of dress are perceived as a wearer's traits. In other words, if an individual usually wears vivid colored clothes, people will predict that he or she is active and outgoing; conversely, people will perceive that passive or reserved people prefer subdued colors because he or she does not want to "call attention to themselves" (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000, p. 265).

There are two noteworthy aspects of colors in interpersonal relationships: first, senders "intentionally encode specific meaning" toward the selections of certain colors. To be specific, a sender purposely selects the color of dress when he or she aims to impress others in certain ways, assist his or her verbal messages, or move others' attitudes (Manusov & Patterson, 2006). In addition, individuals can choose the color of the environment where a conversation occurs, not

only their dress. According to Richmond & McCroskey (2000), colors of the walls and furniture can increase or decrease the duration of conversation and the moods of individuals, and it also can influence the nonverbal immediacy and the success of communication. As an example, they suggest that “a room dominated by light- and medium-blue hues tend to give most people a warm, immediate feeling” (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000, p. 227). Ketcham (1958) asserts that the class painted with subdued colors such as dark brown, green, or grey can adversely affect young students’ emotions or performances. Thus, when communicators desire to generate positive messages, they can intentionally consider the color of their dress or the color of environment factors.

Secondly, colors subliminally influence receivers’ moods, thoughts, attitudes, or behaviors. In general, the elements of nonverbal communication influence individuals more unconsciously than verbal messages because it requires skills and knowledge to notice a variety of cues and to decode the sender’s intention (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000; Manusov & Patterson, 2006; Knapp & Daly, 2011). Gestures, body movements, face/eye/vocal behavior, or touch can be considered a conscious nonverbal communication, and receivers may easily realize the sender’s message; however, colors of dress or environment, which receivers may ignore as nonverbal communication, can affect the receiver “more powerfully than conscious nonverbal communications” (Rochford, 2008, p. 133).

Following the second aspect of colors as nonverbal communication, a marketing or media industry utilizes colors to subtly influence or persuade customers or viewers before they notice its intention. In other words, colors stimulate consumers’ visual levels and affect their thoughts, feelings, or actions while they are unaware of the sender’s hidden purposes (Subliminal

Suggestion, 2008). Following this notion, Eiseman (2006), the executive director of Pantone, explains that

Color can be, and often is more effective than words. If you view that last sentence somewhat skeptically, think of an advertisement on the web for a product that emanates from another country (not uncommon in this globally-connected world). You might not be able to understand the verbiage, yet the colors can tell a compelling story about what the product promises to deliver. Viewers of an advertisement might doubt the veracity of the verbiage, but they have no reason to doubt the suggestions that the colors are making as they work on more subtle, often subconscious level. So the powers of colorful persuasion are often subliminal and the would-be buyer, viewer or customer is not always aware they are being persuaded to buy (p. 66).

In the 1940s, Christian Dior, a French fashion designer, sensibly noticed potential female consumers, who were influenced by the movie, *Gone with the Wind*, especially, the main character, Scarlett O'Hara. He introduced New Look, which features its cinched waist and a full skirt falling below the knee, and this silhouette reminded people of Scarlett O'Hara's laced corsets and crinoline dress (Sheridan, 2010). Steele (2001) evaluated that the color of costumes in *Gone with the Wind* played a key role to impress many female viewers. In other words, O'Hara's red dresses, which repeatedly appeared in crucial scenes, were strongly imprinted in female minds even after the movie. Also, O'Hara's "sumptuous" green velvet dress, which was made from her mother's curtain "hold [viewers'] attention in the middle of the screen" (Sheridan, 2010, p. 38). To sum up, the notable colors of the heroine's dresses in *Gone with the Wind* might subconsciously stimulate female viewers, who "longed for frivolity in dress and desired feminine clothes that did not look like a civilian version of a military uniform" (Sheridan,

2010, p. 57). This aspiration was noticed by Dior, and he designed New Look, which was notably successful at that time, and then he began to perceive the Hollywood movie as “an important source of patronage and a key marketing proposition” (Sheridan, 2010, p. 56). He even designed dresses for Vivien Leigh, who acted as Scarlett O’Hara, to attract consumers prior to release New Look in 1947 (Sheridan, 2010).

Thus, in the marketing industry, colors can be a strong persuasion factor when they combine with compelling context, such as narratives of films or dramas. Also, consumers concentrate on what they can remarkably see, rather than thinking of the business part (Wedel & Pieters, 2008). When a good amount of celebrities commonly dress in the same or similar shades, and magazines mention this with the attracting context, such as trendy or popular, people notice about colors, rather than considering those dresses, which were sponsored by specific companies (O’Shaughnessy & O’Shaughnessy, 2006).

Theory Analysis

In the above section, this researcher investigated the extensive uses of colors in historical, psychological, and sociological perspectives and explained the relationships between colors and compelling context. Prior to examining Pantone’s communication techniques creating new perception of colors, the researcher will explore Peirce, Saussure, and Barthes’ semiotics to obtain the most suitable theory for analyzing the combination of Pantone’s color of the year and the persuasive textual content.

To be specific, by scrutinizing Pantone’s colors of the years as consisting of the signs (the signifier) and comparing Pantone’s new meanings (the signified) of the specific colors to the general perceptions (the signified) of those colors, this study will explain how Pantone created the significance, power, and value of the specific color with its color story and how their color

communication techniques affect multiple design areas and the target population. Caivano (1999) suggests that “the semiotic perspective provides the best and most complete epistemological framework for the study of color, because, for living organisms, the important aspect is that color works as a system of signs” (p. 401). Also, in relation to the concept of persuasion, Perloff (2010) define that persuasion is “a symbolic process in which communicators try to convince other people to change their attitudes or behaviors regarding an issue through the transmission of a message in an atmosphere of free choice” (p. 12). Therefore, the semiotics investigation will establish the sophisticated framework and allow for evaluation of Pantone’s persuasive messages.

Semiotics are defined as “the study of signs” that “provides a structure for studying and analyzing how signs function within a particular environment” (Hurwitz, 1993, p. 22; Richard & Mihai, 1987, p. 5). The foundations of semiotics were oriented from ancient anthropologists, “especially Aristotle and later St. Augustine, who distinguished between signs and the things signs represent” (Richard & Mihai, 1987, p. 6). Aristotle believed that “signs are primarily grounded in language (logos)”, and their major function is producing of “knowledge and proof” (Ezzaher, 2011, para. 4). St. Augustine explains that signs are involved in the “knowledge-making process,” and the sign illustrated by individuals represent “the feelings of their minds, or their perception, or their thoughts” (Ezzaher, 2011, para. 6).

Following these “classical and theological conception of the sign,” in the late nineteenth century, Saussure introduced “semiology” by reconceptualizing the sign, which includes the notion of “a dichotomy (a two-part relationship); ... the signifier and the signified” (Hurwitz, 1993, p. 23; Ezzaher, 2011, para. 7). He illustrates a signifier as the form which is “visible or in some way presents,” such as the word, image or sound, and the signified as a concept which is

“the tacit element of sign,” but it represents certain meanings (Hurwitz, 1993, p. 23). Although the sign is generated by the association of “the signifier (sound-image)” with “the signified (concept),” their relation is “arbitrary” (Leitch, 2010, p. 847). In other words, when people perceive the particular signifier, they will connect to the particular signified; however, the attached concept (the signified) of the word, sound, or image (the signifier) can be different to each individual because there is “no necessary, intrinsic, direct or inevitable relationship between the signifier and the signified” (Chandler, 2007, p. 22). For example, the association of the sounds for /open/ (the signifier) and the concept open (the signified) “is not instinct to the object itself, but is entirely dictated by semantic codes in the English language” (Oswald, 2011, p. 10). Also, the concept of ‘open’ (the signified) can be different by the given context despite the same form of signifier, in other words, when people see the ‘open’ sign in front of the store, they know that the store is in business. And when people see the sticker ‘push to open’ on the door, people understand this ‘open’ as an action (Chandler, 2007). Moreover, depending on the “cultural construction,” the signifier can produce the various signified, which means it “can be interpreted metaphorically to account for the role of codes and social convention in meaning production” (Oswald, 2011, p. 10). For instance, there is the word ‘pig,’ and one person is reminded the image of a pig, which is the animal, while the other person perceives it as the meaning of fat, and another person thinks about wealthy (because the pig is the “sign of prosperity, wealth, and overall good fortune” in Chinese culture) (Welch, 2008, p. 140). To sum up, Saussure emphasizes “the process of meaning production from a theory of cognition,” which can be varied by “the dialectical relationships” or the cultural background (Oswald, 2011, p. 10). Therefore, although “individuals do not have the power to change a sign in any way once it has become

established in the linguistic community,” the signified (concept) can be modified by humans because the surrounding context is heterogeneous (Leitch, 2010, p. 854).

Peirce, another significant founder of semiotics, envisages signs as “a trichotomy (a more elaborate three-part relationship): ... the sign or *representatum*, the *object*, and the *interpretant*. ... [T]he representatum is parallel to Saussure’s signifier, identifying the present part of the sign; but, Peirce divided Saussure’s signified into two: the object and the interpretant” (Hurwitz, 1993, p. 23). For instance, if there is a box (object) on the table, people will not know the inside until they open it; however, if they see the brand logo (sign/representatum) on the box, which is ‘Samsung,’ they will most likely assume that the box contains something related to electronic devices (interpretant). Therefore, the sign can be any form “which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity,” the object is “which the sign refers,” such as “a thing, event, relationship, quality, or argument,” and the interpretant is the concept of the sign based on individuals’ cognition, approaches, or cultural experiences (Danesi, 2011, para. 4; Hurwitz, 1993, p. 23; Wikipedia, 2015a, para. 15). In layman’s terms, if people saw the serious smog (sign) from a far distance, they will most likely think about the fire (object) and someone will decide to call 911 because they perceive it as a danger (interpretant).

Moreover, Peirce developed the component of signs, which is widely accepted in the academic field: icon, index, and symbol. According to Hurwitz (1993), Peirce identifies that

An icon has the relationship of similarity or resemblance; an index has the relationship of contiguity or connection; a symbol has the relationship of arbitrariness. That is, any sign displaying a similarity between the present and the absent components is termed an icon; any sign using an arbitrary connection between the present and absent components is symbol. (p. 23)

To be specific, the icon physically resembles the object it represents, such as photograph, “portrait, cartoon, a scale-model, onomatopoeia, metaphors, realistic sounds, in ‘programme music,’ sound effects in radio drama, a dubbed film soundtrack, imitative gestures”; the index is the direct link of the sign and the object, such as traffic signs; a symbol is arbitrary that is same as Saussure’s opinion that there is no logical connection between the signifier and the signified (Hurwitz, 1993; Chandler, 2007, p. 37). For instance, when people see a the crown (the index) from the portrait (the icon), they can conjecture that the female of the portrait may of a royal family, such as a queen or princess, or they can notice that she is Princess Dianna from her badge (the symbol) if they learned about it before.

