

# WOMEN'S IMAGE REPRESENTED ON DOLCE & GABBANA ADVERTISEMENT

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## Abstrak

Periklanan merupakan salah satu bentuk informasi yang menyampaikan pesan suatu produk atau jasa. Informasi ini ditujukan untuk umum. Lebih jauh lagi, iklan dapat mempengaruhi keinginan dan pikiran orang tentang produk atau layanan yang kemudian membujuk mereka untuk menjadi konsumen. Studi penelitian ini menggunakan dua iklan yaitu Iklan Dolce & Gabbana di Majalah Elle edisi Mei 2020. Kedua iklan tersebut adalah Dolce & Gabbana Millenialskin On-The-Glow Tinted Moisturizer dan Dolce & Gabbana Passioneyes Intense Volume Mascara. Kedua produk ini memiliki banyak makna simbolis. Melalui analisis penelitian ini, tanda-tanda visual dan frasa verbal berpengaruh membangun representasi makna simbolik. Dalam memahami makna, peneliti menggunakan teori semiotik dari Ferdinand de Saussure dan Roland Barthes, serta struktur iklan menurut teori Leech. Teori-teori tersebut digunakan untuk mengetahui makna simbol yang terkandung dalam iklan dan bagaimana merepresentasikan citra perempuan.

**Kata Kunci:** Periklanan, Makna Simbolik, Semiotika.

## Abstract

*Advertising is one of the forms of information which conveys messages of a product or service. This information is aimed to the public. Furthermore, advertising can influence people's desire and minds about the product or service which then persuades them to be the consumer. This research studies use two advertisements which are Dolce & Gabbana Advertisement on Elle Magazine on May 2020 edition. These two advertisements are Dolce & Gabbana Millenialskin On-The-Glow Tinted Moisturizer and Dolce & Gabbana Passioneyes Intense Volume Mascara. These two products have many symbolic meaning. By this research analysis, visual signs and verbal phrases are influential to builds the representation of symbolic meaning. In understanding the meaning, the researcher use semiotic theory by Ferdinand de Saussure and Roland Barthes, also structure of advertising by Leech's theory. The theories are used to find out the meaning of symbol contained in the advertisements and how it represents women's image.*

**Keywords:** Advertising, Symbolic meaning, Semiotics.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Advertising is a form of information that contains an interesting message about a product or service aimed at the public. It is one of the most strategic media to attract attention or persuade readers to buy. According to Aashish (2019), advertising activities can also be categorized into 5 types based on the advertisement medium used. These types of advertisements are print advertising, broadcast advertising, outdoor advertising, digital advertising and product or brand integration.

Advertising has experienced many changes from the ancient Egyptian etchings, to print ads, to the Golden Age of Advertising, to today where highly targeted, personalized online ads are the only way to succeed in today's marketing world (Quick, 2020). According to Frolova (2014), it was the 20th century when advertising became this so popular – primarily due to the unprecedented growth rate of world industrial production, as well as due to the appearance of more and more sophisticated means of creating and distributing advertisements: multicolor printing, analog and then digital radio, television, satellite communications, and finally, computers and the Internet.

Advertisements are made by choosing images, colors, slogans as attractive as possible so it easily remembered by readers. Therefore, a picture serves to emphasize the text in building a good message. From the linguistic perspective, advertisement complements are vital in shaping consumers thought to interpret meaning. An advertisement contains logos, pictures, colors, brands, and slogans. According to Eco (1976), semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign. When the advertisement was made and it can be understood by readers, then an advertisement can be distributed properly. In accordance with Berger (2000), human could understand of something only through sign. In his mind, logic is the same as semiotic and semiotic could be applied to all kinds of signs. Good

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advertisements are advertisements that are able to attract the buying power of the readers.

This study uses a semiotic approach to interpret the meaning behind the advertisement. The writer analyzes two products of Dolce & Gabbana that were published in Elle Apps, a French Magazine. On Elle Magazine Apps, May 2020 edition, there are 92 pages. The writer use Elle Magazine which is on a Mobile Apps because of it is easier to read anywhere and the other benefit is that is free to download. Elle is a worldwide lifestyle magazine of French origin that focuses on fashion, beauty, health and entertainment. It was founded in 1945 by H el ene Gordon-Lazareff and her husband, the writer Pierre Lazareff. According to Adam (2017), in the early 21st century Elle had the largest readership of any fashion magazine in the world. Elle has grown to consist of 43 international editions in more than 60 countries. Elle means "she" or "her" in French. Elle Magazine is one of the leading women's fashion and beauty publications on the market. With a focus on inspiring every woman to create her own unique style, it offers an aspirational model that, at the same time, is attainable for the empowered woman. Lazareff considered women to be actors in society's evolution, motivating them to invest themselves in key issues, gain their financial independence and position themselves as equal to men. This is very interesting because gender equality is indeed very necessary nowadays. It is related with the condition where women and men should not be any gap.

