

## Semiotics Analysis of Gojek Advertisements on Instagram

**Mohammad Irfan Maulana**

*Faculty of Adab and Humanities, State Islamic University of Sunan Gunung Djati, Indonesia*  
irfanm991@gmail.com

DOI: 10.20884/1.jli.2022.13.2.6491

---

### Article History:

First Received:

### ABSTRACT

31/7/2022

Final Revision:

28/12/2022

Available online:

31/12/2022

*The rapid development of the era has made changes in various aspects of life, including the way of communication. One of the things the company does to communicate its message to its target audience is through advertising on Instagram social media. This article was created to analyze the signifiers and signified in advertisements, especially those published by Gojek on Instagram on 15 and 17 October 2021 using the Ferdinand de Saussure sign approach. This study uses qualitative methods to conduct research in collecting and analyzing data. The study finds 35 signifiers in 3 ads published on 15 October and 13 signifiers in 2 ads published on 17 October. October 2021.*

*Keywords: Sign; signifier; signified; Gojek; advertisements*

---

## INTRODUCTION

Communication is currently developing so rapidly and the progress of various media is inevitable. Almost all parts of human life are directly related to the development of communication, which leads to changes in the new order and the development of information technology. This development is not only in the realm of problems or discourse but also leads to reality.

With the development of information technology marked by the birth of various media, there has been a revolution and change in the new order of human life. The communication process that used to be face-to-face, then developed into a more effective and efficient mass communication that can reach and involve many people.

Advertising is one of the promotional media that can be used to send messages to audiences (Kotler et al., 2016). It aims to shape and change the behavior of consumers or society. One of the functions of advertising is a social function. Advertising influences the emergence of new cultures such as creating consumerism, new social status, pop culture and others (Kaid. Lynda Lee & Holtz-Bacha, 2006). It is also one of the media that is able to construct people's minds.

Based on the explanation above, the writer will conduct an in-depth study of the signs and markers and their meaning in advertisements on Instagram conducted by Gojek.

The selection of the above study topics was based on the following considerations. First, knowing what markers are in Gojek image ads on Instagram. Second, knowing what markers are

in Gojek image ads on Instagram. Third, the meaning of the sign in the Gojek image ad on Instagram.

To limit the topic above, this study will only focus on several aspects, namely a) markers in Gojek image advertisements on Instagram, b) markers in Gojek image advertisements on Instagram, and c) the meaning of signs in Gojek image advertisements on Instagram.

To examine the problems above, the writer uses the semiotic theory of Ferdinand de Saussure. Saussure's semiotics are more aimed at linguistic semiotics, also called communicative semiotics. In principle, communication semiotics is an interpretation of the semiotic phenomenon as a language that supports the use of society. Ferdinand de Saussure states, "The linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound-image" (Saussure, 1916). A sign consists of two elements, a signifier (a concept) and a signified (a sound-image), and this system is called a sign. Therefore, the sign system can function according to certain abilities and is influenced by the cultural background that supports the community to make and use the sign.

## **MATERIALS AND METHOD**

While related to the study (or research) method, the writer uses qualitative methods to conduct research in collecting and analyzing data as stated by Creswell that qualitative research examines the meaning that emerges from the data and is often presented in words. Qualitative research aims to find patterns that emerge after observation, documentation, and analysis of research topics (Creswell, 2007).

In analyzing the meaning of text and images in Gojek's ads on Instagram, the author uses advertisements published on October 15 and 17, 2021. Ads are obtained through one of Facebook's features called Facebook Ad Library. Gojek published an advertisement with its new slogan which reads "extra protection" on October 15 as many as advertisements are still running today. On October 17th, Gojek published an advertisement promoting Goshop, one of Gojek's products, with 2 advertisements still running to this day. This study analyzes the meaning of text, images, and symbols in Gojek advertisements using Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic perspective. Saussure's sign theory emphasizes internal structures aimed at cognitive thought processes or the activities of the human mind in compiling physical (material) or intangible (abstract) signs from the environment or surroundings. Among them is the structure of linguistic signs in the language system that allows them to function as humans and communicate with each other. Saussure's theory is considered a proponent of the idea that "language does not reflect reality but constructs it"

because we not only use language or give meaning to whatever is in the world of reality, but also to whatever is not in it. (Chandler in Yakin & Totu, 2014).

