UNVEILING GENDER PERFORMATIVITY THROUGH MAKE OVER ADVERTISEMENT: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRAK. Artikel ini membahas bagaimana performativitas gender dikonstruksi dan diperkuat dalam iklan produk kecantikan, khususnya pada iklan merek Make Over di Instagram periode 2023 hingga 2024. Dengan menggunakan teori performativitas gender karya Judith Butler dan kerangka Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) tiga dimensi dari Norman Fairclough, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana fitur linguistik, teknik diskursif, dan faktor sosial bekerja secara sinergis dalam membentuk serta memanipulasi pesan berkonotasi gender dalam pemasaran kecantikan modern. Melalui analisis wacana multimodal kritis, penelitian ini mengungkap cara bahasa, citra, dan petunjuk sosial dalam iklan tersebut menguatkan feminitas tradisional, meneguhkan norma budaya, serta mencerminkan struktur kekuasaan dan ideologi yang lebih luas dalam industri kecantikan. Temuan penelitian memberikan kontribusi teoretis dengan memperkuat gagasan Butler bahwa gender merupakan konstruksi sosial yang dipentaskan, sekaligus memperluas penerapan CDA dalam analisis wacana media. Secara praktis, studi ini menawarkan wawasan bagi para pengiklan, pelaku industri kecantikan, dan pembuat kebijakan untuk mendorong representasi gender yang lebih inklusif dan beragam dalam dunia periklanan, dengan tujuan menantang stereotip merugikan serta mengembangkan ideal kecantikan dan identitas yang lebih sehat di era digital.

Kata kunci: Discourse Analysis, Gender Performativity, Linguistic features, Advertisement, Beauty

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON GENDER PERFORMATIVITY IN MAKE OVER ADVERTISEMENT

ABSTRACT. This article investigates how gender performativity is constructed and reinforced in beauty product advertisements, specifically analyzing Make Over brand ads on Instagram from 2023 to 2024. Using Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity and Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, the study explores how linguistic features, discursive techniques, and social factors work together to shape and manipulate gendered messages in modern beauty marketing. Through a critical multimodal discourse analysis, the research shows how language, images, and social cues in these ads uphold traditional femininity, reinforce cultural norms, and reflect broader power structures and ideologies within the beauty industry. The findings contribute to theory by supporting Butler's idea of gender as a socially performed construct and broadening CDA's use in media discourse analysis. Practically, the study provides insights for advertisers, the beauty industry, and policymakers to promote more inclusive and diverse gender representations in advertising, aiming to challenge harmful stereotypes and foster healthier ideals of beauty and identity in the digital age.

Keywords: Discourse Analysis, Gender Performativity, Linguistic features, Advertisement, Beauty

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary digital era, the global beauty industry plays a crucial role in shaping and reinforcing gender norms through its pervasive advertising strategies. Particularly in Indonesia, where beauty standards remain deeply intertwined with cultural, historical, and media narratives, advertisements continue to promote idealized versions of femininity that resonate with both local and global audiences. Beauty product advertising, especially through platforms like Instagram, has become a powerful medium that not only sells products but also performs and enforces specific gender identities. This article explores how language and visuals within Make Over's beauty product advertisements construct,

normalize, and perpetuate the performance of gender—particularly femininity—as an ideological and cultural script.

This study seeks to investigate how linguistic features, discursive techniques, and social elements contribute to the construction of gender performativity within Make Over's advertisements. Drawing on Judith Butler's (1990) theory of gender performativity and Norman Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the study examines how language functions as a performative act that shapes consumer identities and social expectations. Through a critical multimodal approach, this research analyzes how advertisements function not only as marketing tools but also as cultural texts that reflect and reinforce dominant gender ideologies.

In doing so, it reveals the mechanisms through which beauty norms are internalized and reproduced in everyday discourse.

