The Necessity of Analysis of Cosmetics Advertisements: A Semiotic Perspective

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Abstract

In such an era of media, information, commodity and consumption, advertisements have become an indispensable part of everyday life, among which cosmetics advertisements are an essential category worthy of study. There are some studies applying semiotics to the analysis of advertisements. Semiotics, as a new approach and perspective, is undoubtedly a useful tool to probe into the study of advertising, especially the effectiveness and artistry of cosmetics advertising; however, it remains a relatively under-examined area. Therefore, it is necessary to make a semiotic analysis of cosmetics advertisement.

Key words: advertisement; cosmetics advertisements; semiotic perspective; necessity

Advertisements and Cosmetics Advertisements

Nowadays, advertisements are ubiquitous and they bombard people in their daily life and even change their recognition and life styles without their noticing it. People's attitudes towards advertisements are varied and complex. Among the most commonly seen categories of advertisement, cosmetics advertisements are typical and of great significance, which make them perfect object of scientific studies.

The Necessity of Studying Advertisements

In today's highly developed commodity society, the advertising phenomenon can be seen anywhere at any time, and the means of advertising is needed both in the process of production and consumption. It can be said that advertising is indispensable in people's life. However, advertising can be troublesome to people sometimes because it can mislead them to make impulsive and wrong choices and decisions and make them suffer a great economic loss. Therefore, a large number of people have a negative attitude toward advertising. To some extent, advertising has become a bothering thing in some people's life, and they may feel sick and tired of advertising which fills every aspect of their daily life.

However, it is contradictory that people in fact need advertising for it can provide them with the information of the product or service they are about to buy. The reason of this paradox lies in the different interpretations of advertising information. Therefore, the reason why people dislike advertising is not because they don't need it; instead, people need it and even expect to see it in a more artistic form that can offer them true information and pleasure as well. That is to say, advertising can not only provide information they need but also enable them to appreciate the beauty of advertising. Therefore, it is necessary to have a specific analysis on advertising.

The Definition of Advertising

Advertising can be seen as a communication form to provide the information of the product or service to potential consumers through public media. It can be said that advertising has become an inseparable part in people's life and has a deep influence on the whole society. It is no longer simply a means to persuade consumers to buy the product or service but also a carrier of information and a guidance of value and lifestyle. In fact, advertising has become a culture. Therefore, it is necessary to learn some basic knowledge of advertising.

The word "advertise" originates from the Latin word "advertere", which means "to turn towards". Advertising has a long history. In ancient times, advertising was often conducted in the form of signs or by spoken words. In the 15th century, people in Europe began to post advertisements at the street and print advertisements could also be seen in the newspapers. By the end of 19th century, some advertising firms had already been established.

Nowadays, advertising can be seen anywhere at any time. But what on earth is advertising? Advertising can be defined from different angles and according to different purposes. For example, advertising is defined as the means of informing the general public about the products or services through oral or visual message according to some economists.

Another definition is provided by Wikipedia: "Advertising in business is a form of marketing communication used to encourage, persuade or manipulate an audience (viewers, readers or listeners; sometimes a special group) to take or continue to take some action". (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advertising)

In comparison, the definition put forward by the American Marketing Association (AMA) is more widely accepted and more specific in meaning: "Advertising is the non-personal communication of information usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature about products, services or ideas by identified sponsors through the various media" (Bovee & Arens, 1992).

Attention should be paid to some elements in the definition: a) advertising is non-personal, which means that it is not directed to individuals but group of people; b) advertising is paid for by sponsors; c) advertising is persuasive, which is intended to convince people that products, services, or ideas will benefit them; d) sponsors can be identified; e) various media are used, such as newspapers, radio and television, etc. (Zhen, 2005).

According to different standards, advertising can be classified in many different ways. In terms of its ultimate objective, advertising can be classified as commercial advertising and non-commercial advertising. In terms of its direct objective, advertising can be classified as product advertising and corporate adverting. In terms of its coverage, advertising can be classified as international advertising, national advertising, regional advertising and local adverting. In terms of its forms, advertising can be classified as print advertising (on newspapers, magazines, billboards, outdoor signs, etc.) or multimedia advertising (on television, radio, Internet, etc.).

