

# Critical Discourse Analysis of Wechat Stores' Advertisements in Cosmetics and Skin-Care Products

-- Contradictory Perceptions Infused into Women's Mind

Jingdan Hu<sup>1,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> School of International Studies, Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, China

\* Corresponding Author Email: hujingdan@zju.edu.cn

---

**Abstract:** The WeChat moment advertisements (WMAs), which were commonly utilized to promote cosmetics and skin-care products in WeChat stores, might have an impact on how women perceive themselves, their self-esteem, and their interpersonal connections. By adopting critical discourse analysis, this study analyzed the textual features, discourse practice, and social contexts of WMAs in cosmetics and skin-care product advertisements. The results revealed that numerous contradictory ideologies existed in the WMAs. Words and sentences that indicated both closeness and distance with female customers would lead them into a puzzlement of self-value, mixing their definitions of independence and being loved. In this process of perceiving these WMAs, women might experience an inner struggle of spending money for the pride brought by skin-care and cosmetic products, which was further reinforced by the social context that reshaped women's pursuit of beauty.

**Keywords:** Critical discourse analysis, Advertisement, Female customers, Cosmetics, Skin-care products, WeChat stores.

---

## 1. Introduction

As the mobile phone App WeChat has prevailed over the Chinese Mainland and become a leading communication channel for both young and middle-aged Chinese communities, numerous potential functions based on WeChat have been developed, the majority of which successfully operated in a commercial mode and generated millions of profit [1]. One of the most cutting-edge and successful examples of these applications was the WeChat store. The term WeChat store refers to the store on the users' WeChat accounts, and commodity transactions happen between individual accounts [2].

WeChat stores largely relied on advertisements to promote their items as well, following a similar marketing strategy to commercial activities in traditional companies [3]. The shop owners utilized WeChat moments, a social network site (SNS) known as Peng-you-quan in Mandarin, for advertising their goods. These advertisements were formally called WeChat moment advertisements (WMAs) [4]. The WMAs were thought to share numerous similarities to regular WeChat postings aside from their goals of product promotion and customer-to-customer chain of commerce, but these posts featured images and text describing WeChat shop owners' products [5].

Compared to advertisements released officially on websites, radio, and TVs, WMAs were designed and produced by individuals and lacked the supervision of relevant advertisement administration. Contents of WMAs were criticized by a great number of people for linking the strength of the products and the social factors it brought in an overly exaggerated way [4]. In other words, if a WMA promotes a product, is likely to focus on its favorable impacts on people once they see you use it rather than the product's quality and design.

Owners of WeChat stores were typically inclined toward selling cosmetics and skin-care products, targeting the main

customer groups of young and middle-aged females [6]. Owners of the WeChat stores would introduce each product and analyze the best-fit population of each product, saving time for learning skin-care and make-up. In addition, cosmetics and skin-care products would attract female customers more easily, as female groups would enjoy paying for items that make them look better.

Recent voices, mainly from the feminist perspective, started questioning the opinions presented in these WMAs. According to others, WMAs manipulated the fantasies of female audiences by endorsing concepts such as "men who pay for you truly love you", "being pretty is the greatest and forefront task", and "one can only be pretty by spending money on products" [7]. Others, however, held the view that WMAs promoted women's independence and self-investment, which was a positive encouragement that helped to develop feminist power. The current study employed critical discourse analysis and aimed to disclose the ideologies behind these WMAs in the hopes of gaining more knowledge about how these WMAs may affect women's perceptions of themselves and their interactions with others. Additionally, the study might offer recommendations for improved WMA administration.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. The images of women in advertising and the contradictory perceptions

Advertising and gender are inextricably linked since many of the images and concepts used in commercials represent female characters [8]. Embedded in those representations, the ideologies of the dominant culture were mixed with the sellers' motivation to promote the products. As was illustrated, such promotion involved a mental framework that linked languages, categories, imagery of thought, and representation systems [9]. It entitled the social presence to various meanings, presented the existences in an intelligible way, and

might exert further influence on how people perceived the world.

In the modern Chinese environment, advertising consciously followed the dominant social opinion because they made significant profits by pandering to it. Advertisers increasingly focused on the connection between men and women, as well as the values and ultimate aspirations of women, as gender issues evolved into a contentious debate topic [10]. Although the producers of commercial plots attempted to portray the female characters as strong, independent, and mentally mature, several underlying and pervasive prejudices about women remained ingrained in those depictions, such as the sensitive ladies who required men's protection and meticulous care. These opposing notions created a number of contradictions that could mislead women regarding their ideal identities.