Peirce and Saussure’s semiotics cannot “be viewed as contradictory” because their work contains similarities (Hurwitz, 1993, p. 23). Specifically, both Peirce and Saussure emphasize that signs are “arbitrary and conventional and depend on social agreement for their significance” (Oswald, 2011, p. 10). The distinction of their study is Peirce highly concentrates on the connection between the signs and the potential varieties of signs (he identified 66 concepts, and the three concepts, which are the icon, index, and symbol, are widely accepted), while Saussure emphasizes “the dialectical structure of meaning, which implicates any particular sign or statement in broader cultural discourses, such as myth” (Oswald, 2011, p. 10).

Following the above, Saussure’s semiology is more suitable to study the combination of Pantone’s color of the year and its color story because those are highly related to “the dialectical structure” (Oswald, 2011, p. 10). Yet this research concerning Pantone’s color communication techniques does not center on various cultural or conventional concepts; it entirely focuses on the verbal utterances of Pantone’s color of the year. In this perspective, Barthes, who was influenced by Saussure's linguistic system, is perhaps the person most advisable for this study because he

rhetorically elaborates the relation between objects and “textuality” (Hayward, 2001, para. 4).

Specifically, Barthes asserts that

[i]t is true that objects, images and patterns of behavior can signify, and do so on a large scale, but never autonomously; every semiological system has its linguistic admixture.

Where there is a visual substance, for example, the meaning is confirmed by being duplicated in a linguistic message [...], so that at least a part of the iconic message is, in terms of structural relationship, either redundant or taken up by the linguistic system.”

(Noth, 2014, p. 313)

Barthes' logocentrism is precisely presented through his book *The Fashion System*, which structurally analyzes descriptions of garments concerning fashion. Barthes explains that a fashion magazine includes “two different garments”: the “image-clothing” and “written clothing” (Barthes, 1990, p. 3). They are considered Saussure's signifier or Peirce's sign, and the intended meanings, which are caused by a combination of the “image-clothing” and “written clothing” is regarded as Saussure's signified or Peirce's interpretant. Moreover, He argues that the “image-clothing” is merely a visible object (“it is nothing other than a photograph”) whereas the “written clothing” includes four functions: First, it immobilizes levels of perception (Barthes, 1990). Individuals interpret the images to various meanings based on their levels of perception; thus, the image, itself without the descriptions, generates uncertainty. However, “written words” concerning the image determine “the choice of the level” and eliminate numerous readers' interpretations and eventually provide “a single certainty” (Barthes, 1990, p. 13). Second, it adds knowledge. For example, in a fashion magazine, the written words “deliver information which photography delivers poorly or not at all: the color of a fabric (if the photograph is black and white), the nature of a detail inaccessible to view (decorative button, pearl stitch), the existence

of an element hidden because of the two-dimensional character of the image (the back of a garment)” (Barthes, 1990, pp. 13-14). Namely, the given text helps individuals to rediscover the image under the writer’s intention. Third, it emphasizes the object. Barthes (1990) explains that “the larger collar, the absence of buttons, [and] the flared line of the skirt,” are already visible in the image, yet these commentaries “stress their value” because “verbalized notation helps to reinvigorate the information” (pp. 13-14). Fourth, the written words help to achieve the goals. Barthes (1990) indicates that “finality of description” is to encourage consumer’s purchasing demand (p. 16). To be specific, the images of a magazine attracts the readers, and the written words persuade them once again. Thus, the combination of fascinate images and the appropriate context escalates the purpose of the magazine or fashion industry, which aims to generate purchasing (Barthes, 1990).

Based on the significance of the “written clothing,” Barthes examines the language of fashion, mostly concerned with the language in magazines and develops his study to four semiological subsystems, which are “(1) the real vestimentary code; (2) the written vestimentary code or the terminological system; (3) the connotation of Fashion; and (4) the rhetorical system” (Barthes, 1990, p. 36). First, the “real vestimentary code” is the name of clothing, such as, shirts, skirts, or pants. Second, the “written vestimentary code” is about the fashionable element, such as “prints, accessories, a pleated skirts, or halter top” (Barthes, 1990, p. 27). According to Leeuwijn (1983), the “real vestimentary code” can be created, evolved, or vanished by the speakers of a certain language; however, the “written vestimentary code” cannot evolve, but “it changes year by unilateral decision on the part of a small group of fashion experts: designers, manufacturers, editors of fashion magazines— the 'fashion group', as Barthes says. And it changes not only in form, but also in meaning” (p. 20). Third, the “connotation of Fashion” is the

result of the combination of the “real vestimentary code” and “written vestimentary code” (Barthes, 1990, p. 36). For instance, if the magazine wrote that “a skirt with laces gives elegance,” a skirt is the “real vestimentary code,” laces are the “written vestimentary code,” and elegance is the “connotation of Fashion” (Barthes, 1990, p. 36). Fourth, the “rhetorical system” is a “phraseology of the magazine” that contains the purpose of the Fashion magazine. For instance, Barthes (1990) explains the formation of the “rhetorical system” below:

3. Rhetorical: Daytime clothes in town are accented with white.

2. Terminological: White accents on day clothes signify the day.

1. Pseudo-real: day • clothes • accents • white \equiv city

(•: Relation of simple combination and \equiv : Relation of equivalence) (p. 48)

Therefore, the “rhetorical system” involves “the world-view or the ideological signs which such examples of the fashion system wishes its readers to accept” (Allen, 2003, p. 51).

To conclude, Barthes sufficiently explains the developed concept of the signifier and signified in several stages under Saussure's semiology and apparently emphasizes the importance of language in writing and ultimately indicates that the textual words in a fashion industry are designated by idealistic bourgeois emphasis (Barthes, 1990). In addition, this researcher assumes that Barthes' *fashion system* and Pantone's color of the year seem to correlate in terms of marketing. Specifically, this study centers on the power of a written system; thus, Barthes' concentration upon the text will suggest the directions to analyze the written content, which was created for the announcement of Pantone's color of the year. Also, Barthes' semiological system will be utilized to show how Pantone creates new power, value, and significance of colors through compelling text and alters prevailing preconceptions of colors.

In the following section, this paper will precisely explain the method, which is grounded on Barthes' semiotic, particularly analyzed in his book, *The Fashion System*, to examine Pantone's color communication techniques, such as how it creates and suggests a new interpretation of the specific color.

Methodology

Prior to explaining Barthes' semiological system, in 2000, Pantone established the Pantone Color Institute to provide "color trend forecasting, color insights and customized color consulting" (Pantone LLC, 2015c, para. 1). For fifteen years, Pantone has forecasted and announced the color of the year to inspire "a variety of industries including fashion, commercial/industrial, contract and interior design, graphic arts, advertising, film and education" (Pantone LLC, 2015a., para. 16). Pantone Institute insists that the color of the year reflects "a global point of view on the movement of color across current and future seasons" (Pantone LLC, 2015c, para. 5). However, as the literature review detailed, individuals perceive any color depending on historical, psychological, and sociological contexts. In other words, a color cannot be globally interpreted with only one meaning because it could generate positive or negative images of upon different nations and cultures. How then does Pantone's color communication influence a variety of individuals' thought processes, emotions and physical reactions to its specific interpretation regardless of their cultures? This researcher hypothesizes that the power to create new perception of a color is oriented from the "verbalized notation" (Barthes, 1990, p. 13). A color without any explanation can yield diverse perception; however, the written text with the image of a color leads individuals' notions to intended meanings. For instance, Pantone introduced "2002 Pantone Color of the Year: True Red" as follows:

True Red is the color of patriotism-not only in the United States, but in many nations around the world. Evocative of passion and adrenalized energy, it reflected the wave of emotion that swept the globe in the months following 9/11. (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 109)

Without the “verbalized notation” of True Red, which was explained as “patriotism,” “evocative of passion,” or “adrenalized energy,” Koreans may initially perceive “True Red” as a color of death when they see the color swatch of True Red (Barthes, 1990, p. 13; Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 109; Dresser, 2005, p. 64). Yet the “verbalized notation” provides the link between red and Koreans’ other perception, which is “patriotism” because Koreans wear red T-shirts in order to cheer for the world cup (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 109). Therefore, when they read the concept of “patriotism” with the image of “True Red,” they will leave their preconception behind.

Therefore, this study focuses on clarifying how Pantone attempts to create new perception of each color of year toward its “choice of the oral structure” (Barthes, 1990, p. 7). In order to discover Pantone’s color communication techniques, there are three foundational points of inquiry:

1. Which colors are selected as Pantone’s color of the year and what is the written content concerning them?
2. How each year’s color story (written text) can be analyzed in Barthes’ semiological system?
3. What is the effectiveness of Pantone’s color of the year and its written content in terms of the evaluation of its power, significance, and value?

The goal of this analysis is to come to a fuller understanding of the semantic nature of Pantone’s communication techniques and the intention of Pantone’s underlying economic involvement. Therefore, by fulfilling these inquiries, already mentioned, Pantone’s color of year and each of color story can be analyzed using Barthes’ semiology, particularly which is presented through his book *The Fashion System*. This paper will seek the way Pantone declares

its color of the year with compelling written text how a fashion magazine presents “image-clothing and written clothing,” which is the main subject of *The Fashion System* (Barthes, 1990, p. 3). Barthes (1990) explains “two different garments” as follows:

I open a fashion magazine; I see that two different garments are being dealt with here.

The first is the one presented to me as photographed or drawn—it is image-clothing. The second is the same garment, but described, transformed into language; this dress, photographed on the right, becomes on the left: *a leather belt, with a rose stuck in it, worn about the waist, on a soft shetland dress*; This is a written garment. (p. 3)

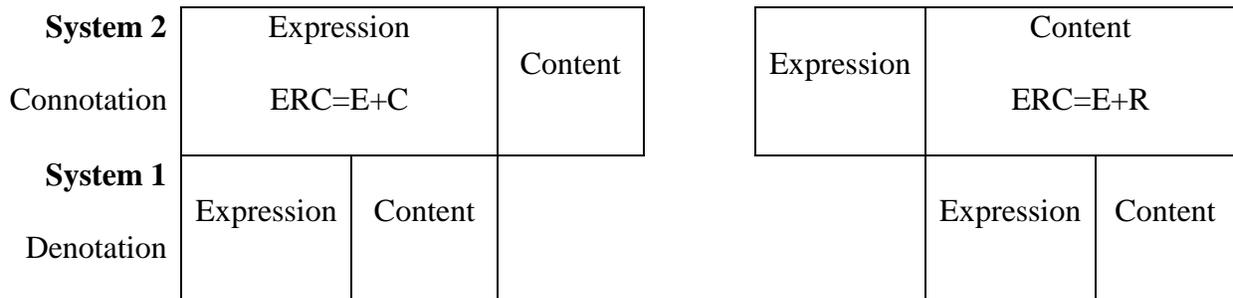
In this manner, Pantone's website and its press announced a color of the year including the image of color and the language of that color. The users click the banner “Pantone/Color of the Year–2015” on the website, and the image of Marsala shows as a color swatch along with the written phrase, “A naturally robust and earthy wine red, Marsala enriches our minds, bodies, and souls” (Pantone LLC, 2014b, para. 1). Also, in the fashion magazine ELLE, there are photos of Marsala dresses, which appear in the fashion show with the content, “clothes and accessories in [Marsala] shade will be absolutely everywhere. ... [I]ts grounding red-brown roots emanate a sophisticated, natural earthiness” (Friedman, 2014a, para. 2).