With the rapid development of commodity economy, science and technology, we have entered the era of information and digitization. Advertising, as the information carrier of a large number of goods, plays an important role in our life. It generally refers to commercial advertising. In a broad sense, all those who disseminate social and personnel dynamics, cultural entertainment and propaganda concepts to the public belong to the category of advertising. To put it simple, advertising, that is, publicity, is the main body of the media with the help of certain media intentionally to transmit information to the public means of propaganda. Today's advertising media have taken a variety of forms.

After a review of all the above definitions, combining with the development of advertising in the current situation, advertisements could be defined as follows: an advertisement is a piece of paid information transmitted from its producers (including advertisers, advertising designers and manufacturers of the products or providers of the services) to the receivers (including potential buyers which are the main target, the existing consumers and the unspecific public who may influence the consumption behavior of others) in the forms of oral, verbal, pictorial, audio and video etc. through mass media such as radios, newspapers and magazines, billboards, televisions, internet and cellphones etc. with the purposes of persuading the potential consumers, building the awareness of the brands and products and advocating a lifestyle and value preference.

The Functions of Advertising

The primary objective of advertising is to persuade. To achieve this objective, different ways may be used. Generally speaking, advertising may have the following functions: a) the identification function. Advertising identifies a product and make it different from other products; this creates an awareness of the product and provides consumers with a basis to choose the advertised product over others. This function includes the ability of advertising to make a product different from others so that it has its own unique identity or personality. b) the information function. Advertising carries information about the product, including its attributes, its location of sale, c) the persuasion function. Advertising induces consumers to try new products and suggests the reuses of the product as well as its new usages. To fully realize the persuasion function, advertising must be often tailored to emphasize the benefits that are important and meaningful for a particular group of consumers or a particular use of the product.

From what is mention above, it can be known that advertising plays an important part in people's daily life. With the rapid development of economy, there will be a larger and larger demand for advertising and no doubt a higher and higher requirement toward the quality of advertising. Therefore, advertising should not only meet the requirements to provide information but also be produced in a more scientific and artistic way. It can be foreseen that advertising in the future may become more informative, more artistic and more widely-accepted by the audience.

Cosmetics Advertising

Beauty products advertisements bombard consumers on a daily basis. They give promises to consumers that certain product can make consumers look younger or that foundation can take years off their appearance. Beauty products advertising often seek to consumers of the product value or even its necessity for the consumer's well-being and self-image. The effectiveness of cosmetics advertising depends on its ability of convincing consumer that the product can improve their appearance. With this purpose, cosmetics advertisements may use different methods to persuade individuals to make purchases.

Definition of Cosmetics

Cosmetics are quite common and essential in the daily life for not only women but also the other sex. According to Wikipedia, cosmetics are chemical industrial products or fine chemicals that can be used across the surface of the human body by smearing, spraying, or other similar methods, to parts of body such as skin, hair, toenails, lips, teeth, etc., for the purpose of cleaning, maintaining, beautifying, modifying and changing the appearance, or correcting the smell of the human body and keeping in good condition. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosmetics) According to this definition, the broad scope of

cosmetics also includes shampoo, toothpaste and other daily necessities for cleaning skin, hair, lips and teeth, as well as cosmetics. Narrow sense cosmetics mainly refer to some beauty cosmetics, including skincare products, such as washing facial milk, skin care lotion, moisturizer, essence lotion, muscle base lotion, eye cream, facial cream, BB cream and isolation cream, etc., and makeups such as makeup front milk, foundation, eyeliner, eye shadow, blush, lipstick, lip honey, lipstick, nail polish, etc., It can be seen that cosmetics cover a wide range and are closely related to people's lives.

Definition of Cosmetics Advertising

Among the diversified advertisements, cosmetics advertisements are an essential category, which are in huge in quantities and varied in genres. According to Wikipedia, cosmetics advertisements or cosmetic advertising is the promotion of cosmetics and beauty products by the cosmetics industry through a variety of media. The advertising campaigns are usually aimed at women wishing to improve their appearance, commonly to increase physical attractiveness and reduce the signs of ageing. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosmetics_advertising) The obsession with youth and beauty sends thousands of people to stores searching for a quick fix. The beauty industry relies on all kinds of persuasion techniques to sell products. Brands like to rely on celebrities to sell their beauty products. "If the product is good enough for her, it's good enough for me." This philosophy is often the impetus behind advertisements for makeup, skin products, and hair products. Celebrities can also help to build brand awareness through promoting products as consumers believe the product is used by the celebrity and this can affect consumer's decision making.