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

### *Signifier on Gojek Ads on Instagram*

There are different markers for each ad published by Gojek, even though they have the same ad theme.

### *Signifier on First Ad*

The first image ad is an advertisement published by Gojek regarding extra protection since October 15, 2021. This ad, which is not only published on Instagram, but on other platforms, provides information with clear text and an image of an online motorcycle taxi driver presented with other elements such as syringes, masks, vaccine certificates, and barriers between drivers and passengers. In addition, there is also a Gojek logo in the lower right corner with the text "extra protection".

**Figure 1.** Gojek advertisement on October 15, 2021



There are several signifiers, both in the form of text and images

**Table 1.** Signifiers and signified on Gojek advertisement on October 15, 2021

Signifier	Signified
	<p>Green background with vignette effect. This effect makes the reader focus his gaze towards the center or lighter part. The green color also symbolizes creative intelligence (Singh &amp; Srivastava, 2011).</p>
	<p>The headline " <i>SUDAH DIVAKSINASI, MASIH EKSTRA PROKES JUGA</i> " Headlines are made larger than other font sizes in the ad. This is so that the reader's eyes can be directly fixed on the headline. This is as Bell said that the headline itself serves to attract readers' attention and provoke them to read everything in the ad (Jeganathan &amp; Szymkowiak, 2020). The headline here provides the main information to readers that Gojek drivers continue to carry out health protocols even though they have been vaccinated.</p>
	<p>The sub-headline "<i>menjaga kebersihan di tiap orderan.</i>" The sub-headline has a smaller font size than the headline because it serves to explain the headline (Berkman &amp; Gibson in Leonidou et al., 2006). The sub-headline here emphasizes that Gojek maintains hygiene in every order through drivers who have been vaccinated and follow health protocols.</p>
	<p>The slogan "<i>proteksi ekstra</i>". This slogan emphasizes the word "ekstra" by making the font size slightly larger, the typeface and color of the letters different from the word "proteksi". This slogan emphasizes the sense</p>

---

of security that Gojek passengers get. This is done as one aspect to get the reader's attention (Chellam & Mahalaxmi, 2017).



A man holds a cell phone wearing a mask, helmet, and green jacket, and has the Gojek logo on it. And the sleeves of the jacket are lifted up so that the sleeves are visible.



The injection and the small medication tube are connected by a dotted line towards the man's arm above. Indicates that the Gojek driver has been vaccinated. A dotted line leads to the right arm because the vaccination was done on the person's right arm.



A separator between driver and passenger. The dotted line leading to the shoulder indicates that this divider is attached to the shoulder like a bag. This can also be seen by the presence of 2 ropes on the separator.



The mask image indicates that Gojek drivers always wear masks. The type of mask displayed is a duckbill that is in accordance with health protocols.



Image of vaccination certificate with dotted line towards cell phone. This indicates that the Gojek driver already has a vaccine certificate which is always carried on his cellphone for certain needs.

---



Gojek logo with a mask symbol that resembles a shield. The mask indicates that the health protocol is implemented by Gojek and the shape that resembles a shield indicates that Gojek has the intention to protect its passengers.

Overall, this Gojek image ad informs its readers that Gojek drivers have implemented health protocols even though they have received vaccinations. Of course, this will make readers feel confident and safe to use Gojek services, especially in the midst of this COVID-19 pandemic. This advertisement also shows how Gojek continues to implement more health protocols with the condition of the declining number of COVID-19 patients.

### *Signifiers on Second Ad*

The second image ad is an ad with the same theme as the previous ad. By promoting a new feature, namely extra protection. The ad is displayed with text that says “extra protection” is bigger than the text below it, namely “maintaining hygiene in every order”. In addition, there is a visual element similar to the previous advertisement, namely an online motorcycle taxi driver with other supporting elements such as a mask, thermometer, 36 degrees temperature, a shopping bag that says gofood, a motorcycle, helmet glass, and 2 sprayers.