In the world of magazine advertisements, women are often used as a model. It forms a women's image in society and it is interesting to study it. According to Robin (2020), beauty has financial value. Beautiful people delight the eye but also intrinsically better humans. Attractive people are paid higher salaries. It is really a combination of beauty, intelligence, charm, and collegiality that serves as a recipe for better pay. There are many beauty product

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advertisements that offer a beautiful model of advertisements to attract consumers. In order to look attractive and cover all these shortcomings, women usually use cosmetics. It makes them feel beautiful, it gives them confidence, it helps them be more empowered and makes them more attractive (Hazel, 2020). People will indeed appreciate others who look attractive like if meet a new person, the first thing that will be noticed is the physical appearance. If a person is less attractive, naturally people will less value them.

There are two Dolce & Gabbana cosmetic products on Elle Magazine. The writer chose this products because from analyzing the advertising image, it can give clear detail to answer about women's image. The May edition is chosen because it is the most recent so it is most relevant to the nowadays society. The writer just focus on the most recent women's image shown by the magazine due to the women's image that is continue to evolve from time to time to reflect current women's image in the society. Dolce & Gabbana was founded in 1985 in Legnano by Italian designers Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana. Domenico Dolce was born in Palermo, Sicily in 1958. In 1986, they produced Dolce & Gabbana's first collection called "Real Women". In 1989 the Dolce & Gabbana swimwear and underwear line was launched. Madonna ordered a corset made of gemstones and a jacket to wear in Cannes to launch her film *Truth or Dare: In Bed with Madonna* by Alek Keshishian (1990). In 1992 the company launched their first fragrance, Dolce & Gabbana. Instant and sustainable success, Dolce & Gabbana continues to issue fragrances and colognes for men and women.

Dolce & Gabbana itself was originally an Italian luxury fashion house that sells clothing, footwear, handbags, sunglasses, watches, jewelery, perfumes and cosmetics. Success in the fashion field, Dolce & Gabbana \*)Penulis Korespondensi

expanded their reach in the cosmetics field. Dolce & Gabbana has called on one of its most famous, and glamorous, fans to front its very first make-up campaign: Scarlett Johansson. According to Claire (2009), this will be the first time that Dolce & Gabbana has stepped into the beauty world, albeit for a hugely successful line of perfumes. 'We see make-up as another thing for women, like a dress. We worked on the make-up line like we work on a clothing collection — you can change make-up like you can change your clothes, depending on your mood,' Gabbana told WWD. The first collection will be inspired by Mediterranean shades and the lipsticks will be rose scented. According Webster (1981), cosmetic is defined as "a preparation (except soap), preserving, or changing the appearance of a person as for conditioning, cleansing, coloring."

Dolce & Gabbana shows a female medley style that reflects vibrant appearance, lifestyle, culture and age. Every amazing woman transforms into a luxurious make up style, bringing her own unique touch and perspective. The cosmetic products from Dolce & Gabbana advertisements were chosen because it is related to the issue raised which is about today's women who are mostly more confident when using makeup. According to Thompson (2009), Cosmetic retailers design advertising to alter women's attitudes toward cosmetics, encouraging them to buy more products. Many advertisers shape this attitude by encouraging women to feel dissatisfied with their appearance. Women feel pressure to meet an idealized beauty standard, cosmetic advertisements that offer women the opportunity to live up to that standard can be highly effective, encouraging more cosmetic purchases. The women's image in advertisement is influential on the women's image in society. The products selected are Dolce & Gabbana Millenialskin On-The-Glow Tinted Moisturizer and Dolce & Gabbana Passioneeyes Intense Volume A-8-3

Mascara.