In recent years, cosmetics advertising has been further developed, and the advertising text has been closely combined with the product concept, which is no longer a traditional introduction of product function, but instead it transmits to consumers a symbol and value concept of "confidence" "beauty" and "being yourself". These words transmit to consumers a concept of self-consumption, self-worth and self-awareness, perfectly transmitting the concept of independence, self-confidence and independent fashion of products to consumers, so that the consumers can satisfy their spiritual culture while purchasing the cosmetics.

The Development of Semiotics

Semiotics, as a useful method for study, has a long history. The ideas of semiotics can date back to 4 to 5 century B.C., when the ancient Greek medicine scientist Hippocrates (460-377 B.C.) termed the symptoms of patients as signs. The word "sign" is originated from a Greek word "semeion", which was related to the medicine science. Then people termed all the symptoms of diseases as signs; when the doctor diagnosed the patients, he could find out the cause of the disease by mastering these "signs".

The Earliest Study of Semiotics

The earliest study of semiotics was started in the field of philosophy. Both Plato (427-347 B.C.) and Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) once discussed about the question of semiotics. In the dialogues of Plato, some discussions about semiotics could be seen. For example, in Cratylus, a debate was shown about the relation between the object and the name used to signify that object. Aristotle also discussed the question of semiotics. In his work Rhetoric, he put forward the proposal to distinguish the meaningful signs from the meaningless ones. After Aristotle, school of Stoicism, Epicureanism, and Skepticism had a lot of descriptive study of the question of signs.

Modern Semiotics

The modern semiotics was born at the beginning of twentieth century. There are two origins of modern semiotics. One is Ferdinand de Saussure (1983), a Swiss linguist; the other is Charles Sanders Floyd (1997), an American philosopher. They put forward the idea of establishing the science of signs almost at the same time. Both Saussure and Pierce are considered as the founders of semiotics.

Saussure's Semiology

Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss Linguist, is characterized as the founder of European semiology (semiotics). In the Course in General Linguistics, Saussure (1983) proposed that "It is possible to conceive of a science which studies the role of signs as part of social life. It would form a part of social psychology, and hence of general psychology, we shall call it semiology. I would investigate the nature of signs and the laws governing them. Since it does not exist, one cannot say for certain that it will exist. But it has a right to exist, a place ready for it in advance. Linguistics is only one branch of this general science".

Saussure gave his definition of semiotics as "a science that studies the life of signs within a society is conceivable; it would be a part of social psychology and consequently of general psychology" Hawkes (1977). Saussure suggested that language is a unique system of signs to express concepts, which maintains the most important status in the whole system of signs.

The structuralist linguistics and semiotics put forward by Saussure discuss the arbitrariness and sociality of symbols, deformability and immutability, synchronic and diachronic relations, syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations, the value theory of linguistic symbols and the unity of symbolic differences and signifiers contained in them, which provide a very important perspective and have important guiding significance for the analysis of linguistic symbols and even general symbols.

Peirce's Triadic Division of Signs

Charles Sanders Peirce, an American philosopher, is considered as the founder of American semiotics. {Floyd, 1997 #39@@@author-year} defined semiotics as "the study of signs. A sign is anything which determines something else (its interpretant) to refer an object to which itself refers (its object) in the same way, the interpretant becoming in turn a sign".

Pierce did not, as Saussure did, define sign as a sound image, or try to distinguish or link it with language. For Pierce, the characteristic of pragmatism is function first: the meaning of a sign is the effect of a sign, so what can produce a sign meaning can be classified as a sign to Pierce. Such a definition avoids any inconvenience that might arise from defining signs according to their own attributes.

In addition to this pragmatic semiotic view of functional effect coming first, Pierce's most influential semiotic view belongs to his proposal of triadic model of signs and sign composition theory. The triadic model of signs of Pierce is not based on the attributes of the signs themselves, but on the representation function of the signs, according to the relationship between the signs, interpret ants and the objects they represent, the signs are divided into three categories: icon (which are based on similarity to objects), index (which have causal or

existential associations with the objects involved), symbols (which are neither similar nor related with the objects involved but through a rigid regulation made by the user that relates to the subject only through social custom). This kind of triadic division, which is different from Saussure's dyadic method, is also reflected in Pierce's analysis of the composition of signs: all signs are based on the triadic model of "represent amen - object - interpret ant". Since both the sign and interpret ant can be an idea or meaning, there is a Pierce's famous process of infinite semiosis: signs produce interpret ant, which will act as sign in the next sign process, producing a more powerful interpret ant, which continues indefinitely.