**Figure 2.** Gojek advertisement on October 15, 2021



The following are the signifiers and signifieds contained in the ad:

**Table 2.** Signifiers and signified on Gojek advertisement on October 15, 2021

Signifiers	Signified
	<p>Green background with vignette effect. This effect makes the reader focus his gaze towards the center or lighter part. The green color also symbolizes creative intelligence (Singh &amp; Srivastava, 2011)</p>
	<p>The headline, which is also the slogan of the security system implemented by Gojek, is more emphasized. Slogans that aim to be easy to remember (Chellam &amp; Mahalaxmi, 2017), are emphasized more because of their position as headlines.</p>
	<p>The sub-headline reads “<i>menjaga kebersihan di tiap orderan.</i>” The sub-headline has a smaller font size than the headline because it serves to explain the headline (Berkman &amp; Gibson in Leonidou et al., 2006). The sub-headline here emphasizes that Gojek maintains hygiene in every order through drivers who have been vaccinated and follow health protocols.</p>
	<p>Gojek logo with a mask symbol that resembles a shield. The mask indicates that the health protocol is implemented by Gojek and the shape that resembles a shield indicates that Gojek has the intention to protect its passengers.</p>



Gojek drivers have jackets and helmets bearing the Gojek logo. This indicates that Gojek drivers use complete attributes in carrying out their duties.



Gofood logo paper bag. This indicates that Gojek drivers also carry gofood orders, not just passengers.



Helmet glasses, indicating that the equipment used by Gojek drivers complies with standards



The mask image indicates that Gojek drivers always wear masks. The type of mask displayed is a disposable medical mask that is in accordance with health protocols.



The image of a thermo gun with a dotted line pointing to the forehead indicates that the Gojek driver has a normal temperature by checking the forehead



A separator between driver and passenger. The dotted line leading to the shoulder indicates that this divider is attached to the shoulder like a bag. This can also be seen by the presence of 2 ropes on the separator.



The injection and the small medication tube are connected by a dotted line towards the man's arm above. Indicates that the Gojek driver has been vaccinated. There is a dotted line leading to the left arm because the



---

vaccination was done on the person's left arm.

---



The white shadow of the head with the number 36 degrees indicates that the driver has a body temperature below 36 degrees Celsius. But the dotted line leads to the food bag

---



Red adhesive that says gofood with a dotted line leading to the food bag. This indicates that every order brought in a bag from Gofood is still safe because it can be tightly sealed with a special adhesive. This is to keep food safe from the corona virus

---



Spray drawing with plus logo and dotted line leading to the motor. The spray represents a disinfectant. With the dotted line leading to the motorbike, it indicates that the motorbike used by the Gojek driver has been sprayed with disinfectant. Ethanol and isopropanol contained in disinfectants are effective against viruses, including the corona virus (Al-Sayah, 2020).

---



Image of a bottle with a plus logo and a dotted line leading to the hand. This indicates a hand sanitizer. This indicates that Gojek drivers always use hand sanitizers in carrying out their duties, as a step to keep their hands clean from viruses, including the corona virus.

---

Overall, the image advertisement published by Gojek is almost the same as the previous advertisement. The difference is in the more complete health protocol that is applied to this one ad. There is also an oddity where the body temperature image has broken lines that are connected to the food, not to the body of the Gojek driver.

### ***Signifiers on Third Ad***

The third image ad published by Gojek on October 15 is still promoting its extra protection features. Similar to previously published ads, this ad has large text and is spliced with smaller text



below it. In addition, there is also extra protection text and the Gojek logo on the bottom right. The visual elements are not much different from the previous advertisements, namely a temperature of 36 degrees, hand sanitizer, thermometer, and special adhesive that says gofood. What distinguishes it from the previous two advertisements is the visual element which only shows a shopping bag with a logo and text that says gofood, with a hand holding it.

**Figure 3.** Gojek advertisement on October 15, 2021



The following are the signifiers and signifieds contained in the ad:

**Table 3.** Signifiers and signified on Gojek advertisement on October 15, 2021

Signifiers	Signified
	<p>Green background with vignette effect. This effect makes the reader focus his gaze towards the center or lighter part. The green color also symbolizes creative intelligence (Singh &amp; Srivastava, 2011).</p>
	<p>The headline reads “<i>DI MANA ADA PESANAN, DI SITU ADA PROTOKOL KESEHATAN</i>”. This headline indicates that the health protocol is always applied by Gojek in every food brought by the driver.</p>

Menjaga kebersihan di tiap orderan.