Advertisement analysis of gender considered not only the representations of women that were favored or despised in masculine norms, but also the impact that these representations would have on women, both explicitly on their willingness to conform to those norms and influence on their sense of worth [11]. How the implied information worked to influence female groups' self-perceptions remained an open question.

These perceptions have more recently been identified in research as various contradictions. One of the most well-known contradictions was food and weight. Sweet, high-calorie foods such as chocolate were frequently portrayed as a comfort for distressed women, which encouraged women to purchase and consume more chocolate. However, some overly thin models shown in the advertisements conveyed the message that women should diet and avoid sweets to maintain their figure. Similar results were found in more recent research, including Zuraidah and Ling's study critiquing the portrayal of overweight women in Malaysian slimming commercials [12]. These contradictory demands were extremely difficult, if not impossible, for women to fulfill in reality, and the contradiction of these demands and the unsatisfactory results were more likely to cause women to experience depression and self-doubt. The WMAs, which would be addressed in the coming sections, showed these types of contradictions more prominently.

## 2.2. Critical discourse analysis on advertisements

The theory of critical discourse analysis (CDA) emerged from critical linguistics, focusing on the dialectical relationship between language and social and cultural structures, providing a new perspective and method for discourse analysis. As a representative of CDA theory, Fairclough proposed that language activity in social contexts is part of social practice, a social process influenced by social factors [13]. There is a dialectical relationship between discourse and social practice, where social reality influences the discourse [14].

Fairclough proposed three dimensions of CDA: description, interpretation, and elaboration. These three dimensions correspond to genre, discourse, and style, respectively. In analyzing texts in CDA, the description is about the formal characteristics of the discourse text, while understanding is about the text and social interaction, including the output of the discourse, practice, and social practice. Interpretation is the relationship between social interaction and social context,

where social factors influence the production and reception of discourse. An important ideological function of discourse is to manipulate the mental models of others through rhetorical effects.

Commercial advertisements, which tried to gain people's appeal to their products through the power of words and images, conveyed social ideologies in their representations [15], which were, therefore, materials that were appropriate to be analyzed with CDA. CDA focused on both the text of commercial advertisements discourse and the ideological and social factors behind it through discourse, revealing the role of language and power. CDA in commercial advertisements often involved social discussions on gender and ageism [16]. These investigations exposed preconceptions that may be harmful to individuals with the targeted qualities by intentionally or unintentionally bringing up the contrast.

Since the construction of subject identities and interpersonal relationships depended on the dialogue and communication, everyday discourse in social media was not only a symbolic representation of social experiences or facts, but also a mark of the "mediated" construction of subject identities and interpersonal relationships. To further elaborate on the contradictions presented by WMAs in skin-care and cosmetics products, the WeChat stores and WMAs would be discussed in the following section.

## 2.3. WeChat stores and WMAs

The basis of the burgeoning SNSs is essential to the success of the WeChat store. With 1,083 million members in January 2019, WeChat rose to become the fifth most popular social media platform [4]. The widespread use of social media platforms demonstrated that anything trending online had a good chance of garnering public attention, and this kind of effective and low-cost exposure has led to a significant number of business prospects [17]. WeChat stores were quickly set up to attract the public's attention when people became aware of the significant opportunity for fortune and started to pay attention to the combination of WeChat and commerce. It involved an entirely online manner of commerce: Customers placed orders online, paid with an e-bank, and merchants sent the products by express to the specified address. As females were more likely to be attracted by advertisements in SNSs and did more online shopping than males, most online stores based on SNSs products targeted women's favor, most prominently the skin-care products, as well as clothes and accessories, which was the same situation with WeChat stores [16].

In view of the special background and specific platform that WeChat stores stood upon, previous studies suggested that WMAs had uniqueness in both the forms and the contents [18]. Among those characteristics, the lack of supervision, catering for news and the close relations with gender issues were the three most distinctive features.