Both Saussure and Pierce had built a foundation of the establishment of semiotics and made a great contribution to develop semiotics into an independent science. However, Saussure's understanding of semiotics is mainly based on the social functions of signs while Pierce focuses more on the logic functions of signs.

Morris's Semiotics

In 1946, Charles W. Morris (1946), an American semiotician, defined semiotics as a triad, which consists of syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Syntax mainly studies the interrelation of the signs regardless of meaning and social factors. Semantics mainly studies the relation between signs and the objects to which they apply and the meaning of signs. Pragmatics studies the relation between the system of signs and humans as well as their use of signs. Scholars who study linguistic signs speak highly of Morris's classification, which they have applied to the study of intercultural communication, literature theory, translation and other subjects. Therefore, the triad is still one of the most influential and widely accepted branches of semiotic study in the world.

The Study of Semiotics as an Independent Science

Though the pioneers of semiotics are Saussure and Pierce, and many other semiologists had put forward some significant semiotic ideas, the study of semiotics as an independent science initiated in France in 1960's. In 1964, the book Elements de Serraiologie by Roland Barthes (2003), the French sociologist, was published, which indicates that semiotics had become an independent science, and the theory of semiotics had come into being. What's more, Roland Barthes, who further improved Saussure's semiotic theory, combined semiotics to the study of mass culture. In this book, he pointed out that a sign includes two systems. The first system consists of a signifier and a signified; in the second system, the first system as a whole becomes the signifier of the second system, and extends to a new signified, which becomes the connotation of signs.

This book soon gained the attention of the western world. In several years, semiotics as an academic campaign was widely spread regardless of the political barriers. In 1969, the International Association of Semiotic Studies (IASS) was set up in Paris, and from then on, many other countries started to establish their associations of semiotic studies. Today, the IASS has more than 20 members. It can be said that the study of semiotics has become an international trend.

During the past decades, the study of semiotics has extended from linguistic signs to non-linguistic signs. Many theoretical systems of semiotics have been established and adopted in other subjects, and a great number of sub-semiotics have come into being, including linguistic semiotics, animal linguistics, medical linguistics, musical linguistics, etc. In France and the U.S. where semiotics is most commonly studied, the methodology of semiotics has been used in natural science, social science and almost all the other subjects. It can be stated

that the semiotics "opens a new approach to the study of many other patterns of behavior". Of course, the field of advertisement is no exception. Semiotics is undoubtedly an effective tool to shed some light into the study of advertising for offering some insights for advertisers, manufacturers, consumers and also researchers. (Saussure, 1983).

Previous Studies on Advertising from the Perspective of Semiotics

Nowadays, the study of semiotics keeps developing. With its combination of different fields, semiotics provides them with a new perspective and direction, and thus has a greater and greater influence on them. The study of signs in advertising is also a research field of semiotics. In advertising, signs are fully made use of. It can be said that when people read advertisements, they are actually reading signs. Thus, it is necessary to analyze the semiotic phenomenon in advertising.

There are more and more scholars applying semiotics to study advertising, with their research results gaining more and more public attention. The study of advertising from the perspective of semiotics started early in the western academic world, thus the result is very fruitful. For example, Roland Barthes is the first scholar to apply semiotics to the study of advertising. The book The Rhetoric of Image was published by Roland Barthes (2003), which is a classic text on advertising from the perspective of semiotics, because it provides a conceptual frame work for the study of the relation between words and images. Therefore, Barthes is considered as the first scholar to apply semiotics to the study of advertising.