The sub-headline reads “*menjaga kebersihan di tiap orderan.*” The sub-headline has a smaller font size than the headline because it serves to explain the headline (Berkman & Gibson in Leonidou et al., 2006). The sub-headline here emphasizes that Gojek maintains hygiene in every order through drivers who have been vaccinated and follow health protocols.

PROTEKSI  
EKSTRA

The slogan reads “*proteksi ekstra*”. This slogan emphasizes the word "extra" by making the font size slightly larger, the typeface and color of the letters different from the word "protection". This slogan emphasizes the sense of security that Gojek passengers get. This is done as one aspect to get the reader's attention (Chellam & Mahalaxmi, 2017).



The image of a hand carrying a paper bag with the gofood logo and text, indicates that Gojek not only provides extra protection for passengers, but also food orders.



Image of a bottle with a plus logo and a dotted line leading to the hand. This indicates a hand sanitizer. This indicates that Gojek drivers always use hand sanitizers in carrying out their duties, as a step to keep their hands clean from viruses, including the corona virus.



The image of a thermo gun with a dotted line pointing towards the hand indicates that the Gojek driver has a normal temperature by checking on hand. Checking the temperature on the wrist is certainly more stable than measuring the temperature on the forehead (Chen et al., 2020).



The white shadow of the head with the number 36 degrees indicates that the driver has a body temperature below 36 degrees Celsius. But the dotted line leads to the food bag.



Red adhesive that says gofood with a dotted line leading to the food bag. This indicates that every order brought in a bag from Gofood is still safe because it can be tightly sealed with a special adhesive. This is to keep food safe from the corona virus.



Gojek logo with a mask symbol that resembles a shield. The mask indicates that the health protocol is implemented by Gojek and the shape that resembles a shield indicates that Gojek has the intention to protect its passengers.

---

In the third advertisement, through its advertisement, Gojek wants to inform readers that extra health protocols will be carried out on every food brought by the driver. As the ad's subheadline emphasizes, it aims to make buyers feel safe when ordering food through Gojek in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### ***Signifiers on Fourth Ad***

The Gojek ad, which was published on October 17, 2021, has a different theme and purpose from the previous ad. By promoting a discount on one of its products called goshop. By using text


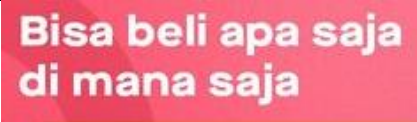

and visual elements in this ad, To the left of the image, all text is displayed with some text in larger and bolder font sizes. On the right, a visual element showing an online motorcycle taxi driver carrying 2 shopping bags in his hand while waving, fills half of the advertisement image.

**Figure 4.** Gojek Advertisement on October 17, 2021



The following are the signifiers and signifieds contained in the ad:

**Table 4.** Signifiers and signified on Gojek advertisement on October 17, 2021

Signifiers	Signified
	<p>It can be seen there is 1 color that dominates, which is pink. Pink itself symbolizes joy (Singh &amp; Srivastava, 2011). The joy here can come from the driver himself, like the one in the picture, or from the consumer.</p>
	<p>The headline reads “<i>bisa beli apa saja di mana saja</i>”. This signifies as written, that buyers or users of the Goshop application can buy anything and anywhere. The headlines here have communicated things very well without any unnecessary information. Many headlines work well when they are not written at length (Gligorić et al., 2021).</p>
	<p>The text that says goshop is placed above the</p>

left and has the same font size as the headline. This indicates that the importance of the headline and product name is the same.



The body copy “*Diskon s.d. 30rb\**” and “*Kode promo: BELIYUK*”. Text size “*Diskon s.d.*” smaller than the number 30 and the acronym rb is written small. This indicates that there is an emphasis on the number. The numbers are there to inform readers that the discounts that buyers can get can reach 30 thousand rupiah. There is also a star near the acronym rb. This indicates that there is a note that Gojek, as the ad maker, wants to be notified of.