The concepts central to this study include *gender* performativity, which refers to the repeated enactment of gender through stylized acts (Butler, 1990), and critical discourse analysis, which deconstructs the relationship between language and social power (Fairclough, 1995). This study also considers discursive strategies such as personalization, hyperbole, emotive appeals, scientific legitimacy, and celebrity endorsement—all of which serve to naturalize and commodify femininity within capitalist consumer culture. These conceptual tools help illuminate the ways in which seemingly benign beauty advertisements are in fact powerful instruments of ideological reproduction.

This research is delimited to Instagram-based advertisements by the Indonesian beauty brand Make Over, published between June 2023 and March 2024. The selection of this brand and platform reflects their significance in shaping beauty culture among young, digitally engaged women in Indonesia. While the scope is intentionally narrow—focusing solely on advertisements directed at women and excluding other media or gender representations—this allows for a deep and focused analysis of one brand's discursive practices in constructing femininity. The study draws on visual and textual data to identify recurring linguistic patterns, social cues, and aesthetic strategies embedded in the advertisements.

A number of previous studies have explored the between language, gender, intersection advertising. For instance, Kaur et al. (2013) and Iqbal et al. (2014) employed Fairclough's CDA framework to examine how beauty advertisements in print media reinforce traditional gender norms. Similarly, Xu and Tan (2020) investigated the role of linguistic and visual elements in cosmetic advertisements using multimodal discourse analysis. While these studies provide important insights into the ideological function of advertising, few have focused specifically on Instagram-based campaigns in the Indonesian context or employed a critical multimodal approach informed by Butler's theory of performativity. This study aims to fill that gap by offering a focused case study of Make Over's advertisements using both linguistic and sociocultural analytical lenses.

The significance of this research lies in its contribution to the humanities, particularly in the fields of language, cultural studies, and gender discourse. By revealing how beauty advertisements construct and reinforce gender norms through language and imagery, this study deepens our

understanding of how social identities manufactured and manipulated in media texts. It contributes to linguistic and cultural studies by showing how discourse shapes not communication, but also perceptions of self and society. Moreover, it provides practical implications for advertisers, media creators, and policymakers to critically reflect on how their content influences societal understandings of beauty, gender, and identity. Through this analysis, the article challenges the naturalization of idealized femininity and opens up space for more inclusive and empowering representations in media discourse.

The study is grounded in Judith Butler's (1990) theory of gender performativity, which posits that gender is not an inherent biological trait but a socially constructed identity that is enacted through repeated performances. This framework is crucial for understanding how gender roles are not only represented in advertisements but also performed and reinforced through language, images, and social practices. Butler's theory is applied to examine how Make Over advertisements portray femininity as an idealized and performative construct, urging women to engage in beauty rituals and adopt certain behaviors to align with societal expectations of womanhood.

Norman Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) provides the methodological tools to investigate the linguistic and social dimensions of these advertisements. Fairclough's approach integrates three interrelated levels of analysis: (1) the textual features of the advertisement, (2) the discursive practices surrounding its production and consumption, and (3) the broader sociocultural practices that inform and are reflected in the advertisement. By using CDA, the study aims to uncover the ways in which power, ideology, and gender are embedded in the language and imagery of beauty advertisements, helping to shape consumer identities and reinforce societal norms.

The study followed a logical and systematic approach, starting with preliminary data collection. Advertisements from Make Over's official Instagram account, posted between June 2023 and March 2024, were identified and selected for analysis. The focus was on posts that contained both textual and visual elements, which provided a rich basis for exploring gender-related messages.

Next, a detailed textual analysis was conducted, focusing on the linguistic features of the advertisements. This included examining vocabulary, grammatical structures, and rhetorical devices to identify how language

constructs gendered messages, particularly those related to femininity. The analysis aimed to uncover how specific language choices help shape gender identities in the advertisements.

Following the textual analysis, the study examined discursive practices by analyzing how the advertisements were produced, distributed, and consumed. Key strategies such as celebrity endorsements and the use of scientific language were identified, revealing their role in reinforcing gender roles and influencing audience perceptions. This level of analysis provided insights into the power dynamics and persuasive tactics employed in the advertisements.