Barthes holds that in advertising there are three kinds of messages, namely the linguistic message, which consists of the name of the product and the linguistic commentary, the non-coded iconic message, in which the photograph image denotes the object and has literal message, and the symbolic message, which refers to the picture forming the connotation of the image of the product. He also recognized that the linguistic text and picture work simultaneously and produce connotations in different process. Barthes believed that communication is achieved by the process of message encoding and decoding. He suggested that the audience can derive different information from the same advertisement, which is his main contribution to the study of advertising. However, there are some problems in his research method that the decoding of the connotation depends on the cultural background and experience of the audience. Because of their different culture knowledge, the audience's interpretations are likely to be different as well. Therefore, as a consequence of over-emphasizing the connotation of advertising, neither linguistic message nor symbolic message can avoid ambiguity and subjectivity.

Baudrillard (1998), the French thinker, inherited the criticism and understanding of Roland Barthes on the consumption society and put forward the concept of signs consumption. Signs consumption refers to the process during which the mass audience not only consume the value of the product, but also consume the concept and meaning of reputation, status, taste and personality, namely the additional signs value of the product. Hence Semiotics has developed from theory into practice.

Hall (1999), the representative of English cultural study, applied semiotic theory to study the ideological nature of advertising. Hall put forward the theory of encoding and decoding, which make use of the analytical approach of semiotics to analyze how the meaning of signs are created, and the modes for encoding and decoding. He also emphasized on the importance of semiotics in analyzing the ideological nature.

Williamson (1978) in her book Decoding Advertisements: Ideology and Meaning in Advertising proposed the phrase of decoding advertisements for the first time. She analyzed magazine advertisements, and signs and symbols in use, and explained how they work. However, she did not analyze the whole advertising system because she was only interested and focused on how to uncover the mechanisms by which meaning is created in advertisements.

John (1990), the English media scholar, in his book Introduction of Communication Studies combined semiotics with media theory and had a very detailed discussion on the television advertisements. Fiske agreed that the mass audience consumes the product offered to them with thinking. Thus, the audience with different social backgrounds and identities will receive the texts differently. He is considered as one of the first scholars applying semiotics to the study of media texts.

Gou (1994) put forward the idea of applying semiotic approach to study the design of advertising language, which indicates that Chinese scholars had started to apply semiotics to study advertising. But he only emphasized on signs characteristics of the advertising language and seldom analyzed advertising texts and their meaning. Wang (1994) discussed the relation between semiotics and advertising. He introduced the relation between semiotics and human culture, and discussed about semiotics and the advertising language. But he did not specify how signs are applied to the advertising language and what on earth their relation is. Thus, the semiotic approach is not fully applied.

At this period, there are many articles analyzing the advertising elements with signs characteristics, such as trademarks and texts. However, the semiotic approach is not fully applied, and texts are not studied deeply enough.

Wu (1997) analyzed the common system and structure of signs in advertising by analyzing the advertising phenomenon with the semiotic approach applied in the whole process; he also studied the structure of the system of signs and recognized the value of signs in advertising. What's more, he pointed out that when consumers buy the product or service, they actually buy signs. His study can be considered as one of the milestones in China, because Wu applied Roland Barthes' semiotic theory to advertising and also introduced his concept of signs consumption to mainland China. However, his study only analyzes advertising text, and seldom discusses the semiotic phenomenon in advertising.

Li (1998) analyzed the characteristics, types and functions of signs in advertising in his book. Li proposed that signs in advertising mainly possess the functions to inform, evaluate and encourage. However, he did not specify how their functions and characteristics are bestowed from the perspective of semiotics. And no case studies were involved. Li (2004) put forward the concept of advertising semiotics, which means that the study of advertising from the perspective of semiotics in China was pushed one step further. Zhao (2009) defined the definition of signs consumption in the consumption society and proposed that advertising is a system of signs which makes the audience trapped in advertising without notice.

From what is mentioned above, it is clear that previous scholars have long been applying semiotics to study advertising, and it can be seen that the analysis of advertising from the perspective of semiotics witnesses a rapid development. And studies on advertising texts and consumption ideology are abundant. There are many studies applying semiology or semiotics to analyze advertising. However, most of the studies on advertising are based on the communication field of semiotics. Moreover, Scholars often apply the semiotics as a whole or

Saussurean semiology to study advertising. Many scholars applied the basic semiotic theory to analyze advertising texts; some other scholars applied Barthes' theory of myth to analyze the ideology of advertising. What's more, the study of signs consumption in advertising could also be found. However, a semiotic analysis in the field of cosmetics advertisement is seldom found. Therefore, it remains a relative new question to study.