Therefore, Barthes' studies of image-clothing and written clothing presented in *The Fashion System* may be applied to Pantone's announcement of the color of the year. Especially, his denotative and connotative analysis are significantly appropriate to use in this proposed study. The detail of his theory utilized in this study will be explained in the section of theoretical framework.

Theoretical Framework

To begin this study, the paper will reference Barthes’ model from his book *The Fashion System*, which identifies “three-system ensembles” (Barthes, 1990, p. 28).

This research will apply “*Systems of set B*” for the overall understanding of Pantone’s color of the year and its written contents (Barthes, 1990). Prior to explaining “*Systems of set B*”, it is necessary to expand on Barthes’ “three-system ensembles,” which is derived from Hjelmslev’s semiotic model of language. The model identifies “a level of expression (E) and a level of content (C); these two levels are linked by a relation (R), and the ensembles of levels and their relations form a system (ERC)” (Barthes, 1990, p. 27). “(R)” can be viewed as adding an “(E)” and “(C)”; so, “(ERC)” is equivalent to E+C. Those elements integrate in the two ways below:



For the advance reference, Expression (E) corresponds to the Signifier (Sr) and Content (C) corresponds to the Signified (Sd), which will be fully explained in next section. *System 1* is “the level of denotation,” and system 2 is “the level of connotation” (Barthes, 1990, p. 27). The secondary system (*System 2*) can be constituted in two different ways: (1) the level of expression of the secondary system is the integration of the primary system (*System 1*)’s level of expression and level of content; (2) the level of content of the secondary system (*System 2*) is the combination of the primary system’s (*System 1*)’s level of expression and level of content.

Hjelmslev designated “(ERC) R C” ((E+C)+C) as “connotative semiotic” and “E R (ERC)” (E+(E+C)) as “metasemiotic” (Taverniers, 2008, p. 372).

From this, Barthes (1990) developed the “*Systems of set B*”, which was applied to analyze phraseology of the magazine in his book, *The Fashion System*:



This chart has been removed for copyright purposes.

(p. 37)

Barthes (1990) instantiates the “*Systems of set B*” with the phraseology of the magazine: “*Women will shorten skirts to the knee, adopt pastel checks, and wear two-toned pumps*” (p. 37). For instance, this researcher opens the magazine, and the first page is filled with a picture of the fashion model and the written words. In the photo, the model is wearing a skirt, shirt, and pumps, and the contents begins with the heading, “*Women will shorten skirts to the knee, adopt pastel checks, and wear two-toned pumps*” (Barthes, 1990, p. 37). Then, the reader will look at the photo one more time and will notice that the model’s skirt was knee-length, the shirt was the pastel tone with the check pattern, and the pumps had two tones. With this realization, the reader will certainly remember what the trend is in this season, but on the other hand, someone who

may not be obsessed with fashion will accept this as just information and may forget about it. However, once individuals perceive a *knee-length skirt*, *pastel check shirt*, and *two-toned pumps* as meaning 'trendy,' 'fashionable,' or 'must-have items' (connotative meanings), they want to express the connotative meanings, which are intended by the magazine, by wearing three featured garments (Barthes, 1990, p. 37). As a result, the phraseology of the magazine (written clothing) intends to represent the world, and individuals may interpret the sentence by adding "every woman in the world" (Barthes, 1990, p. 263). Below is a summary of the explanation:

1. Real Clothing

- Signifier (Clothing): The images of the skirt, the shirts, and pumps.
- Signified (Fashion): The 'knee-length' skirt, the 'pastel check' shirt, and the 'two-toned' pumps. In other words, knee-length + pastel check + two-toned = Fashion.

2. Written Clothing

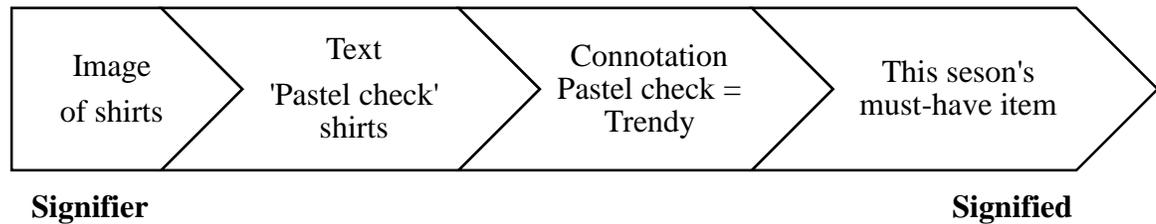
- Signifier (Sentence): Reading /Women will shorten skirts to the knee, adopt pastel checks, and wear two-toned pumps/.
- Signified (Proposition): Depending on individuals' level of expression (E) of reading the above content, the level of content (C) could be a result of gaining information or a result of changing one's fashion to adopt the trend.

3. Connotation of Fashion

- Signifier (Note): It is 'trendy' to wear a knee-length skirt, pastel check shirt, and two-toned pumps.
- Signified (Fashion): I wear the knee-length skirt, pastel check shirt, and two-toned pumps; thus, this can deliver the meaning of 'fashionable' or 'trendy.'

4. Rhetorical system

- Signifier (Phraseology of the magazine): *Women will shorten skirts to the knee, adopt pastel checks, and wear two-toned pumps.*
- Signified (Representation of the world): It can be interpreted as 'every fashionable woman in the world' will shorten skirts to the knee, adopt pastel checks, and wear two-toned pumps.



As Barthes applied the phraseology of the magazine to “*Systems of set B*”, it will employ it to analyze the contents of Pantone’s colors of the years.

Defining Terms

Signifier

The signifier is “the *form* which a sign takes” (Chandler, 2007, p. 261). It could be a word, sound, or image. Saussure’s signifier is focused on “linguistic signs” while Peirce’s signifier, which is called a “representamen,” includes various types of signs that can “stand to somebody for something” (Chandler, 2007, p. 261, p. 29). Barthes (1990) views the signifier in the same way with Saussure, and Barthes identifies that the signifier includes “the level of expression” or “the level of content” or the level of combination between expression and content (p. 27). In this thesis, the signifier is Pantone’s color of the year, such as “Cerulean,” “Fuchsia Rose,” “True Red,” “Aqua Sky,” or “Tigerlily” (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, pp. 108-110).

Signified

The signified is the meaning of the sign or the personal interpretation of the signifier. Saussure identifies “the signified” as a “psychological” or “mental” concept, whereas Peirce considers it “as the material (or physical) form of the sign – something which can be seen, heard, felt, smelt, or tasted”); thus, among his “sign vehicle model, an “object” and an “interpretant” can be viewed as a “signified” (Chandler, 2007, pp.14, 261, 29). For Barthes, the signified can be various depending on the level of his semiological system. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Barthes divides his system into four, and he explains that each system’s signified is the result of the link between the lower system’s signifier and signified, except in *system 1*. In his theory, the signified always can possess different meanings, and he believes that signified will be determined by the level of expression (E) and the level of content (C), whereas Peirce perceives the signified as an interpretation of the signifier, which basically involves one to two meanings. Yet, Barthes also recognizes that the signified contains the intended meaning, which the sender of the signifier may aim to deliver to the receivers. To be specific, in his book *The Fashion System*, he explains that the fashion magazine always likes to express ‘Fashion’ as a signified, regardless of whether the signifier was an image-clothing or a written clothing. To sum up, in this thesis, the signified can be various upon the readers of Pantone’s color story, but it agrees with Barthes’ concept that the signifier desires to guide to the sender’s intended meaning; so, the signified from the Pantone’s signifier, mostly concerning the color story, contains the expected meanings for the receivers.

Denotation

In general, denotation is “the definitional, literal obvious or common-sense meaning of a sign” (Chandler, 2007, p. 248). Saussure and Peirce recognize denotation as a signifier and connotation as a signified while Barthes states that “denotation is just another connotation,”

which already includes both signifier and signified (Chandler, 2007, p. 138). Barthes (1974) concludes that “denotation is not the first meanings, but pretends to be so; under this illusion” (p. 9). Therefore, for the purpose of this paper, a denotation corresponds to the general preconception of the colors.

Connotation

Depending on “the socio-cultural and personal associations,” individuals, or cultures diversely interpret the text with various meanings (Chandler, 2007, p. 246). If the denotation of the certain color contains one or two common meanings, the connotation of the certain color includes many meanings depending on individuals or situations. For instance, the denotation of red is a caution because the world utilizes this color to represent stop signals, including the traffic signal, but the connotation of red can always different be because Chinese view red as a meaning of good fortune while Koreans recognize it as a meaning of death. Connotation is not only concerned with individual or cultural perspectives, but it is also related to the linguistics’ arbitrariness, which is mentioned by Saussure and Peirce. In terms of the linguistic aspect, Barthes specifies that “connotation [is] a second ‘order of signification’ which uses the denotative sign (signifier and signified) as its signifier and attaches to it an additional signified” (Oswald, 2011; Chandler, 2007, p. 246). In this thesis, a connotation is the new meanings of the certain color, which is intentionally created by Pantone.

E (the level of expression)

Barthes (1990) utilized Hjelmslev’s framework to develop his “three-system ensembles,” which includes “real code, terminological system, rhetorical and system” (p. 29). The level of expression is according to Saussure’s signifier, and it divides into “substance of expression” and “form of expression” because Hjelmslev believes that “both *expression* and *content* have

substance and *form* (Chandler, 2007, pp.56-57). The “substance of expression” is “physical materials of the medium, such as photographs, recorded voices, printed words on paper,” and the “form of expression” is the “language, formal syntactic structure, technique and style” (p. 57). In Barthes’ theory, a real code can be “photographs” (“substance of expression”) of a fashion magazine, and a vestimentary code can be printed words on a fashion magazine (“substance of expression”) or “form of expression” (Chandler, 2007, p. 57). In terms of this thesis, “the level of expression” refers to the “photographs” of Pantone’s color of the year or “form of expression” in its color story.