The sociocultural practice analysis focused on the broader sociocultural and ideological contexts in which the advertisements were produced and consumed. The study explored how these advertisements reflect and reinforce societal gender ideologies and beauty standards. Using Butler's theory of gender performativity, the research examined how the advertisements contribute to the social construction of femininity through repeated consumer behavior and beauty rituals.

Finally, the findings from all three levels of analysis were synthesized to draw conclusions about how gender performativity is constructed and reinforced in Make Over's beauty advertisements. The synthesis of these findings highlighted the role of advertisements in maintaining traditional gender norms and shaping cultural perceptions of beauty.

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative research design, utilizing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to investigate how gender performativity is constructed and communicated in beauty product advertisements. The research is guided by Judith Butler's gender performativity theory and Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional CDA model, with a focus on how linguistic features, discursive strategies, and social elements contribute to shaping gender roles in Make Over's beauty advertisements. This approach allows for both a detailed textual analysis and an exploration of the broader cultural and social contexts influencing these advertisements.

Data were collected from Instagram advertisements by the Indonesian beauty brand Make Over, posted between June 2023 and March 2024. Instagram was chosen for its significant role in digital advertising, especially among young consumers. The advertisements, targeted primarily at women, were selected based on their inclusion of both textual and visual components. These posts offered rich insights into how the brand communicates gender roles and beauty standards through language, imagery, and promotional content.

The data were analyzed using a critical multimodal discourse analysis approach, following Fairclough's three-dimensional model. The first level, textual analysis, examined linguistic features such as vocabulary, syntax, and visual elements. The second level. discursive practice, explored advertisements are produced and consumed, focusing on celebrity endorsements and emotional appeals. Finally, sociocultural practice looked at how the advertisements reflect and reinforce societal norms and capitalist values, using Butler's theory of gender performativity to analyze the construction of femininity and the enactment of gender roles through consumer behavior. This comprehensive analysis provides insights into how gender is perpetuated in beauty advertisements.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the analysis based on the three-dimensional framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as applied to the Make Over beauty product advertisements. The results are structured according to Fairclough's model, focusing on textual features, discursive practices, and sociocultural practices. These three dimensions help address the research objectives by revealing how gender performativity is constructed and reinforced through language, imagery, and broader social norms within these advertisements.

1 Textual Analysis: Linguistic Features in Constructing Beauty

The textual analysis focuses on the linguistic and semiotic features present in the Make Over advertisements, particularly in the language used in captions, slogans, and visual elements. The key linguistic features identified in the advertisements are discussed below.

a. Use of Personal Pronouns and Synthetic Personalization

One of the most prominent linguistic features is the frequent use of second-person pronouns such as "you" and "your." This technique, known as synthetic personalization, creates a direct and intimate connection between the advertisement and the viewer, giving the impression of a personalized message. By addressing the consumer directly, the advertisement creates a sense of involvement, making the consumer feel as if the beauty product is personally designed for them.

For example:

- "Wake your skin to perfection."
- "Get as plumpy as you want."
- "Keep your look simple, such shade as my lips."

These examples demonstrate how the brand speaks to the consumer as if they were in a personal conversation. This personalization strategy is crucial in the advertising context as it fosters a feeling of individual engagement, which is essential in creating a connection with the consumer. Moreover, it subtly implies that achieving beauty and femininity is an individualized yet socially expected process. By positioning the viewer as the recipient of direct and personal attention, the brand enhances its emotional appeal and encourages consumer trust and loyalty.

b. Adjectives and Evaluative Language

The use of positive evaluative adjectives in the advertisements plays a significant role in constructing an idealized version of femininity. Words such as "flawless," "radiant," "perfect," and "timeless glamour" create a vision of an unattainable but desirable beauty standard. These adjectives do not just describe the products; they also shape the consumer's perceptions of beauty as something to be pursued relentlessly.