The Application of Semiotics on Cosmetics Advertising

With the development of cosmetics advertising, there are more and more scholars showing interests in studying the relation between semiotics and cosmetics advertising. When studying the application of linguistic and visual signs in cosmetics advertisements, structural semiotics, value theory of signs, myth theory, cultural semiotics and visual semiotics can be referred to. Semiotics is a very useful methodological tool for analyzing the linguistic and visual information because the thinking processes it proposes are parallel to the interpretive processes used in creating and understanding language and visuals. It offers a range of tools for looking at advertising language and visuals carefully.

Semiology offers a very full box of analytical tools for extracting linguistic signs and taking a visual apart and tracing how it works in relation to broader systems of meaning. The most important tool in the semiotic box, though, is the "sign"; semiology means "the study of signs". Semiology has an elaborate analytical vocabulary for describing how signs make sense. The terms, including sign, connotation, denotation, syntagmatic analysis, paradigmatic analysis, code and myths, could be used to better analyze signs in cosmetics advertisements. And Peirce's theory of icon, index and symbol could be used to study the production of meaning in the visuals of the advertisements.

Previous Studies on Cosmetics Advertising from the Perspective of Semiotics

In recent years, there are many studies of advertising from the perspective of semiotics, and the result is very fruitful. Many articles are published in which semiotic approach is commonly applied. With the development of the study, semiotic theory is more closely combined with advertising, and the research method is developed from signs interpretation into diversified ways. The analysis of advertising from the perspective of semiotics witnesses a rapid development. And studies on advertising texts and consumption ideology are abundant. However, it is relatively less to focus on certain categories of advertisements, especially cosmetics advertisements, from the perspective of semiotics. Therefore, it is necessary to make a semiotic analysis of cosmetics advertisement.

The Necessity of Analysis of Cosmetics Advertising from the Perspective of Semiotics

Semiotics is indeed one of the useful methods to probe into the interpretation of advertisements. But by going through the related literature, it is discovered that although the study of semiotics has entered a prosperous era, the study of theoretical semiotics is lack in the support of sufficient and effective practical cases; on the other hand, the analysis and study of signs of advertisements belong obviously to the fields of economics, mass media, information etc., or it is just case studies focusing on certain products.

Cosmetics are a major expenditure for many women, with the cosmetics industry grossing around 7 billion dollars a year, according to a 2008 YWCA report. 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. Therefore, women all over the world are obsessed with cosmetics. They spend billions of dollars every year on cosmetics to make themselves younger and prettier. Are cosmetics really so magical that they can achieve what they have promised such as anti-aging? Or is it just a tricky art of the signs in cosmetics advertisement?

Thus, it is absolutely necessary to analyze the semiotic factors behind cosmetics advertising specifically. On the one hand, it can provide some guidance on how to establish effective cosmetics advertisements. The analysis of the semiotic phenomenon behind cosmetics advertising intends to enhance people's understanding of the nature of cosmetics signs, types of signs, and the application of semiotic theory in cosmetics advertising, thus may provide some enlightenment for advertisers as to how to choose appropriate signs in cosmetics advertising. By unveiling why some signs take effect in cosmetics advertisements and gain popularity while others fail and cause a great controversy, it may provide some suggestions for cosmetics advertisers on how to choose the signs that are widely understood and accepted by the audience. On the other hand, it could also shed some light for consumers on how to understand cosmetics advertisements appropriately by helping the consumers to read the advertisements critically to get the needed information and avoid being lured by the alluring and multifarious advertisements.

All the previous studies focus little on cosmetics advertisements from the perspective of semiotics. Therefore, it is essential to make a semiotic analysis of cosmetics advertisement. From a theoretical perspective, this may probe into aspects of semiotics and its viewpoints in the cosmetics advertisement field; from a practical perspective, this is a good application of theory into reality which could help the consumers unveil the mysterious coat of cosmetics advertisement and get familiar with mode of functioning of cosmetics advertisement signs, which provide new inspirations and ways of thinking for interpreting cosmetics advertisements and help consumers get a rational consumption concept out of the maze of advertisements.

After all the clarification, we will not only have a deeper understanding of the signs applied in the cosmetics advertisements, but also obtain a very useful tool to understand signs in other types of advertisements and other fields which are full of signs. And importantly, we will be familiar with the process of production of meaning in the signs and know how to interpret signs.

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