“*Kode promo: BELIYUK*” has a different font color and background from the text on it. This is done so that the reader's focus can shift after seeing the number 30 made the largest. In addition, the word “*BELIYUK*” is made in all capital letters. This is done so that users or buyers who want to use the promo are not confused whether they have to use a capital letter at the beginning or not.

---

\*S&K berlaku

The text “*\*S&K berlaku*”. T&C itself stands for terms and conditions. The text of the T&C applies here means that there are terms and conditions that apply to doing something. There is a small star to the left of the letter S that can refer to other stars in the ad. In this case, the star describes the 30k text in the middle of the ad image. That means, there are certain terms and conditions to get a discount of up to 30 thousand rupiah.

---



Image of a person wearing a green jacket, sitting on a motorbike waving and carrying two shopping bags, while looking at the reader. From the logo on the jacket and helmet, this is a picture of a Gojek driver. In this picture, the driver reads a red shopping bag which indicates that he is carrying a goshop order. This is because goshop has a red logo. The view and attitude of waving to the reader is made so that readers feel they are interacting directly with the Gojek driver, not just as an image. In addition, the driver also uses a Honda Vario 125 CBS ISS 2021 motorbike, which indicates that the Gojek driver uses a motorbike that is still suitable for driving.



Goshop logo. The shape of a red shopping bag. Shopping bags indicate that goshop is a place for people to shop.

In this advertisement, Gojek is promoting its promo code, namely BELIYUK by informing readers of what can be obtained from the promo, which is a discount of up to 30 thousand rupiah. This promo can be obtained with certain terms and conditions that must be met by application users or buyers who want to use the promo code. This ad also shows how Gojek drivers who carry goshop orders use proper driving equipment and vehicles so that orders can reach their destination smoothly.

### ***Signifiers on Fifth Ad***

Similar to the previous advertisement, the second Gojek advertisement published on October 17 also promotes discounts that can be obtained by application users for one of Gojek's products, namely Goshop. By combining 2 elements, namely text and visuals, this ad is slightly different from the previous ad, where the images look separate. In this ad image, the visual elements seem to blend with the rest of the image. This ad also doesn't feature an online motorcycle taxi driver, but a shopping bag full of goods, a hand, and a gadget.

**Figure 5.** Gojek advertisement on October 17, 2021



The following are the signifiers and signifieds contained in the ad:

**Table 5.** Signifiers and signified on Gojek advertisement on October 17, 2021

Signifiers	Signified
	<p>It can be seen there is 1 color that dominates, which is pink. Pink itself symbolizes joy (Singh &amp; Srivastava, 2011). The joy here can come from the driver himself, like the one in the picture, or from the consumer.</p>
	<p>The headline “<i>Bisa beli apa saja di mana saja</i>”. This signifies as written, that buyers or users of the Goshop application can buy anything and anywhere. The headlines here have communicated things very well without any unnecessary information. Many headlines work well when they are not written at length (Gligorić et al., 2021).</p>
	<p>The body copy reads “Diskon s.d. 30rb*” and “Kode promo: BELIYUK”. Text size “Diskon s.d.” smaller than the number 30 and the acronym rb is written small. This indicates that</p>



there is an emphasis on the number. The numbers are there to inform readers that the discounts that buyers can get can reach 30 thousand rupiah. There is also a star near the acronym rb. This indicates that there is a note that Gojek, as the ad maker, wants to be notified of.

“*Kode promo: BELIYUK*” has a different font color and background from the text on it. This is done so that the reader's focus can shift after seeing the number 30 made the largest. In addition, the word “*BELIYUK*” is made in all capital letters. This is done so that users or buyers who want to use the promo are not confused whether they have to use a capital letter at the beginning or not.

---

The logo for 'goshop' is displayed in white lowercase letters on a red rectangular background.

The text that says goshop is placed above the left and has the same font size as the headline. This indicates that the importance of the headline and product name is the same.

---

The text '\*S&K berlaku' is written in white on a red rectangular background.