For example:

- "Flawless"
- "Radiant"
- "High UV protection"
- "Lightweight formula"

Such language is highly persuasive, positioning the product as the key to achieving an ideal beauty standard. These adjectives help construct an image of femininity that is polished, controlled, and seemingly effortless. This contributes to the broader societal ideal that women must conform to rigid beauty standards in order to be considered beautiful, valuable, or successful. This idealization of beauty can create a sense of inadequacy among consumers who feel they fall short of these unattainable standards.

The use of adjectives with positive connotations also influences the way beauty is conceptualized. The descriptions of beauty products often revolve around perfection, flawlessness, and other unattainable qualities, creating an emotional response in consumers that aligns with their desires for social approval and

validation. This also links to the capitalist commodification of beauty, where products are marketed as necessary to achieve these idealized versions of femininity.

c. Imperatives and Calls to Action

The advertisements often use imperatives to encourage immediate action, suggesting urgency and necessity. The use of direct commands positions the brand as authoritative, guiding the consumer to engage in certain behaviors or adopt specific beauty ideals.

For example:

- "Wake your skin to perfection."
- "Turn vision into artful creations."
- "All-day slay, zero fade."

Imperatives create a sense of urgency and expectation, implying that the consumer must act immediately to achieve the desired result. These direct calls to action encourage consumers to internalize the message that beauty requires active participation and continual investment. It also reinforces the idea that femininity is an ongoing, dynamic process that requires continual enhancement and monitoring.

The frequent use of imperative sentences also reflects the power dynamics in advertising. The brand assumes an authoritative role, instructing the consumer on how to achieve the idealized state of beauty. By framing beauty as an active endeavor, the brand encourages a constant relationship with the product, thus positioning itself as integral to the consumer's identity and daily routines.

d. Scientific and Technical Language

The incorporation of scientific terminology, such as "shade-matching technology," "SPF 30, PA ++++," and "oil control particles," serves to legitimize the product. This use of technical language positions the beauty product as not only a cosmetic but a scientifically advanced solution to achieving beauty. It appeals to the rationality of consumers, providing them with a sense of trust in the product's effectiveness.

For example:

- "Shade-matching technology"
- "SPF 30, PA +++ protection"
- "Oil control and light refinement particles"

By presenting beauty as a scientific achievement, the advertisements align beauty with modernity and technological advancement. This strategy also frames beauty as something that can be controlled, measured, and perfected through the right tools and knowledge, making beauty a pursuit that is both a personal responsibility and a commercial

product. The use of scientific language effectively transforms beauty from a subjective, aesthetic experience into an objective, measurable phenomenon, thus giving the product a sense of credibility and sophistication.

In addition, the inclusion of technical language allows advertisers to foster a sense of security in consumers. The mention of clinical specifications and product development techniques reassures consumers that they are purchasing something not only effective but also backed by scientific research. This serves to legitimize the product's promises of transformation and perfection, making it seem less like an unattainable ideal and more like a practical, achievable goal.

e. Hyperbole and Idealization

Exaggeration and hyperbole are common rhetorical devices in advertising, used to heighten the appeal of the product and create a sense of exclusivity. Terms like "no match," "the most inclusive cushion," and "super long-lasting" serve to elevate the product beyond ordinary beauty items, positioning it as the ultimate solution for achieving flawless beauty.

For example:

- "The most inclusive cushion in Southeast Asia"
- "24H uncrackable plump"
- "8 levels of skin tones"

Such idealized language constructs unrealistic beauty standards, suggesting that the ideal woman is constantly flawless and can maintain an appearance of perfection at all times. This contributes to the commodification of femininity, where women are encouraged to invest in products that promise unattainable results. Hyperbole not only makes the product seem indispensable but also heightens consumer aspirations by creating a narrative of exclusivity and superior quality.