This study is related to visual and verbal where Saussure, Barthes and Leech theories are combined to analyze the advertisement. In this analysis, the writer use Saussure's theory which deals with the signs that classified into the signifier and the signified. The application of semiotic in this study continues with Barthes' theory that developed the semiotics from linguistics to visual image, such as the photography, advertisement and movement picture. In addition to using the semiotic theory, the writer also applies the theory of advertising by Leech. The analysis of this study is based on signs of linking existing and nonexistent in the text, which in this case is a Magazine Apps advertisement. In this study, semiotics approach is needed to understanding the sign of advertisement. This study discusses the symbols that exist in the advertisement and meaning of messages conveyed from visual and verbal representations of woman's image. Hopefully, the readers could understand more about semiotic study and be interested.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

There are two semiotics approach from Ferdinand de Saussure and Roland Barthes that the writer use in this study. According to Ferdinand de Saussure, there are two main parts to any sign. These are signifier which connotes any material thing that is signified, be it an object, words on a page, or an image and signified that explains the concept which the signifier refers to. This would be the meaning that is drawn by the receiver of the sign. Furthermore, Roland Barthes uses the denotative and connotative 'levels of meanings' to analyze the signs in visual object. Barthes distinguished the analyzing of the signs into two, the verbal and non-verbal signs. Beside semiotic theory, the writer also use advertising theory from Leech. According to Leech (1966:25) advertisement is directed towards a mass audience with the aim of  
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promoting sales of a commercial product. There are four parts following advertisement structures, which are headline, body copy, signature line and standing details.

In this study, the writer also use the qualitative method. Qualitative use to explain symbolic sign in advertisement through the visual signs from Dolce & Gabbana Advertisement. The writer uses advertisements that related to linguistics study.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. The meaning of the symbol contained in the Elle Magazine Apps

In analyzing the symbolic meaning, the writer begins with visual and verbal phrases by Saussure's theory in this first advertisement below:

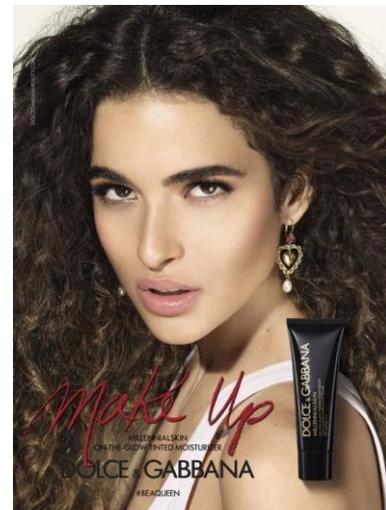


Figure 1.  
Visual Signs and Verbal Phrases in Dolce & Gabbana Millenialskin On-The-Glow Tinted Moisturizer Advertisement

From the Dolce & Gabbana Millenialskin On-The-Glow Tinted Moisturizer advertisement above, it can be seen that there are 6 visual signs and 5 verbal phrases found as described in the following table:

Table 1. Visual Signs and Verbal Phrases in Dolce & Gabbana Millenialskin On-The-Glow Tinted Moisturizer Advertisement

Visual Signs		Verbal Phrases
Color	Object	
Black	1. Woman (the model)	1. Make Up 2. MILLENNIAL SKIN ON-THE-GLOW TINTED MOISTURIZER 3. DOLCE & GABBANA 4. #BEAQUEEN
Gold	2. Flawless makeup	
Red	3. White background	
White	4. Hairstyle	
	5. Earrings	
	6. The product	

Based on the color theory by Schumer, Sullivan & Alexander (2008), all colors in the first advertisement bring several meanings, they are:

1. Black is representation of power, elegance, and mystery.
2. Gold is representation of prestige and wisdom.
3. White is representation of light and purity.
- Red is representasion of strength, desire, and energy.

In this study, the writer analyzes visual sign by Saussure's theory that explains signifier and signified thath describes in the table below:

Table 2. Visual Signs Based on Saussure Theory

No	Theory of Ferdinand de Saussure	
	Signifier	Signified
1.	Woman (the Model)	Focuses on the model's face with natural makeup
2.	Natural makeup	An impression with soft makeup such pink blushes, little bit contour, pink lipstick, and
3.	White hoodie	Representing of light and Represents casual clothes with white

4.	Back-ground	The representation of cleanliness and makes more stand
5.	Earrings	A jewelry with gold color and it looks luxury that makes the model
6.	Wavy hair	Hair style that looks fun and
7.	The product	Emphasizing the cosmetic product which makes the eyelashes look more curved and long. It uses black color as a

In this advertisement, there are 4 verba phrases that found using Leech's theory:

1. Make Up

It is the headline of the ads. It is an impression to attract the reader's attention. It gives the target consumers information about the name of the product.