C (the level of content)

Likewise, the level of content corresponds to the signified, and it consists of the “substance of content” and the “form of content” (Chandler, 2007, p. 57). The “substance of content” can be the “textual world, subject matter, [or] genre,” and the “form of content” can be the “semantic structure [or] thematic structure” (Chandler, 2007, p. 57). In terms of Barthes’ *Fashion system* (1990), particularly “*Systems of set B*”, the most signified aim is to decode as a “Fashion,” regardless of various substances and forms of content (p. 37). However, in this paper, the level of content depends on individuals who read the content of Pantone’s color story because when a fashion marketer reads Pantone’s written content concerning the color of the year, the level of content, namely signified, is ‘marketing’ while a customer only perceives it as a ‘trend’ (the level of content). Thus, the result of this paper will explain how the level of content (signified) can be diverse depending on the readers. The individuals’ levels of content concerning Pantone’s color communication can be significant to examine that Pantone’s color story was compelling enough to lead readers to accept its intended meaning.

Real Clothing Code

Barthes (1990) identifies the “real code” (“real garment”/”real clothing”) as a photographed garment (pp. 4-5). The real code’s signifier is clothing and its signified means fashion. In this thesis, the real code is the picture of Pantone’s color of the year. The picture can appear in a color sample or with that color’s dress, cosmetics, or furniture.

Written Clothing Code

Barthes (1990) studies the “written clothing code,” which is the sentence referring to “real clothing” in the fashion magazine (p. 37). In this research, the written clothing code corresponds to Pantone’s color story about a color of the year toward its presses or books (Barthes, 1990, p. 37).

	Barthes	Pantone
Real code (Image)	Image-clothing A photo of the magazine	Image color The color swatch of the color of year
Written code (Text)	Written clothing A sentence of the magazine	Written color The color story of the color of the year

Research Questions

The research and analysis of this study will seek to ultimately answer how Pantone created the illusion of color (connotation) that could break the cultural perception of color down and produced a new visual experience through the result of textual analysis. The research questions are as follows:

- RQ 1: How does Pantone present the color of the year through their phraseology to create a link of equivalence between a certain color and its concept in 2000, 2002, 2009, 2014, and 2015?

- RQ 2: What is the significance of the semantic nature of the links between Pantone's color of the year, the marketing field, the color-related industry, and consumers?

The last question will assist in answering Pantone's purpose of announcing a signifier, which is the encompassing question of this thesis.

Researcher's Role

The research material presented in this thesis is collected from Pantone's official website, which was created for mass viewing. Hence, there are no ethical issues with the researcher utilizing this data for analysis. In addition, this researcher endeavors to remain objective and unbiased under her Christian faith. Although the utilized data is substantially obtained through Pantone's website and publications, this research is explicitly grounded on textual analysis, particularly semantic structures of the signifier and signified; thus, the readers are free from the company's inclination. In other words, this study is irrelevant to numerical estimate or scientific verification, it is thoroughly based on the written text and its theoretical analysis; therefore, this study is not related to shaping readers' background, "such as their gender, culture, history, and socioeconomic origin." Concerning the readers' inquiries of bias and reliability, this researcher explicitly articulates through this section, the researcher's role (Creswell, 2014, pp. 210-211). Lastly, the results and interpretation are completely founded upon Barthes' Economy of the System to eliminate personal evaluation, which could be viewed as unfair and unbalanced.

In addition, the readers must also be aware that this researcher's professional experiences strengthen the validity of this thesis. Specifically, the researcher's previous position as a beauty and fashion model for ten years has allowed her to accumulate in-depth, context-specific knowledge and consolidate the insight of the color-related industry. Also, this researcher

sufficiently understands the world-wide fashion system because she was an entrepreneurial self-starter, creating her own fashion brand in Hong Kong, which is not her home country/city.

Furthermore, regarding that Pantone globally announces the color of the year and translates its concept in different languages toward each nation's press, the researcher's multilingual ability can aid to partially consider the influences over the world. For instance, if a Korean fashion magazine reports about the Pantone's color of the year, this researcher is able to read the content and compare to the original color story, which is described in Pantone's website so that depending on the Korean fashion magazine's level of content, it could be one of the criterions to evaluate the world influence of Pantone. Therefore, this researcher's inherent expertise will contribute to address neutrality, trustworthiness, authenticity, and credibility.

Research Design

This researcher was tasked with collecting the data of Pantone's colors of the years from the following two sources:

- www.pantone.com
- Eiseman, L., & Cutler, E. (2014). PANTONE Color of the Year. In Pantone on fashion: A century of color in design. San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books.

The gathered data of the color of the year in 2000, 2002, 2009, 2014, and 2015 will be utilized to answer two inquiries:

1. Which colors were Pantone's colors of the years and what is the description of the colors proposed by Pantone?
2. How its color concept can be analyzed in Barthes' semiological model, which contains a "real clothing code" ("image-clothing"), "written clothing code" ("sentence"), "connotation of fashion," and "rhetorical system" (Barthes, 1990,

pp. 28-29). Those textual analyses under Barthes' semiology will lead to clarify RQ 1, the new link of equivalence between a certain color and Pantone's color story.

Next, for the sake of answering Pantone's purpose of announcing the signifier, this researcher will examine the effectiveness of Pantone's nomination and new interpretation (written color) concerning the color of year by utilizing the web articles of major fashion magazines to discover how color-related industries and a marketing field accommodate Pantone's color of the year (Barthes, 1990, p. 281). The effectiveness of the color itself (image-color and written color) will be evaluated in three ways: power, semantic significance, and economic value. The investigation of fashion magazine reports will assist to answer RQ 2, the significance of the semantic nature of the links between Pantone's color of the year, the color-related industry, and consumers.

Once all textual data will be coded through Barthes' semiological system, the arranged, sophisticated, and measured result will evaluate the significance of studying the semantic nature to scrutinize the links between Pantone's colors of the year, marketing field, color-related industry, and customers. The results and discussion will follow.

Results

In this chapter, the textual analysis of Pantone's color stories of 2000, 2002, 2009, 2014, and 2015 will be presented in the first two of four levels of analysis. First, the content of Pantone's color of the year was analyzed by this researcher utilizing Barthes' "*Systems of set B*," which consists of "real code," "written code," "connotation," and "rhetorical system" (Barthes, 1990, pp.28-29). By subdividing Pantone's color stories, their intended meanings will be revealed and the results of these five colors' analyses will judge whether if Pantone eventually created the power, significance, and value in the world throughout its colors.

Second, this writer will examine major fashion magazines, including ELLE, Vogue, Cosmopolitan, Harpers Bazaar, Glamour, Instyle, to figure out how Pantone's color of the year (the signifier) was demonstrated in their fashion reports (the signified). Also, top designer brands, which are known as high-end brands or luxury brands, including Chanel, MAC, Dior, and Dolce & Gabbana, were utilized to discover the relation between Pantone and upper brands. This examination will assist to explain the effectiveness of the announcement of Pantone's color of the year in a color-related industry, including cosmetics, fashion, and home interior field. In summation, the first textual analysis aims to illustrate how Pantone created the illusion of color (connotation) that intends to transform the cultural perception of the color and produce a new visual experience and the color direction to various industries. The second investigation, based on the timeline of introducing the certain color, attempts to evaluate Pantone's actual influence and answer the question of whether Pantone establishes the trend of color, or do top designers, celebrities, and other socio-economic conditions inspire Pantone to influence the public.

Therefore, the first half of this chapter analyzes five color stories of Pantone's color of the year and fashion magazine reports of each year, and then the chapter of discussion will

combine these two results to understand the signification of 1) Pantone's purpose for nominating the color each year and proposing its color story and 2) the hindsight of the semantic nature of the links between Pantone, top designers, and various industries or consumers.

The following section is based on the data of Pantone's colors of the years from its official website and the book *Pantone on fashion: A century of color in design* and then utilizes Barthes' semiotics to extract the consequential results.

Textual Analysis

In this chapter, the textual analysis of Pantone's color stories of 2000, 2002, 2009, 2014, and 2015 will be presented in the first two of four levels of analysis. First, the content of Pantone's color of the year was analyzed by this researcher utilizing Barthes' "*Systems of set B*," which consists of "real code," "written code," "connotation," and "rhetorical system" (Barthes, 1990, pp.28-29). By subdividing Pantone's color stories, their intended meanings will be revealed and the results of these five colors' analyses will judge whether if Pantone eventually created the power, significance, and value in the world throughout its colors.

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The following section is based on the data of Pantone's colors of the years from its official website and the book *Pantone on fashion: A century of color in design* and then utilizes Barthes' semiotics to extract the consequential results.

2000: Cerulean

PANTONE 15-4020

1. Real Color Code

- Signifier (Color): "Sky blue" (Pantone LLC, 1999, para. 1)
- Signified (By Pantone): Cerulean is "the hue of the Future" and "the leading favorite color for designers and consumers worldwide, regardless of culture, gender, or geographic origin," and it offers the perfect calming effect ... in this stressful [and] high-tech era" (Pantone LLC, 1999, para. 3-4). To sum up, 'future' + 'mass appeal' + 'calm' = Cerulean = the color of the millennium (2000) =
Compelling text.

2. Written Color Code

* Subsequent designations of Sr and Sd stands for signifier and signified respectively.

- Sr (Sentence): Reading/Solace, inner peace, and spiritual fulfillment were desired in this stressful, high-tech age, and Cerulean offered calm/(Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 108).
- Sd (Proposition): Although it can be differently read and interpreted between individuals, it could be one of the reasons why Cerulean is the color of the millennial moment. Some people may anticipate that Cerulean will be the popular color in fashion industry after they read the above sentence.

3. Connotation of Color

- Sr (Note): Cerulean is the 'perfect' color for the millennium because it produces 'solace, inner peace, and spiritual fulfillment' in this 'stressful era.' (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 108) Also, it is a 'universal [and] unisex' color that designers and consumers prefer. (Pantone LLC, 1999, para. 4)
- Sd (By Pantone/Company): Prior to noticing the color story of Cerulean, the nomination as 'the color of 2000' might already deliver the meaning of 'remarkable' or 'trendy,' in other words, Pantone creates "something out of nothing" because Cerulean was just a typical blue until it became a color of the year (Barthes, 2013, p. 116); thus, any Cerulean colored product can appeal to the customers with the context of a trend and also display the meaning of the millennium's 'peaceful spirit.'