The text “\*S&K”. T&C itself stands for terms and conditions. The text of the T&C applies here means that there are terms and conditions that apply to doing something. There is a small star to the left of the letter S that can refer to other stars in the ad. In this case, the star describes the 30k text in the middle of the ad image. That means, there are certain terms and conditions to get a discount of up to 30 thousand rupiah.

---



Image of a hand holding a shopping bag filled with various items, such as cooking utensils, beauty products, hobby products, automotive products, and more. This indicates that goshop, which is one of Gojek's products, is the place to shop for everything. All kinds of items can be found in goshop.

The red shopping bag represents the goshop bag because the logo of the goshop itself is a red shopping bag. This is emphasized by the goshop logo.

This shopping bag is in the form of a marker on Google Maps, and is above the cellphone. This means that customers can shop on Goshop from anywhere. This image also emphasizes the headline “You can buy anything anywhere”.

---

Overall, this Gojek ad is almost similar to the previous ad. With the headline, subheadline, and body text positioned in the same place, the difference is only in the subject of the two ads. In this ad, more emphasis is placed on information about the ease with which buyers or app users can shop.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the sign analysis that has been carried out through Saussure's semiotic approach on Gojek image ads published on 15 and 17 October 2021 on Instagram, there are 35 signifiers in 3 Gojek image advertisements published on 15 October and 13 signifiers in 2 Gojek image advertisements published on 17 October. October 2021. Then, it can be concluded that the messages that Gojek wants to convey, both about the security obtained with extra protection or about discounts of up to 30 thousand, are very informative and clear. The visual elements displayed are also not just decoration, but emphasize text messages so that readers can better understand the advertisements given.

## REFERENCES

- Al-Sayah, M. H. (2020). Chemical disinfectants of COVID-19: An overview. *Journal of Water and Health*, 18(5), 843–848. <https://doi.org/10.2166/wh.2020.108>
- Chellam, C., & Mahalaxmi, A. P. C. (2017). Advertising Slogan - It's Emphasis and Significance in Marketing. *International Research Journal of Management and Commerce*, 4(11), 37–46. [www.aarf.asia](http://www.aarf.asia),
- Chen, G., Xie, J., Dai, G., Zheng, P., Hu, X., Lu, H., Xu, L., Chen, X., & Chen, X. (2020). Validity of the Use of Wrist and Forehead Temperatures in Screening the General Population for COVID-19: A Prospective Real-World Study. *Iran J Public Health*, 49, 57–66. <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications, Ltd.
- Gligorić, K., Lifchits, G., West, R., & Anderson, A. (2021). Linguistic effects on news headline success: Evidence from thousands of online field experiments (Registered Report Protocol). *PLoS ONE*, 16(9 September). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0257091>
- Jeganathan, K., & Szymkowiak, A. (2020). Social Media Content Headlines and Their Impact on Attracting Attention. *Journal of Marketing and Consumer Behaviour in Emerging Markets*, 1/2020(10), 49–59. <https://doi.org/10.7172/2449-6634.jmcbem.2020.1.3>
- Kaid. Lynda Lee, & Holtz-Bacha, C. (2006). *The SAGE Handbook of Political Advertising- (2006)*. Sage Publications, Inc.
- Kotler, P., Kartajaya, H., & Setiawan, I. (2016). *Marketing 4.0: Moving from Traditional to Digital-Wiley (2016)*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Leonidou, L. C., Spyropoulou, S. A., Leonidou, C. N., & Reast, J. D. (2006). An Integrated Framework of Newspaper Advertising: A Longitudinal Analysis. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 22(7–8), 759–797. <https://doi.org/10.1362/026725706778612185>
- Saussure, F. de. (1916). *Course in General Linguistics* (C. Bally & A. Sechehaye, Eds.). THE PHILOSOPHICAL LIBRARY, INC .
- Singh, N., & Srivastava, S. K. (2011). Impact of Colors on The Psychology of Marketing-A Comprehensive Over View. *MANAGEMENT AND LABOUR STUDIES*, 36(2).
- Yakin, H. S. Mohd., & Totu, A. (2014). The Semiotic Perspectives of Peirce and Saussure: A Brief Comparative Study. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 155, 4–8. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.10.247>