By continually presenting exaggerated or unattainable beauty ideals, hyperbole reinforces the notion that to be truly beautiful, a woman must meet an extreme, unattainable standard. This process contributes to a cycle of consumer dissatisfaction and self-objectification, where women are encouraged to constantly strive for an idealized version of themselves.

2 Discursive Practice: Production, Distribution, and Consumption

The discursive practice analysis focuses on how these advertisements are produced, consumed, and

interpreted by audiences. This level of analysis examines the power dynamics and social roles embedded in the advertisements, focusing on how they are designed to manipulate, influence, and engage the consumer.

a. Celebrity Endorsement: Authority and Aspiration

A key discursive practice in the Make Over advertisements is the use of celebrity endorsements. Prominent figures such as Niki Zevanya, Isyana Sarasvati, and Rawdah Mohamed are featured in the advertisements, lending authority and aspiration to the brand. The endorsement of these public figures transfers their social status, credibility, and appeal onto the product, positioning it as desirable and culturally relevant.

Celebrity endorsements are used to construct a narrative where beauty is not only tied to physical appearance but also to social success and public approval. The association between beauty and celebrity creates an aspirational narrative, where consumers are encouraged to purchase the product not only for its beauty benefits but to emulate the success, fame, and perfection embodied by the celebrity endorsers.

For example:

- "I love the product" Niki Zevanya
- "Uncrackable color for unlimited potential" Isyana Sarasvati

These endorsements suggest that by using the product, the consumer can attain not only physical beauty but also social and cultural capital associated with celebrity and fame. The advertisements imply that beauty, power, and success are interconnected and that consumers who align themselves with the brand will have access to the same privileges.

b. Irrealist Representation: Selling the Ideal

The advertisements also rely on irrealist representations of beauty, where exaggerated imagery and claims are used to depict the transformative power of the product. Statements like "24-hour flawless finish" and "turn every face into the pure untouch canvas" promote an ideal of beauty that is both unattainable and highly curated. These representations construct an unrealistic beauty standard that encourages women to strive for an idealized, flawless appearance.

These idealized portrayals contribute to selfobjectification, where women are encouraged to measure their worth by their physical appearance. They also reinforce the idea that beauty is not a natural trait but something that must be constantly worked on and perfected.

The use of hyperbolic language and unrealistic expectations in the advertisements works in tandem with visual representations to create a narrative where beauty can be manufactured and controlled. This serves to convince the consumer that achieving beauty is a matter of purchasing the right product, a powerful tool in shaping consumer behavior.

c. Scientific Language and Legitimacy

As previously discussed, the use of scientific language in the advertisements functions to legitimize the product, positioning it as both advanced and necessary for achieving beauty. This approach is a discursive strategy designed to give the product credibility, making it appear as if achieving beauty is a scientific process that can be mastered through the correct tools and techniques.

By incorporating these scientific references, the advertisements draw on broader societal discourses that value empirical evidence and technological progress. They frame beauty as not just an aesthetic ideal but a scientifically achievable goal. This has the dual effect of both rationalizing and mystifying the product's effectiveness, as consumers are encouraged to trust in the scientific authority of the brand without fully understanding the terminology.

3 Sociocultural Practice: Beauty Standards, Capitalism, and Gender Ideology

At the sociocultural level, the advertisements reflect broader cultural ideologies about gender, beauty, and consumerism. This analysis considers how beauty standards are reinforced and normalized in society through advertising, particularly within the context of capitalism and patriarchal structures.

a. The Beauty Myth and Commodification of Identity

The advertisements are part of a larger system of beauty culture that commodifies femininity, turning it into a marketable good that can be purchased, perfected, and displayed. Naomi Wolf's (1990) concept of the "beauty myth" is evident in these advertisements, as they promote the idea that beauty is both an individual pursuit and a societal expectation. Beauty is framed as a moral imperative, where women are not only expected to look beautiful but are judged by their adherence to narrow beauty standards.