The advertisements on WeChat stores did not necessarily require a content check before being posted, as the WeChat moment on which WeChat store owners posted their advertisements were classified as the personal social platform, and users on the platform were not restricted from sharing their ideas as long as the posts did not touch upon some sensitive topics that violated the laws [4]. In addition, WeChat moment served as a semi-open platform that only allows those who were on the address list. In this sense, any content released on WeChat moments was expelled from the domain

of public discourse and was restricted in the field of personal sharing, which increased the difficulties to supervise those unregistered advertisements.

Catering for news is another salient feature of WMAs. Combining focused social issues with advertisements was one way of catching one’s attention, which was highly valued in WMAs, as people easily switched their attention to other posts and showed less patience with advertisements. In addition, demands were easily created once attached to current hot issues of SNSs. For instance, presenting a product by a popular celebrity could persuade consumers to purchase the same item, particularly in the case of common and inexpensive goods like skin-care products and cosmetics.

For those potential customers, mostly women, the majority WeChat shop owners would be cautious to take note of the gender and aging issue and target the cognition of women [19]. WeChat store owners typically targeted female groups with their sales of cosmetics and skin-care products since women were more likely to look to buy and paid more attention to buying. The advertisements’ emphasis on appealing to women could be observed in a way that most WMAs expressed their support for the rights and independence of women.

This study aimed to bridge the gap in women’s images in WMAs by taking into account the aforementioned concerns with women’s representation in WMAs.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Advertisement collection

Chen indicated that the advertisement included its overall design, written text, visuals, and contexts. In the case of WMAs, most of the information was contained in the texts [20], whereas the visuals only presented the product and did not involve any additional designed information. Therefore, the written texts in WMAs were the primary analyzed materials

The inclusion criteria of the investigated WeChat stores included: a) Posting advertisements frequently. All included WeChat stores posted more than three advertisement posts a day on average; b) Opening WeChat moment for at least half a year. The researcher has connected with 8 WeChat stores, and picked up some of their advertisements to analyze the underlying information brought to the female group. These three WeChat stores, as shown by their owner’s personal information file, were respectively in Zhejiang province, Sichuan province, Jilin province, Guangdong province, and Jiangsu province (see Table 1), and they had never been connected to one another. Therefore, data from northeastern, eastern, and western regions in China reduces biases in data collection to a large extent, which might also improve the generability of the current investigation. All investigated WeChat stores have operated for at least 1 year, and one store (Store F) has been operated for five years. All these stores sold skin-care products and cosmetics, while some of them also sold clothes, accessories, and healthcare products.

**Table 1.** Information about investigated WeChat stores in this study

Name of the store (Anonymous)	Location (Province)	Years of WeChat stores	Products
A	Zhejiang	3	Skin-care products, cosmetics, clothes, and accessories
B	Sichuan	1	Skin-care products, cosmetics, and accessories
C	Jilin	2	Skin-care products, cosmetics and accessories
D	Guangdong	4	Skin-care products, cosmetics, clothes, and health care products
E	Zhejiang	3	Skin-care products, cosmetics, and clothes
F	Jiangsu	5	Skin-care products and cosmetics
G	Guangdong	3	Skin-care products, cosmetics and clothes

#### 3.2. Textual analysis: Critical discourse analysis

CDA, which draws its inspiration from critical theories, emphasizes the influence of speech on social representations and calls for in-depth research in particular social contexts. CDA positioned itself as a textual analysis that contributed to social issues of emancipation and equality, making it appropriate for evaluating themes based on aging and gender [21].

Specifically in advertisements, CDA in commercial discourses concerns the products with the social value they are promoting. Following the research goals of identifying women’s image that WMAs constructed and the analyzing schemes of CDA, the analysis followed three steps: First, analyzing the textual features of WMAs in skin-care products and cosmetics; Second, exploring the intentions of constructing such discourse based on these characteristics of advertisements; Third, linking the intentions with the social context that further revealed the underlying ideologies and

representations in the WMAs. Together, these analytic techniques drew a clearer picture of WMAs that attempted to win women’s favor while simultaneously reconstructing women’s self-perceptions and interpersonal relationships.

### 4. Analysis and Discussion

#### 4.1. Textual features: Closeness and distance with females

In this section, the vocabulary and syntactic characteristics of WMAs that marketed cosmetics and skin care products were examined.

Words that implied a close relationship with the customers, particularly female customers, were adopted. WeChat shop owners would begin each advertisement with “sisters”, “dear”, and “honey” to evoke the feeling that a close friend was recommending some worthwhile products to you. As a result, the relationship between shop owners and customers went beyond simple business transactions to include a sense of friendship and mutual aid. Based on the features of WeChat

stores, where only users on the address list may see the WMAs, the advertisements' messages were more convincing.