2. DOLCE & GABBANA

It is the signature line. It mentions a brand name.

3. #BEAQUEEN

It is the signature line. It mentions a slogan.

4. DOLCEGABBANABEAUTY.COM

It is the standing details. It obtains further information.

After analyzing the advertisement using Saussure's theory which about visual sign and verbal phrases, the writer will analyze the denotation and connotation using Barthes' theory, they are:

1. Denotation
  - a. Woman (the model) An adult female.

- b. The product's web  
A network address of a product.
- c. Flawless makeup  
A combination of things to make someone looks perfect or without any blemishes or imperfections.
- d. Headline  
Emphasizing the message.
- e. Sub headline  
The advertisement part that explains the main points of the ad that is important.
- f. Signature line  
A mention of a brand name.
- g. Slogan  
A short and striking phrase.
- h. White background  
The neutrality.
- i. Hairstyle  
Styling hair to look neat and nice.

## 2. Connotation

A woman can be more stylish than a man. Women can apply makeup on their faces, wearing head, ear, and hand accessories. Women can wear skirts and clothes that are so diverse compared to men. It does not mean that men can't do these things but it just that women can express themselves more. The Ads maker use a woman because this is a beauty product that accentuates facial beauty with an additional moisturizer in appearance. On the first advertisement, there is the word "Make Up" aims to improve the appearance of facial makeup by applying cosmetics. It is the headline of the ad because it is the title by using a large font and it in a top of other words. The font is red so that when the reader see it, it will immediately catch. Using the red color also represents the strength that makes the ad eye catching. Dolce & Gabbana uses black color for its letter that makes the brand seem elegant and not excessive. With a

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capital letter and bold that certainly their trademark, Dolce & Gabbana can be placed in the right proportion and can still be seen from a considerable distance. One of Dolce & Gabbana's variant is MillennialSkin On- The-Glow Tinted Moisturizer. The sentence uses black color with smaller size and capital word like Dolce & Gabbana which of course makes them harmonious. It is inspired by the unstoppable Millennial lifestyle, which requires beautiful and radiant skin. Moisturizer which is usually transparent white, is now further formulated in the presence of this product. MillennialSkin On- The-Glow Tinted Moisturizer is a new variation of makeup. Moisturizer which usually has a functions to moisturize and as a skincare, now developed into a makeup that has a function like a foundation. Dolce & Gabbana MillennialSkin On-The-Glow

Tinted Moisturizer means a product that not only moisturize the skin but also provide the effect of bright and glowing as millennials want. Moisturizer in this product aims to make the skin look instantly brighter and creating a 'soft-focus' effect that blurs the appearance of imperfections such as powers and as fine lines. "Glow" means fresh, young and healthy looking skin. This formula is a perfect combination of chemical filter to protect the skin stay fresh even wearing makeup. This advertisement choose flawless makeup to be worn by models. Flawless makeup itself is a combination of things to make someone looks perfect or without any blemishes or imperfections. By applying moisturizer and then applied with the contour of brown cheeks that means stability and masculine qualities, making the face look like there are more gaunt shadows and the shape of the face more visible.

## 2. Analysis of Visual Signs and Verbal Phrases Signs in Dolce & Gabbana Passioneeyes Intense Volume Mascara.

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In analyzing the symbolic meaning, the writer begins with visual and verbal phrases by Saussure's theory in this second advertisement below:

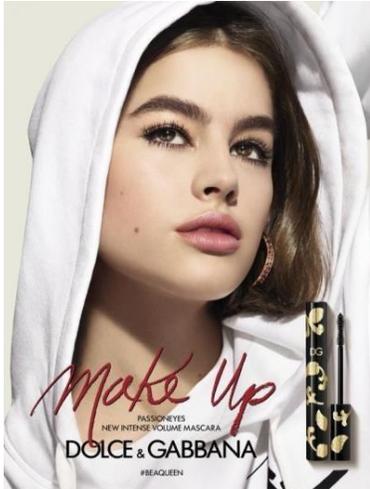


Figure 2.