The commodification of beauty in these advertisements reinforces the capitalist agenda, turning self-worth and identity into consumer products that can be bought and sold. This process perpetuates a cycle of consumption, where women are encouraged

to purchase products to meet socially constructed standards of beauty.

b. Intertextuality and Postfeminist Discourse

The advertisements demonstrate intertextuality, borrowing from various cultural discourses, including celebrity culture, science, and empowerment. The brand positions itself as progressive and inclusive, promoting messages of individuality and empowerment, yet these messages are still framed within the confines of traditional beauty ideals. This paradoxical blending of feminist ideals with the pursuit of beauty reflects postfeminist discourse, where empowerment is framed through consumer choice, but the underlying expectation remains that beauty is central to a woman's identity and success.

In the Indonesian context, these advertisements reinforce both local and global beauty standards, which often prioritize fair skin, slim bodies, and refined features. While Make Over strives to present itself as inclusive by featuring diverse models, the core message remains that beauty is something to be bought and achieved through consumption.

4 Discussion: Constructing Gender, Beauty, and Identity

The results of this study illustrate how gender performativity is intricately woven into the fabric of beauty advertisements. Through linguistic features, discursive practices, and sociocultural ideologies, these advertisements not only construct gendered identities but also reinforce the idea that beauty is a performative and commodifiable trait. By analyzing Make Over's advertisements through the lens of CDA and gender performativity, this study has shown how language and imagery work together to normalize and perpetuate unrealistic beauty standards, shaping societal perceptions of femininity and beauty in the process.

This analysis also underscores the role of advertising as a powerful tool in reinforcing gender roles, where women are encouraged to perform their femininity through consumption and adherence to idealized beauty standards. The findings contribute to our understanding of how modern advertising practices perpetuate gender inequality by linking women's worth to their physical appearance and their ability to conform to societal norms of beauty.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

This study has analyzed the construction of gender performativity in Make Over beauty advertisements, utilizing Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework and Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity. The findings from the textual, discursive, and sociocultural levels of analysis reveal how these advertisements perpetuate and reinforce traditional gender roles, particularly the idealization of femininity. Linguistic features such as synthetic personalization, evaluative adjectives, imperatives, and scientific language work in tandem with visual representations to create an image of beauty that is not only unattainable but also commodified. Through celebrity endorsements, irrealist depictions of beauty, and the use of aspirational language, the advertisements encourage women to internalize these beauty standards and view beauty as an essential, ongoing, and commercialized sociocultural At the level. pursuit. advertisements reflect broader societal ideologies that commodify femininity and promote capitalist values, where beauty becomes a marker of social worth, success, and identity.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that beauty advertisements, particularly those by Make Over, play a significant role in constructing and reinforcing gendered identities. By framing beauty as both a personal goal and a societal expectation, the advertisements contribute to the ongoing performance of gender and the perpetuation of unrealistic beauty ideals. Through language and visual cues, these advertisements position women as subjects whose worth is tied to their appearance, which in turn reinforces cultural norms and expectations about femininity.

Suggestions

For future research, it would be valuable to explore how beauty advertisements across different platforms (e.g., television, print, and digital media) construct gender performativity and whether these representations differ depending on the medium. Additionally, research could focus on the impact of beauty advertising on diverse demographics, such as different age groups, ethnicities, or socio-economic classes, to examine how varying representations of beauty might affect different segments of society. From a practical standpoint, beauty brands and

From a practical standpoint, beauty brands and advertisers should consider the social responsibility they hold in shaping perceptions of beauty. As this study has shown, advertisements have the power to reinforce harmful gender norms. Thus, it is recommended that beauty companies create more inclusive, diverse, and empowering representations of gender and beauty, challenging the narrow beauty

standards that often lead to body dissatisfaction and self-objectification among consumers. Lastly, policymakers and regulatory bodies should consider implementing guidelines that encourage more responsible advertising practices, ensuring that beauty advertisements promote healthy, diverse, and realistic ideals of beauty that do not perpetuate harmful stereotypes.

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