However, words and phrases that expressed negation also frequently appeared in WMAs, often in a way that tried to change the current skin-care or make-up habits of the customers. Advertisements that criticized certain skin-care or makeup behaviors included "Don't save on skin-care", "Stop ill-treating your face", "Don't go to work without makeup again", and "Never wear the same scent for a complete year". These unfavorable remarks appeared to keep the targeted clients at a mental distance. The shop owners were higher up and instructed the customers what they should and shouldn't do to care for their faces, and delivered the idea that women should obey others' opinions. Such negative voices ran contrary to the closeness to the female identity that shop owners intended to construct.

Another prominent element in WMAs for cosmetic and skin-care products was comparative sentences and sentences that include comparison. WMAs tried to arouse people's willingness to purchase new products by consuming situations for people with and without certain products, and comparing them with critical judgement. For example, "Your rivals in love have used this lotion, and they may be prettier than you", and "All your friends were buying this lipstick, and you still use the outdated one." consumed that either friends or rivals were using certain skin-care or cosmetic products, and compared their potential customers with their consumed "friends" and "rivals". These comparisons situated females in a confronting position with others, and viewed females without certain products as inferior, which put the female group into a further struggle of being more pretty.

In WMAs, rhetorical questions were commonly employed. WMAs frequently used questions to encourage consumers to consider the effects of using or not using a skin-care or cosmetic product[22]. For instance, "With the upcoming of the new year, don't you want to celebrate with dazzling make-up?" encouraged female customers to purchase a new product by asking them to consider if they want to celebrate the new year with no changes from daily make-up.

These vocabulary and syntactic features together shaped a contradictory relationship between female customers and shop owners. The shop owners intended to bring the relationship closer to their customers, while at the same distancing female groups by posing negations on them.

## **4.2. Discourse practice: Women in contradictory struggles of "independence" and "love"**

Advertisers closely related the male-and-female relationship to persuade people to purchase goods. Some WeChat store owners promoted those women's independence by despising men's love and caring. These WeChat store owners would often take the advantage of the independence of women to persuade female groups to buy certain products, and equate buying products as the proof to "love yourself". This strategy worked well as it successfully linked the purchase and independence which actually had no direct correlation. Some WeChat store owners would incite women's desire to buy products with the slogan "We do not rely on men anymore, so you should freely buy what you want." For instance, one advertisement in Store B for a facial cleanser read, "It's near the Valentine Day: If you don't have a boyfriend, then buy yourself a gift". Another advertisement

in Store D went for the eye cream, "If your boyfriend doesn't buy you a gift, then buy our eye cream to sharpen your eyes, and kick him out." These advertisements strongly proposed that women should not wait to be loved, but fight for what they want. However, those WMAs mistakenly equated "what they want" to a specific product and misguide girls to buy certain products as a substitution for what they really want to achieve. The contrast between waiting for the gift and buying the gift installed the idea that women do not need men's love and care.

However, in the different advertisements of the same sellers, it was recommended that women should be meticulously cared for and cherished by their male partners. This thought, reflected in the advertisements, could be illustrated as "Buy something for me, or you do not love me." This assumption was nevertheless widely adopted by WeChat shopkeepers to stimulate consumption. An advertisement for a sales promotion around May 20th stated that, "Let your boyfriend or husband add me to his contact list, and you shall guess from my WeChat moment what would you receive at the day (In Chinese homo-phonetics, May 20th represents I love you, thus it gradually turned into a festival for youngsters)." There was another written text for promoting a luxurious lipstick, "Don't believe men's sweet words or swears. If he buys you lipstick, that's the true love." This sort of advertisements influenced women in a way that affirmed women should be cared and even spoiled by their boyfriend or husband. However, the love and affection of men were exclusively demonstrated by the wealth spent on their female partners.

Women's self-value directly concerned how women look at themselves and how they proceeded with the introspection of their self-value, which were also likely to be manipulated with WMAs. The advertisements on WeChat stores tended to link the purchase of a certain product to the value and especially self-value to women. The ideal images of women kept changing in the descriptions and connotations of those advertisements, and puzzled females a lot on achieving the imagined self. Some WeChat store owners advocated for women to pursue the real self, namely incite them to buy more products. One advertisement in Store A read, "buy cosmetics, and you'll make up to become beautiful. Then you'll run out of money, and you'll get thinner. That's double benefits". Advertisements like these satisfied women's wishes to spend money without restriction, and guided women to indulge in the desires of buying.