4. Rhetorical System

- Sr (Phraseology of Pantone): *Solace, inner peace, and spiritual fulfillment were desired in this stressful, high-tech age, and Cerulean offered calm* (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 108). *Cerulean Blue is the official color for the millennium because of its mass appeal* (Pantone LLC, 1999, para. 1).
- Sd (Representation of the world): It can be interpreted as the millennium can be the confusing for many people; however, Cerulean, the color loved by numerous people, will produce a peaceful influence. Therefore, consumers should possess a Cerulean colored product to be 'trendy' and to attain 'a sense of peace.' (Pantone LLC, 1999, para. 2)

In terms of the effectiveness of the color of 2000, the phraseology of Pantone (written color) was similar to the general conception of sky blue, which is known as "calming, restful, or heavenly"; so, the written content did not include any new connotation of Cerulean color (Eiseman, 2006, p. 35). Consequently, Cerulean basically obtained the power as a color for 2000 due to Pantone's nomination; however, it is hard to say that written content provided a semantic significance and created economic value for the color.

2002: True Red

PANTONE 19-1664

1. Real Color Code

- Sr (Color): "True Red" (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 109)
- Sd (By Pantone): True Red represents "patriotism-not only in the United States ... Evocative of passion and adrenalized energy, it reflected the wave of emotion that swept the globe in the months following 9/11" (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 109).

In summation, 'passion' + 'adrenalized energy' + 'the influence of 9/11' = True Red = the color of patriotism = Compelling text, which reflects the global issue of 2001.

2. Written Color Code

- Sr (Sentence): Reading/Patriotism-not only in the United States ... Evocative of passion and adrenalized energy/ (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 109).
- Sd (Proposition): This color was mentioned as one of the examples in order to explain that a compelling text can alter the individuals' cultural notion in the beginning of the methodology section. To specify the developmental progress of transforming cultural norms into new concepts, this researcher decides to observe True Red anew based on Barthes' "*Systems of set B.*" Assuming that Koreans read the phrase concerning True Red, they will capture the terms 'passion,' 'energy,' and 'patriotism' because of the 2002 World Cup, which was co-held in Korea and Japan, and it was the first time that South Korea reached the semifinals of the World Cup. At that time, all Koreans wore Red T-shirts to support the Korean soccer team, instead of Blue T-shirts, which are known to represent the color of South Korea; thus, in this level of expression of reading the above sentence, South Korean will consider patriotism first, rather than thinking a negative meaning, such as death or blood, which is a general cultural notion.

3. Connotation of Color

- Sr (Note): True Red contains 'patriotic fervor' regardless of the nation, and it also represents 'passion' and 'adrenalized energy.' (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 109).

- Sd (By South Koreans): The textual content of True Red can explain the reason why South Koreans wore Red T-shirts for cheering their soccer team, and it can convince people that True Red is 'the color of patriotism' in many countries, not only in America. Remarkably, the Signifier, Pantone's phrase of True Red, left the color preconception behind to Koreans and led them to perceive red in other ways.

4. Rhetorical System

- Sr (Phraseology of Pantone): *True Red is the color of patriotism—not only in the United States, but in many nations around the world. Evocative of passion and adrenalized energy, it reflected the wave of emotion that swept the globe in the months following 9/11* (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 109).
- Sd (Representation of the world): True Red can be absolutely utilized in many industries around the world, including fashion, cosmetics, or manufacturing, to emphasize the 'patriotism' regardless of the encountering situations in nations; in other words, it can derive the patriotic ardor after national emergencies, such as 9/11, or inversely stimulate the strong emotion and spirit during the nationwide event.

In terms of effectiveness of the color of 2002, the phraseology of Pantone (written color) was compelling enough to direct individuals' preconception concerning True Red because the written content, such as "patriotism" or "energy," can remove individuals' negative conception about the red color, including "danger, antagonistic, or overly aggressive" (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 109; Eiseman, 2006, p. 11). Therefore, the effectiveness of True Red not only achieved power as a color of 2000, but it also possessed the semantic significance by providing a new connotation

of the red color with its written content. The economic value is inestimable because this shade is frequently utilized in cheering T-shirts for any sports match; thus, one cannot conclude that Pantone increased the economic value of True Red after 2002.

2009: Mimosa

PANTONE 14-0848

1. Real Color Code

- Sr (Color): “Yellow” (Pantone LLC, 2008, para. 1; Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 113).
- Sd (By Pantone): Mimosa is “a warm, engaging yellow,” which conveys “hope and reassurance,” and it was the earnest and optimal hue to relieve and uplift people “in a time of economic uncertainty and political change as Barack Obama entered the White House” (Pantone LLC, 2008, para. 1-2; Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 113). To sum up, ‘hope’ + ‘reassurance’ + ‘uplifting’ = Mimosa = the vital color for the ‘profound economic uncertain’ time = compelling reason to utilize Mimosa color in 2009.

2. Written Color Code

- Sr (Sentence): Reading/*In a time of economic uncertainty and political change, optimism is paramount and no other color expresses hope and reassurance more than yellow ... Mimosa also speaks to enlightenment, as it is a hue that sparks imagination and innovation/* (Pantone LLC, 2008, para. 1-2).
- Sd (Proposition): Some people may have reminisced of “the abundant flowers of the Mimosa tree [or] the sparkle of the brilliantly hued cocktail” when they solely heard the name of ‘Mimosa’ prior to reading Pantone’s phrases concerning

'Mimosa' as the color of 2009. However, after reading the above content, people can notice the correlation between color and the nationwide situations of 2008. In addition, people may subsequently summon the connotative messages concerning Mimosa, and the information can significantly influence individuals' minds to decide specific things, including designing fashion or selecting products.

3. Connotation of Color

- Sr (Note): Mimosa is the most superb color to signify 'hope and reassurance' because it evokes 'enlightenment, imagination, and innovation' that are essential in the period of 'economic uncertainty and political change' (Pantone LLC, 2008, para. 1-2; Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 113).
- Sd (By individual): The relation between Mimosa and color translation, including the connotative messages 'hope' or 'enlightenment,' will be imprinted on individuals' minds or memories who read Pantone's 2008 press release concerning Mimosa; thus, individuals, especially who perceive 2008 as an era of 'uncertainty,' may feel the necessity to purchase Mimosa-colored home interior products to achieve the feeling of 'hope' and 'enlightenment.' In other words, it demonstrates that new connotative meanings of Mimosa are already established in people's knowledge.

4. Rhetorical System

- Sr (Phraseology of Pantone): *Profound economic uncertainty sat side by side with historical political change as Barack Obama entered the White House. The need for optimism was paramount. And no other color expresses hope and reassurance*

more than the most uplifting shade of yellow, Mimosa (Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 113).

- Sd (Representation of the world): Mimosa, the ‘uplifting shade of yellow,’ represents the year of 2009, which is a struggling period for many countries due to economic and political concerns. Namely, the world desires ‘hope and reassurance,’ and the color of Mimosa is the utmost color to reward individuals’ psychological ‘uncertainty’ (Pantone LLC, 2008, para. 1-2; Eiseman & Cutler, 2013, p. 113).

In terms of the effectiveness of the color of 2009, the phraseology of Pantone (written color) was identical to the general conception of yellow, which is “cheering, pleasing, or warming”; so, the written content did not include any new connotation of Mimosa color (Eiseman, 2006, p. 35). In consequence of the announcement of the color of 2009, Mimosa was able to acquire the power, compared to other years, and it also achieved significance in terms of reflecting the encountering issues of the world although it did not provide a new connotation throughout the written content. Yet, based on the fact that few web magazines introduced the color of 2009, Mimosa shade possessed more economic value than the color of 2000, Cerulean, although it was meager because, according to Vogue, one of the major fashion magazines, “Christopher Kane, Giles, Tommy Hilfiger and Ossie Clark are just a few of the designers looking on the yellow-hued bright side for 2009” (Barnett, 2008, para. 4).

2014: Radiant Orchid

PANTONE 18-3224

1. Real Color Code

- Sr (Color): “Fuchsia, purple and pink undertones” (Pantone LLC, 2013, para. 3)

- Sd (By Pantone): “A captivating, magical, enigmatic purple,” Radiant Orchid, “intrigue[s] the eye and spark[s] the imagination” so that it “encourages expanded creativity and originality, which is increasingly valued in today’s society” (Pantone LLC, 2013, para. 1, 2). In summation, an ‘enigmatic’ purple hue inspires ‘imagination’ and ‘creativity,’ which are significant in the world, so that is why Radiant Orchid represented 2014 as a color of the year.

2. Written Color Code

- Sr (Sentence): Reading/An enchanting harmony of fuchsia, purple and pink undertones, Radiant Orchid inspires confidence and emanates great joy, love and health ... A dazzling attention-getter, Radiant Orchid permeated the runways during the spring 2014 fashion shows and is already making its way onto the red carpet/ (Pantone LLC, 2013, para. 3-4).
- Sd (By Fashion Marketer): Pantone usually announces the color of the year a month before that year, and that period is the time when the fashion and cosmetic industry introduce new trends and colors for the coming year’s spring season. In general, almost every spring, fashion and cosmetic brands suggest light and soft colors, such as peach, sky blue, lavender, or any kind of pastel colors; therefore, Pantone’s selection of 2014 may be warmly welcomed by fashion marketers because they probably possess the Orchid Radiant colored items or similarly colored products, and the name, ‘the color of 2014,’ adds a compelling element for advertising. In other words, fashion marketers might pay more attention or actively consider this when they read the above content.

3. Connotation of Color

- Sr (Note): Radiant Orchid is the 'intriguing' color, which is not an ordinary hue, but it is also not an abnormal shade, so it expresses 'creativity' and 'originality' (Pantone LLC, 2013). This color is obviously outstanding and 'captivating,' but it is different to "pure purple—half blue and the other half red," which derives "contemplative, meditative, mysterious, enchanting, sensual, or dramatic" feelings (Eiseman, 2006). Radiant Orchid provides 'joy, love and health,' rather than being 'thrilling, subduing, or overpowering' (Eiseman, 2006; Pantone LLC, 2013).
- Sd (By Fashion Analyst): Radiant Orchid is one of the colors that "Michelle Obama often wears" in public (New York Daily Times, 2013, para. 7). Based on that, a fashion analyst can interpret Michelle Obama's color selection combined with Pantone's color connotation. To be specific, the fashion magazine may report that 2014's color is Radiant Orchid, and Michelle, the first lady of United States, even wears the Radiant Orchid dress for the press; therefore, this colored garment will obviously lead this year's trend. In terms of Barthes' *Fashion System*, one of the pages of the fashion magazine will be filled with both the photo of Michelle Obama's Radiant Orchid dress and the written words, which were expressed by the fashion analyst. When people view this page, they may not notice which fashion elements, such as dress, color, or design, are important until they read the content, which begins '*the color of the year for 2014: Radiant Orchid*' (Barthes, 1990). From the written content, the magazine readers clearly understand what they should focus on, not a dress or not a design; it is a color. Therefore, the color signified the connotative meanings, such as 'trendy' or

'fashionable,' not simply a 'spring color.' Therefore, when the fashion analyst introduces the colors of spring for 2014, particularly Radiant Orchid or similar shades, he or she can strongly suggest those colored items as a trend comparing to previous years because it was nominated as a color of year. In other words, this color obtained the power in 2014 by Pantone's nomination. In summation, regardless of the many meanings of the purple color, once people start to be interested in Pantone's color selection of the year, they will also be attentive to its' written content, and then these messages will be added as a new connotation.