Visual Signs and Verbal Phrases in Dolce & Gabbana PassioneYES Intense Volume Mascara Advertisement

From the Dolce & Gabbana Millenialskin On-The-Glow Tinted Moisturizer advertisement above, it can be seen that there are 7 visual signs and 4 verbal phrases found as described in the following table:

Table 3. Visual Signs and Verbal Phrases in Dolce & Gabbana Millenialskin On-The-Glow Tinted Moisturizer Advertisement

Visual Signs		Verbal Phrases
Color	Object	
Black Gold Red White	1. Woman (the model) 2. Natural makeup 3. White hoodie 4. Background 5. Earrings 6. Wavy hair 7. The product	1. Make Up 2. PASSIONEYES INTENSE VOLUME MASCARA 3. DOLCE & GABBANA 4. #BEAQUEEN

Based on by Schumer, Sullivan & Alexander (2008), all of color in the second advertisement bring several meanings. They are:

1. Black  
Black is representation of power, elegance, and mystery.
2. Gold  
Gold is representation of wealth and illumination.
3. White  
White is representation of goodness and purity.
4. Red  
Red is representation of energy, passion and desire.

In this study, the writer analyzes visual sign by Saussure's theory that explains signifier and signified that describes in the table below:

No	Theory of Ferdinand de Saussure	
	Signifier	Signified
1.	Woman (the Model)	Focuses on the model's face with natural makeup
2.	Natural makeup	An impression with soft makeup such pink blushes, little bit contour, pink lipstick, and
3.	White hoodie	Representing of light and Represents casual clothes with white
4.	Back-ground	The representation of cleanliness and makes more stand

5.	Earrings	A jewelry with gold color and it looks luxury that makes the model
6.	Wavy hair	Hair style that looks fun and
7.	The product	Emphasizing the cosmetic product which makes the eyelashes look more curved and long. It uses black color as a

In this advertisement, there are 4 verbal phrases that found using Leech's theory:

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2. DOLCE & GABBANA

It is the signature line. It mentions a brand name.

3. #BEAQUEEN

It is the signature line. It mentions a slogan.

After analyzing the advertisement using Saussure's theory which about visual sign and verbal phrases, the writer will analyze the denotation and connotation using Barthes' theory, they are:

1. Denotation

a. Woman (the model) An adult female.

b. White hoodie

A casual clothes with white color.

c. Natural makeup  
A combination of things with slight and soft application.

d. Headline

Emphasizing the

message. e. Sub headline

The advertisement part that explains the main points of the ad that is important.

f. Signature line

A mention of a brand name. g. Slogan

A short and striking phrase. h. White background

The neutrality. i. Hairstyle

Styling hair to look neat and nice. j. Earrings

A jewelry on the ears. k. The product

The object as the brand image.

2. Connotation

After analyzing where the denotation is in the second advertisement, the writer continues this analysis more deeply about the meaning of the connotation by Barthes. Dolce & Gabbana Passioneeyes Intense Volume Mascara Advertisement uses a woman as the model. The same meanings between advertisement 1 and 2 are already explain in the first advertisement. In a world of cosmetics, women are the right people to be represented as models because women's

faces can indeed be more varied. Meanwhile, it does not mean only women who can use cosmetics, just mostly a women who use cosmetics in their daily lives. The model uses a white hoodie. Hoodie itself is a clothing that we can meet every day. This outfit is quite simple but if you can combine it well, it can look stylish. In this ad, hoodie is represented in a relaxed and free style but still looks trendy. It is match with white color that looks clean and natural. Hoodie makes a less effortless appearance but is still cool. The white color also adds to the impression

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of simplicity and purity. It also shows people who are full of optimism. In addition to wearing a white hoodie, the model also combined her appearance with round gold earrings. These earrings are often called hoop earrings. Her appearance wearing a casual hoodie mixed with earrings made her look elegant. These earrings are suitable for people who have thin, oval, or facial features who like to mess with faces. With the gold color, it adds a luxurious and expensive impression. She also breaks down her slightly wavy hair to add a sweet impression. Short hair adds the look more cheerful and young.

## 2. Symbolic Meaning Represent Women's Image

After going through Saussure and Barthes' semiotic analysis and advertising by Leech, the results of this study revealed these two advertisements, each woman has variations in women's beauty pictures according to each person. Women's images represented in the first advertisement are:

### 1. Strong

This advertisement shows how strong the model's gaze. With a thick makeup contour, making this woman look more alive. It also shows how powerful a woman faces her everyday life. Leaving her weaknesses, showing her might.