4. Rhetorical System

- Sr (Phraseology of Pantone): *In 2014, the captivating warmth of Radiant Orchid- and expressive, confident, and embracing purple-intrigued the eye and sparked the imagination. Emanating joy, love, and health, the beguiling charm of this rosy, glowing shade encouraged innovation, originality, and creative thinking* (Eiseman, 2013, p. 115).
- Sd (Representation of the world): The above phrase of Pantone can be utilized by fashion presses to introduce the trend of 2014 and advertise Radiant Orchid colored items; thus, the above written text provides a compelling content, which can appeal to the world. The phraseology of Pantone can be viewed as a signifier, and the signified can be identified as 2014, the era that the world attaches importance to 'innovation, originality, and creative thinking,' and Radiant Orchid is the color that best epitomizes the soul of the society. In addition, when fashion presses introduce this color, they will utilize the pictures of celebrities who wore Radiant Orchid dresses, and that could be signified to individuals who are

interested in fashion as ‘every fashion leader will possess the Radiant Orchid items to embrace the connotative meanings, such as ‘joy, love, and health.’ If one of the male CEO dresses in a Radiant Orchid tie and presented his company’s new smartphone, the press may report that ‘the CEO fully understands the trend of 2014, and his Radiant Orchid tie was enough to express his smartphones’ innovative, creative, and joyful functions.’ Therefore, phraseology of Pantone concerning the color of 2014 (signifier) provides an intended meaning (signified), which aims to influence people in the world and helps individuals or companies to create a compelling story in proper context for their desires.

In terms of the effectiveness of the color of 2014, the phraseology of Pantone (written color) was remarkable because the written content sufficiently demonstrated the philosophy of this era and also guided individuals’ thinking toward ‘joy, love and health,” rather than the “thrilling, subduing, or overpowering” thoughts normally associated with the shade of purple (Eiseman, 2006; Pantone LLC, 2013). The colors of 2000, 2002, and 2009 were insufficient to evaluate their economic values because Pantone did not enthusiastically promote the color of the year, and the presses or companies did not remarkably notice the above colors until 2013. For instance, ELLE, one of the heavyweight fashion magazines in the world, mentioned Pantone’s color of the year in 2013 for the first time with the heading, “Emerald city: Shop Pantone’s color of the year” (Finney, 2013, para. 1). Thus, from 2013 it is possible to precisely estimate the economic value of Pantone’s color of the year.

From the beginning of 2014, the fashion magazines introduced how to wear, make up, and decorate with Radiant Orchid. For example, on December 19th, 2014, The Huffington Post published an article about “how to decorate with radiant orchid” with seven home interior

products, such as a radiant orchid colored clock, tray, chair or wall paper (Wood, 2014, para. 1).

Also, on January 7th, 2014, Babble, the web magazine courtesy of Disney, suggested six cosmetic items for Radiant Orchid make up, including lipstick, nail polish, eye liner, eye shadow, lip tint, and primer (Bryan, 2014). Lastly, on January 10th, 2014, the fashion writer, Gould-Simon (2014), introduced five Radiant Orchid fashions, which are a trench coat, maxi skirt, jacket, dress, and bag, in order to ask the readers “don’t miss out on this season’s most captivating color” (para. 1).

According to the timeline of the three web magazine posts concerning Radiant Orchid colored home interior, cosmetics, and fashion, all content came out after Pantone released the color of the year for 2014 on December 5th, 2013. However, prior to Pantone, one of the most luxury fashion brands in the world, Chanel, exhibited Radiant Orchid colored jackets, dresses, and skirts through its ready-to-wear on October 1st, 2013 (Jones, 2013). Also, one of the highest labeled cosmetic brands MAC’s make-up artist, James Kaliardos, selected “lilac and purple shades to define the eyes at Catherine Malandrino Black Label” on June 7th, 2013 (Niven, 2013, para 1). To sum up, according to the above timeline, Pantone selected one color, which it believed that was the most significant color among various top designers’ fashion shows, and announced that chosen color to the public with a specific name for guiding lower brands’ trend and sharing the top designers’ ideology with general consumers. Therefore, in terms of ‘Radiant Orchid,’ it achieved its power by being nominated as the color for 2014, and it contains an economic value because many color-related industries were intrigued by that color, and the fashion-obsessed customers would purchase the Radiant-Orchid shade items after read the phraseology from the Pantone website or fashion-related posts.

2015: Marsala

PANTONE 18-1438

1. Real Color Code

- Sr (Color): “Red brown” (Pantone LLC, 2014b, para. 3)
- Sd (By Pantone): Marsala is “a stirring and flavorful shade,” which is “a sophisticated, natural earthiness ... yet [its] stylish tone is universally appealing and translates easily to fashion, beauty, industrial design, home furnishings and interiors” (Pantone LLC, 2014a, para. 3). In addition, Marsala, the color of 2015, pursues “confidence, stability, and warmth,” while Radiant Orchid, the captivating 2014 color of the year, encouraged creativity and innovation” (Pantone LLC, 2014b, para. 2). In summation, Marsala has two different aspects: one is a ‘stirring’ and ‘subtly seductive’ shade, which includes ‘confidence,’ and the other is a ‘warm’ and stable hue, which can ‘universally appeal’ in many color involved industries. Therefore, Marsala is a versatile color that has adequate reasons to represent the color of 2015, especially at this point in time when “Marsala was a hit on the Spring 2015 runways with fashion designers” (Pantone LLC, 2014b, para. 4).

2. Written Color Code

- Sr (Sentence): Reading/For interiors, complex and full-bodied without overpowering, Marsala provides a unifying element for interior spaces/ (Pantone LLC, 2014b, para. 9).
- Sd (By Los Angeles Times): Most people will conceive an Italian red wine when they read the term, ‘Marsala,’ and based on the image of that wine, they will try to

discover the association between the color of the wine and Pantone's textual descriptions as a color of 2015. Pantone provides various reasons why Marsala was selected as a color of this year and also proposes to apply in many industries, including fashion, cosmetics, interiors, and graphic designs. However, its color recommendation does not appeal to everyone who reads the written content of the color, but it also can be opposed by some other people. For instance, according to the Los Angeles Times, some home interior designers disagree that Marsala can be an attractive or trendy color in home interior fields because this color assuredly cannot "translate well into décor," and also "it's a repellent version of cranberry, [which is deeply] unattractive" shade to paint on home furniture (Keeps, 2015, para. 2, 5). Thus, in this system, the proposition concerning Marsala contains individuals' perception and personal meaning of "interdiction" while they are reading the above phrase, and depending on their degree to embrace its context, Pantone's connotation of Marsala can be accepted or repudiated.

3. Connotation of Color

- Sr (Note): Marsala is the 'versatile' color that can satisfy different individuals' tastes, regardless of gender, and also appeal to various industries with its sophisticated hue (Pantone LLC, 2014b). Marsala is an 'eye-catching' color but not 'overpowering, overwhelming, or bright,' so that it 'enriches our mind, body and soul, exuding confidence and stability' (Pantone LLC, 2014b).
- Sd (By Cosmetic Industry): Prior to Pantone's written content concerning Marsala, once this color is announced as the color of 2015, it already includes the meaning of 'trendy' or 'noteworthy.' Also, the additional written explanation of

Marsala provides more positive connotations while blocking individuals' negative reactions including their preconceptions. Furthermore, Pantone's color selection and its content can inspire trend-dependent manufacturers in various ways. To be specific, the cosmetic industry is remarkably sensitive to color and trend so that it can introduce new looks in each seasons and increase its business. In general, during spring, the cosmetic industry usually displays pastel tones' beauty products and makeup styles; however, if one of the cosmetic companies follows Pantone's suggestion, then that brand will be more noticeable, outstanding, and innovative than other companies because it breaks the general expectation of the spring makeup suggestion. Therefore, by doing so, the company achieved positive connotations and reactions, and concurrently, became an early adapter or trend setter.

4. Rhetorical System

- Sr (Phraseology of Pantone): *Pantone, an X-Rite company and the global color authority, today announced PANTONE® 18-1438 Marsala, a naturally robust and earthy wine red, as the Color of the Year for 2015* (Pantone LLC, 2014b, para. 1). *The impactful, full-bodied qualities of Marsala make for an elegant statement color when the color is used on its own or as a compelling accent when paired with many other colors* (Pantone LLC, 2014b, para. 4).
- Sd (Representation of the World): There is no clear reason why Marsala should be the color of 2015, but once it was announced as the color of this year, Marsala (signifier) signifies that 'every trend-dependent industry and individual' will concentrate on this color. The Los Angeles Times also reported that "in the days

following [Pantone's] announcement, brand names hustled to present Marsala products to the press and the public" (Keeps, 2015, para. 7). The remarkable aspect of this result is a link of equivalence between a concept (*the color of 2015*) and a form (*Marsala*) because it creates a conformity in the society, and along with the name of 'the color of 2015,' its written explanation concerning Marsala functions as a compelling context, which can transform individuals' usual preconception that in springtime, color-involved industries manufacture only spring colors including pastel-toned shades.

In terms of the effectiveness of the color of 2015, Pantone's color selection was impressive because Marsala, the shade of red-brown, appeared as a Spring/Summer color in 2015, instead of the Fall/Winter color that is usually expected to pop up. However, the written content of Marsala was not compelling enough to persuade naysayers. For instance, *GMA News*, one of the Philippine's online news productions, stated that "perhaps this year's Pantone pick is not as "universally appealing" as the color institute makes it out to be" (Lapeña, 2015, para. 14). In addition, *Nylon*, one of the American's pop culture and fashion magazines, evaluated Marsala as a negative color, which looks like "an expired [and] dried-up tube of '90s lipstick, mulled wine that's lost all of its fervor, fallen leaves, or forgotten dreams"; it disagreed that Marsala "enriches our mind, body, and soul" (Gharnit, 2014, para. 2; Pantone LLC, 2014b, para. 1). *The Cut*, the New York based, high-end fashion magazine, cynically expressed "Pantone's Color of the Year Is Icky Marsala," and one of the Canadian websites, *National Post*, published the critical article with the heading "Pantone's 'Color of the Year' is Marsala, a 'tired' burgundy experts already hate" (Hou, 2014, para. 1; Koncius, 2014, para. 1). As a result, although the selection of the shade was noteworthy and surprising considering that it usually is a fall season color throughout

the previous years, many home interior experts strongly objected to the written content of Marsala. In other words, Marsala possesses the significance regarding the conceptual shift, but in terms of creating a new perception or connotation, Pantone's color communication concerning this shade (written color) was unsuccessful to appeal to various industries and consumers. Despite plenty of debates concerning Pantone's color of 2015, its economic value is much higher than Pantone's color of 2014, Radiant Orchid, because as Pantone's executive director Leatrice Eiseman mentioned, "Marsala has seeped its way into everything from fashion to animated films in the U.S. and abroad" (Instyle, 2015, para. 4). As soon as Pantone announced the color of the year for 2015 on December 4th, 2014, major fashion magazines promptly published articles on the same day as follows:

- *Vogue*, on December 4th, 2014, The 2015 color of the year is.... (General report)
- *Cosmopolitan*, on December 4th, 2014, This is the new color you'll be wearing in 2015 (Fashion)
- *Instyle*, on December 4th, See stars in Marsala, Pantone's 2015 color of the year (Fashion)
- *Harpers Bazaar*, on December 4th, 8 ways to wear Pantone's 2015 color of the year (Makeup and Fashion)
- *Glamour*, on December 4th, 9 lipsticks and nail polishes in Pantone's 2015 color of the year (Beauty)

(Johnson, 2014; Friedman, 2014b; Instyle, 2014; Tunell, 2014; Shapouri, 2014).

Also, many fast fashion brands¹ introduced a 'Marsala Look' in their websites, for example, Charlotte Russe, a clothing retail chain store in the United States, created a theme on its website, named "Color us Marsala" to show Marsala colored clothes, and Forever 21, an international fashion retailer, also introduced a Marsala shade fashion on one of their top menu bars, named "Trending Now: 70's Dream Girl" (Charlotte Russe, Inc., 2015; Forever 21, Inc., 2015).

Certainly, prior to Pantone and fast fashion brands, the high-end fashion companies firstly exhibited Marsala-shade clothes and leather goods at a 2015 Spring/Summer Ready-to-wear fashion show in Milan, Italy in September 2014, at least three months before when Pantone announced its color of the year. For instance, Dolce & Gabbana utilized "red for lots of lace dresses" and in the signature Dolce finale, the model wore "crisp white shirts, red high-waisted shorts [Marsala shade] and ballet flats" (Bumpus, 2014).

In the cosmetic industry, Sephora, a French brand and chain of cosmetics stores, began to work in earnest with Pantone, in 2014, and only introduced six Radiant Orchid hue cosmetic items, whereas in 2015, they introduced sixty-three Marsala colored cosmetic products on a separated theme menu, which is titled, "Wear Marsala now, a bold pop of neutral. Shop beauty inspired by the 2015 color of the year" (Sephora USA, Inc., 2013; Sephora USA, Inc., 2015). Namely, various beauty brands produced Marsala shade cosmetics for 2015, and whether the brands were inspired by Pantone or they influenced Pantone prior to Pantone's announcement, it is undeniable that consumers' interest were captured by Marsala at least one time because they might encounter to this color in anywhere, including off line or online shops, magazines, blog posts, or hashtags.

¹ Fast fashion is an "industry trend" that produces and distributes the fashion to the market as fast as possible, which fits the fashion fad and trend (Choi, 2013).

In summation of the result of Pantone's color of 2015, Marsala, identical to the other colors of the years, acquired power as an encapsulating color of 2015 considering that it was basically one of the wine colors in general people's mind, and it also possesses its economic value because a great amount of the color-related industry and marketing departments introduced Marsala colored products this year, and they are continually utilizing it as a selling method. However, in terms of the significance of the semantic nature of Marsala, it was not compelling enough to transform individuals' perception, and it was especially difficult to apply in the home interior context.

Discussion

Pantone's color of the year and its color story were completely applied to Barthes' "*Systems of set B*," which assist to discover the "written code" of Pantone's color of the year, assess whether the color story created new perception (connotation) or not, and evaluate the effectiveness of Pantone's five colors throughout the "rhetorical system" (Barthes, 1990, p. 37). The structure of Pantone's color communication, including the signifier (image-color) and signified (written color) was similar to Barthes' written clothing, and the result reveals that the economy of the fashion system and Pantone's color of the year are identical underlying Barthes' mythologies. This chapter evaluates the results of the textual analysis of Pantone's color of the year and discloses the hindsight of this research by answering two research questions.

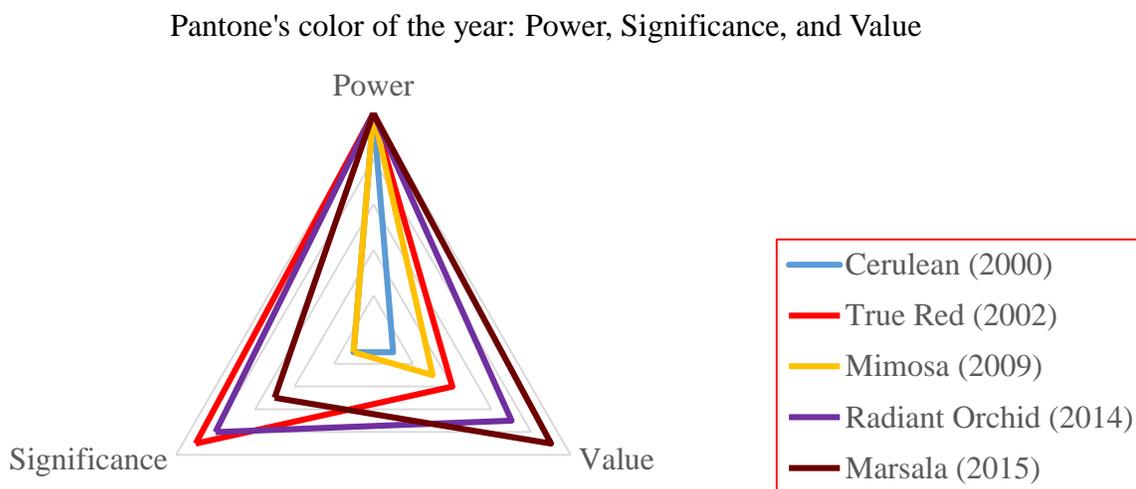
Research Question 1

The first questions inquires, "How does Pantone present the color of the year through their phraseology to create a link of equivalence between a certain color and its concept in 2000, 2002, 2009, 2014, and 2015?" The answer is solved after applying Pantone's color story into Barthes' "*Systems of set B*," which consists of "real code," "written code," "connotation," and

“rhetorical system,” and investigating the effectiveness of the announcement of Pantone’s color of the year in a color-related industry by referencing fashion magazines reports (Barthes, 1990, p. 37). The effectiveness of the color itself (image-color and written color) was evaluated in three ways: power, semantic significance, and economic value. All five colors achieved power as a color of the year because prior to Pantone’s announcement, all those colors were existing shades in the world. In terms of the semantic significance, the colors of 2000 and 2009, Cerulean and Mimosa, were the same as the general color conception, which did not provide a new connotation or compelling content to readers; thus, those two colors were insufficient to evaluate concerning the significance of the colors. The color of 2015, Marsala, was remarkable because it transforms the preconception that the red-brown shade should appear in the fall season; however, the written color was not compelling enough to persuade home interior experts, so Marsala’s semantic significance is considered at an intermediate level. On the other hand, the color of 2002 and 2014, True Red and Radiant Orchid, were adequate to shift individuals’ negative perceptions of those two colors to positive concepts; therefore, True Red and Radiant Orchid possess higher semantic significance than the colors of 2000, 2009, and 2015. Lastly, concerning the economic value of those five colors, the colors of 2000 and 2002, Cerulean and True Red, are difficult to estimate due to the deficiency of information and promotion of Pantone. And in terms of the color of 2009, Mimosa, few top designers utilized it in their fashion shows; therefore, the lower brands were not compelled to produce Mimosa colored clothes. Yet, in case of the color of 2014 and 2015, Radiant Orchid and Marsala, combined with Pantone’s enthusiastic promotion of the color of the year and the attention of color-related industries, fashion magazines, and marketers, the economic value of Pantone’s color of the year highly increased compared to previous years. Although the color of 2014, Radiant Orchid, was welcomed by three major manufacturing

industries, which are fashion, cosmetics, and home interior, the economic value of Marsala, the color of 2015, will be more advanced than the color of 2014 because more manufacturing industries and consumers are concentrating on it more than any other year.

The following is a chart that demonstrates the overall power, significance, and value of the colors of 2000, 2002, 2009, 2014, and 2014. The chart is the result of analysis of Pantone's color story (written content) and the investigation of the color of the year's effectiveness.



Research Question 2

The second and last research question asks, “What is the significance of the semantic nature of the links between Pantone’s color of the year, the marketing field, the color-related industry, and consumers?” This query is grounded on the reason why Pantone creates the illusion of color (connotation) every year, which provides a new visual experience and the color direction to various industries. Pantone’s prior purpose for nominating the color each year is to create economic value throughout the colors, which are named by Pantone. The announcement of the color of the year through the world, first of all, strengthens Pantone’s world authority of colors,

and it strongly connects to its economic profits. For instance, many companies seek for Pantone's color insights and customized color consulting. Currently, seventeen brands, based on Pantone's official website, including fashion, cosmetic, home interior, and graphic design companies, cooperate with Pantone. When Pantone's power, significance, and value become higher, more manufacturing brands will follow and utilize Pantone's color story, and the phraseology of Pantone will be imperative to trend-obsessed consumers.

In summation, RQ 1 explained the significance to textually explore the rhetorical system of Pantone's phraseology (connotation), which led to the establishment of the criteria of evaluating each color of the year toward its power, the semantic significance, and the economic values in this study. RQ 2 concentrated on the economic value of Pantone's colors of the years and answered the prior intention why Pantone created the illusion of color (connotation), which this study concluded as an economic benefit. Although the economic relations between Pantone and other color-related industries are the most significant reason for nominating the color of the year, it is also important to acknowledge that Pantone attempts to provide a new visual experience to readers every year.