### 2.

#### Natural

In this advertisement, it shows the model's hair which is curly and unraveled and looks slightly slammed. It creates the impression of simple and natural.

### 3.

#### Elegant

With the addition of the earrings, the model looks expensive and elegant. Gold itself shows a luxury look that matches with pearls that are so special and beautiful.

### 4. Attractive

The model showed off her smooth face

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without any blemishes, making her appearance so perfect. Even with the help of makeup, the result looks very attractive.

Women's images represented in the second advertisement are:

### 1. Mysterious

The model wears the white hoodie covering her head. The white color itself has a symbol of kindness and sincerity. With her head covered up, giving a mysterious impression.

### 2. Powerful

With the use of mascara that is so fitting, the model has the appearance that is pleasing to the eye. It also has power with its gaze pointing up, but still eye-catching.

### 3. Confident

The model has a short wavy hair. This reflects a woman who is so confident. Among most women who have and want long hair, this ad shows that even short hair remains charming.

### 4. Unique

The product has a black and gold design, plus gold leaf ornaments. This product is very unique. Black itself has the symbol of energy and gold is sparkle. With the sparkle and energy that women have, making each woman unique and different from the others.

### 5. Leader

The #BEAQUEEN slogan shows that the woman is a queen in her daily life. Not only the queen with all her beauty, but also a leader. Not only men can be leaders, but in this advertisement shows that women can also be leaders.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Elle is a lifestyle magazine of French origin that focuses on fashion, beauty, health and entertainment. It was founded in 1945 by Hélène Gordon-Lazareff and her husband, the writer Pierre Lazareff. Elle is one of the famous magazines in the world, consisting of 43 international editions in more than 60 countries.

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This magazine also includes many brands, one of it is Dolce & Gabbana. Dolce & Gabbana (Italian pronunciation is an Italian luxury fashion house founded in 1985 in Legnano by Italian designers Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana. Dolce & Gabbana products in Elle magazine on May 2020 edition are Dolce & Gabbana Millenialskin On-The-Glow Tinted Moisturizer and Dolce & Gabbana Passioneeyes Intense Volume Mascara. These two products have many symbolic meaning. The writer used semiotic theory by Ferdinand de Saussure and Roland Barthes, also structure of advertising by Leech's theory.

After analyzing the semiotic signs of two products advertisement in Elle Magazine, the writer found that Dolce & Gabbana Millenialskin On-The-Glow Tinted Moisturizer and Dolce & Gabbana Passioneeyes Intense Volume Mascara represented 22 signs that had symbolic meanings. There are 6 visual signs and 5 verbal phrases found in Dolce & Gabbana Millenialskin On-The-Glow Tinted Moisturizer Advertisement. In Dolce & Gabbana Passioneeyes Intense Volume Mascara Advertisement, there are 7 visual signs and 4 verbal phrases. 22 signs given in various views and ways based on Ferdinand de Saussure and Roland Barthes have meaning related to symbolic meaning in cosmetics advertisements published by Elle Magazine. Visual signs are more dominant than verbal phrases. Based on this analysis, the writer found that seeing advertisement images could be easier and clearer to discuss and analyze images of women based on the women's physique and the colors provided. The relation between visual signs and verbal phrases deliver an important and suitable element that can make interpretation better. Furthermore, it will be easier to learn the message conveyed by this advertisement. In analyzing the meaning of symbols in these two advertisements, the writer found that Saussure's theory of signifier and signified was not enough. It only explains and interprets an advertisement through a concept. However, the writer also

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combines Barthes' theory into this analysis. After analyzing signifier and signified, the writer continued the analysis deeper and wider using the meaning of denotation and connotation. Although this theory is also a development of the theory of Saussure, but Barthes's theory is also helpful. Both of these theories can help the writer in analyzing advertisements well. From the visual signs and verbal phrases, the symbolic meaning of each advertisement in Elle Magazine is able to represent 9 women's images. The 9 women's images can be obtained after completing a visual signs and verbal phrases analysis so both have a connection. The 9 women's image in this magazine are strong, natural, elegant, attractive (Dolce & Gabbana Millenialskin On-The-Glow Tinted Moisturizer Advertisement), mysterious, powerful, confident, unique and a leader (Dolce & Gabbana Passioneeyes Intense Volume Mascara).

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