Then, in hindsight, this researcher believes that it is necessary to figure out who creates a new visual experience and who establishes it as a trend and persuades consumers to follow. According to Barthes' *Fashion System*, an analysis of the phraseology of a fashion magazine into a rhetorical system assists to reveal the narrative myth of a fashion scheme. Therefore, this researcher decided to scrutinize whether Pantone creates the trend of color or if top designers inspire Pantone to share their ideology to the public. After examining the timeline of the high-brands' fashion shows, Pantone's announcement of the color of the year, and web magazine posts, it is obvious that the high designer brands, such as Chanel or MAC, suggest few specific

colors, which they believe that will be trendy for the upcoming year, at least a few months before the coming year, and Pantone will select one color after evaluating various luxury brands' fashion shows. Afterwards, fashion magazine editors will search the corresponding colored items, including clothes, cosmetics, and home interiors, to write a trend report for the readers. In this process, it is certain that top designers inspire Pantone to influence the public, and it also could say that Pantone (an idealistic bourgeoisie) shared a bourgeoisie culture (a luxury brand) with various lower brands or general consumers who correspond to the third party according to Barthes' methodology (Barthes, 1972, pp. 137-142). To be specific, Barthes explains the bourgeoisie as below,

“The bourgeoisie² is defined as the social class which does not want to be named... the haemorrhage of the name ‘bourgeois’ is effected through the idea of nation... In a bourgeois culture, there is neither proletarian³ culture nor proletarian morality, there is not proletarian art... We dream of, the garments we wear, everything, in everyday life, is dependent on the representation which the bourgeoisie has and makes us have of the relations between man and world... The fact of the bourgeoisie becomes absorbed into an amorphous universe, whose sole inhabitant is Eternal Man, who is neither proletarian nor bourgeois. Petit-bourgeois norms are the residue of bourgeois culture, there are bourgeois truths which have become degraded, commercialized, or out of date... By spreading its representations over a whole catalogue of

² Bourgeoisie is defined as an upper class who possesses a high political or economic status compared to general people, but, in this study, bourgeoisie simply means a top designer or high end brand's designer.

³ Proletarian identifies the class of wage-earners, blue collar works, or commoners. Barthes also named it as a third party. In terms of this study, proletarian corresponds to a general individual, customers, or consumers.

collective images for petit-bourgeois use, the bourgeoisie countenances the illusory lack of differentiation of the social classes” (Barthes, 1972, pp. 138-141).

Top designer brands, either fashion or cosmetics, never mention the color ‘Radiant Orchid,’ but they introduce a similar shade with their own name, such as “La diva” (Chanel.com, 2015) or “Cosmic” (Dior, 2015). Also, depending on the top designers, the luxury brands proposed diverse shades of fashion and clothes; so, it is hard to designate which is the trendy color of that year. However, Pantone or a fashion magazine, which correlates to Petit-bourgeois by Barthes, selects one of the bourgeoisie’s concepts, which they believe is significant or possesses an economic value and creates a name as if it represents the world’s trend. Then, consumers perceive the Petit-bourgeois’ suggestion as a bourgeois culture, which is actually not and does not exist in this society. Therefore, applying to this study, 1) high-end brands’ designers (bourgeoisie) create new visual experiences; 2) Pantone (petit-bourgeoisie) selects one of them to establish it as a trend, announces to the world, and attempts to persuade readers; 3) color-related industries, marketers, and fashion magazines (another petit-bourgeoisies) convince consumers with the name of ‘the color of the year’ (verbalized notation), Pantone’s color story (written color), and the pictures of that color’s fashion or items (image-color); and then 4) consumers (proletarian), who always “dream of” experiencing the bourgeois’ culture, can explore the new visual experience (one part of bourgeois’ culture) that shared by Pantone or other color-related industries (petit-bourgeoisies) and believe that this one of the colors or trends is representative of the entire bourgeois’ culture.

Implications

This research reveals the importance of creating a compelling content concerning the color of the year, and it exhibits that the verbalized notation can create a new power, the written

content can transform the individuals' perspectives to the positive ideas, and the association of the entire semantic structures can yield an economic value. Therefore, although this contemporary society concentrates on an image more than a text, the written content, which is provided with an image, can direct individuals to the intention of a sender, and if it is significantly compelling in various contexts, it can create a new connotation to intrigue more people; thus, the consolidation of the image and compelling written content not only highlights the image, but it also persuades individuals' conceptions.

Accordingly, for Pantone, they can consider the significance of the written content when they release the color of the year, based on Barthes' "*Systems of set B*" (Barthes, 1990, p. 37). Eiseman, the executive director of Pantone, emphasizes the importance of context that the proper context could alter the negative ideas to positive ideas concerning the color, but in terms of the color of the year, it basically creates a new power for a certain color, which means that it also can provide new viewpoints and interpretations to individuals against the generalized perception of the color. Therefore, the consideration and implication of this study's results will prosper Pantone's color of the year and its color communication techniques. Also, any color-related industries, including fashion, cosmetics, home interior, or and graphic designs, should note the significance of connotation and rhetorical system when they create a written content of the image. Additionally, the provided written content should be compelling enough to be shared by a majority of individuals, like the color of 2014, Radiant Orchid, or intriguing enough to make people unconsciously leave the preconception behind, like the color of 2002, True Red.

Limitations

This researcher approached the study with a generalized and interpretive perspective of Pantone's color communication. Yet, as with many qualitative studies, the data was self-reported

data and is therefore limited by the fact that it cannot be officially verified although the results of this study were thoroughly based on Pantone's phraseology and Barthes' semiological system. In other words, Pantone's or each individual's analysis of the phraseology or what they select to analyze among plenty of sentences of the color story may be different to what this researcher considers as remarkable and crucial.

Also, the collected data does not include any statistics or numeric value and basically quotes the articles of magazine concerning the color of the year; therefore, data may contain several potential sources of bias that should be noted as limitations. For instance, the magazines are grounded on the economic system to create benefits; so they may represent and support some particular brands and possibly possess a certain bias.

Lastly, the study of the color of the year is excessively new, and color-related industries and the marketing field recently began to notice Pantone's color nomination; therefore, the influence of Pantone's color of the year is too hasty to generalize or evaluate its effectiveness in the world. Therefore, this research will prosper with the trustworthy and reputable data from non-profit organizations, official statics concerning Pantone's color of the year, and the progressive achievements of at least five or more years. From these limitations and the discussion of the results, this research proposes several areas of further research.

Further Research

Discussion so far has evidently illuminated the magnitude of the written content, which corresponds to the verbalized notation or the choice of the oral structure in colors. In other words, compelling color story can create 1) its new power, which did not exist before; 2) the semantic significance, which transforms individual's negative perception; and 3) its economic value that is always highlighted by a wide range of color-related industries and the marketing

field. Therefore, one must consider how to create a compelling color story, which can provide a positive connotation and persuade diverse companies, experts, and customers. Yet, prior to designing the method to produce a compelling written content, a researcher should focus towards the ripple effects of Pantone's color of the year on their potential consumers and how these influences transform individuals' perception, actions, or tendencies towards or against the phraseology of Pantone, resulting in practicable endorsements for those engaging in reading.

To be specific, the study concerning the ripple effects should clarify the degree of influence among companies and individuals. As was previously discussed, the perception of the data as well as specific analysis of Pantone's color communication techniques are predominantly based on the perspectives of Pantone and certain magazines; so, it was unverified and it is difficult to assert that they sufficiently reflected plenty of companies and individuals' opinions. Perhaps closer study would extend a value of this study and specify the effects of the verbalized notation concerning the color of the year on companies and people. A category of the company can be divided by the types of the industry, such as fashion, cosmetics, and home interior. After that it also can be segmented by brands' levels or companies' rankings. In terms of the classification of individuals, it can be arranged by the types of consumers, such as innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards⁴ (Rogers, 2003). Degree of influence may affect the practical implications that the researcher can design; thus, to prevent the broad and wide-ranging results, it is necessary to establish a certain context, characteristics, or circumstances for companies and individuals so that the study can be precise and insightful.

⁴ The category was defined by Rogers (2003) to standardize the types of individuals when they experience the new ideas and technology.

Accordingly, it will be significantly helpful to measure the ripple effects concerning Pantone's color of the year toward a variety of companies and individuals as a quantitative study. Perhaps it requires a certain amount of time to observe the effect and also a good number of companies and people to generalize the results. However, once the research is completed, the data will be substantially valuable to reference when Pantone decides new color for the color of the year and its color story. Also, not only Pantone, but also any similar industry can utilize the results to apply in their context.

Conclusion

The results exhibits a significance of the written content, which can direct the readers' perspectives, transform their negative connotation to positive ideas, and unconsciously lead them to the senders' intentions. Although the data was limited to prove a long-term influence, the discussion shows that the consolidation of image-color and written color can maximize the influence, which Pantone desires. In this world, almost everything depends on a visual factor, and people respond faster to the visual media rather than the textual media; thus, if the senders aim to intrigue the receivers towards visual communication, the visual features should be remarkably impressive to influence individuals' behavior, reactions, and decisions due to the overflow of images and videos. In this view, among the elements of the visual media, color is one of the most fundamental elements, and that is why this researcher decided to study colors and integrated color and communication since color is utilized as one of the crucial communication tools towards a variety of media.

While people rely on visual messages more than verbal contents in this era, this research concludes that a verbalized notation, a choice of oral structure, and a compelling written content are too significant to be neglected, for instance, the users of social media, such as Facebook,

Instagram, or Pinterest, which are all centered on images, still write a comment or hashtag to emphasize the images. In other words, to strengthen the visual content, the verbalized notation is essential and important. Likewise, by Pantone, one of the existing shades could achieve a name, power as the color of the year (a verbalized notation), and new connotation (a semantic significance). As a result, that color not only possesses the image of color itself, but also includes a certain message.

To motivate, inspire, and direct individuals to the intended way, the sender should 1) explain 'why,' and 2) also provide what the receiver dreamed about. The image, the color swatch or the pictures of color, cannot sufficiently explain 'why' people need to be interested in the color of the year; however, the color story, which is a compelling written content, can explain 'why' people should be intrigued by that color. In other words, the written content should be persuading 'why people need to see,' rather than 'how people need to see.' Lastly, in the last part of the discussion, this researcher mentioned the bourgeoisie, petit-bourgeoisie, and general people and surmised that the terminology of 'bourgeoisie' may sound negative because some part of this society described it as unfavorable, but this study did not define 'bourgeoisie' as an upper class who possesses a high political or economic status, but as high-end brand designers, who inspire Pantone and are distinguished from the consumers. Therefore, the readers should not consider the term negatively. The reason why this study discussed about 'bourgeoisie culture' is that indicates the experience of what general people would like to explore and dream about. The trend-obsessed people dream to wear top designer's clothes in their lives, but they are lavish, and when people do not possess the adequate knowledge about the fashion, they may be unable to capture the most remarkable element of each season's fashion show among more than forty high-end brands (Bourgeoisie). Yet, Pantone or a fashion magazine (Petit-bourgeoisie) sincerely

selects few features, which are nominated as a 'trend,' yield substantial economic value, and awaken the internal dreams of consumers: the desire to experience the culture of bourgeoisie. To conclude the point, in this era, the visual factors are considered as an irreplaceable value; however, the written content, which is displayed with the image, can possess more power, significance, and value than the image because it directly guides where individuals should focus. Also, if the textual content is sufficiently compelling, it will establish a certain norm, which the sender intended, and if the guided perspective inhibits individuals' minds for a longer period, it eventually shapes their ideas towards the sender's expectation. The compelling written content is the key answer to achieve competitiveness.

Be fabulous to vivify individuals' eternal dreams with the real and written code.

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