Some other advertisements, in reverse, put a particular emphasis on women's self-value in the comments of others. To illustrate, one advertisement for tights quoted the criticism from the boyfriend as the recommendation reason, "If your boyfriend thinks you are overweight, then buy our tights!" Another sort of advertisements that reflected the self-value of women was the relative strengths to rivals, such as rivals in love. Just to name another example in Store G, "The Spring festival is approaching: Your first love will probably come back to hometown, so do some of your ex-boyfriends, and possibly your rivals in love. Are you sure not to buy some skin-care products to stabilize your skin?" The WeChat store owners tended to involve the competition among rivals and suggested cosmetics and skin-care products to defeat them. The inner logic was that, if you were more beautiful, then your rivals would feel ashamed, and your ex-boyfriend will regret it, thus satisfying the mentality of a large group of girls who

wanted to get the better of others.

The marketing strategies utilized by the WeChat store owners might have more widespread public acceptance and have a stronger penetration effect into consumers' minds than traditional advertisements in newspapers, magazines, and television [23]. The WMAs took advantage of the public's mental condition by stating that "Reliable and affordable items may be easily obtained in your life," and profited from people's drive to own any things or achieve any consequences following certain services [24]. However, it was noted that, behind the great impulsion is the advertisements that did not experience verification by the media department, which led to a lack of supervision.

Though some people would dismiss the messages behind the advertisements for they are inconsequential, entertaining, or pretentiously harmless, some scholars argued that advertisements construct and reflect reality, and the recognition installed in views may cause harm to the female's perceiving the reality [25]. Also, the images shown in advertisements might follow certain stereotypes and might aggravate those ideal images, thus it caused harm to the audience though advertisers claim the initial purpose is to reach their commercial purpose and have nothing to do with the public ideologies.

### 4.3. Social context: Rising of female power and skewed guidance

In critical discourse analysis, social practice analysis was based on textual and discourse level analysis. The interpretation of social context aimed to reveal the interaction and construction process between discourse and social context. This study set out to examine the causes of the conflicting representations of women that are created in WMAs based on contemporary social contexts.

Women in modern society are urged to adhere to diversified varieties of "beauty". Initially, this was illuminating for women to pursue freedom and personal liberation. But behind each distinct aspect of beauty, there were other product categories with distinct benefits, which significantly increased women's desire for goods like cosmetics, skin-care products, accessories, and clothing. Notably, the WMAs promoted many styles that corresponded to various social identity projects as a business endeavor. For instance, the exaggerated queen style signified independence and strength, the white and thin style represented frailty and protection, and the gentle style showed a considerate characteristic in personality. The distorted guidance of commercial advertisements has twisted the initial diverse aesthetic needs into women flipping between numerous identities, which went counter to the original intention that women should be free to choose their own style.

People's fears of losing and concern about success have given such distorted recommendations greater room to impede rising female power. People in today's society are becoming more and more obsessed with success at all phases of life and whether they can live better than others around them, as the overall quality of living rises and the upward way of the social ladder steadily narrowed. By pairing its products with an elegant and enviable lifestyle, WMAs has successfully targeted female clients to purchase additional items and foster a sense of "I'm successful" in their surroundings. In addition, luxury handbags and jewelry were also considered to be sophisticated symbols, but their costs

were significantly higher than those of cosmetics. As a result, cosmetics and skin-care products have become important tools for modern women to show their wealth.

The rising of social networks on the Internet even intensified the skewed guidance of rising female power. The Internet has increased people's access to the outside world, but it has also increased their ability to snoop around in other people's lives [26]. Social media made the fascinating aspect of other people's lives more visible, but their unique lifestyles were supported by wealth but not only promotions. By conceptually linking their beauty and skincare products to the adventurous lives they market, the WMAs were successfully appealing to women's desire to lead interesting lives and persuading them to purchase similar products.

In summary, the process of infusing an ideology into objects worked to consolidate the ruling ideas of society as it potentially took control of the autonomy of meaning construction. WMAs, by projecting hopes of being successful and loved in the skin-care and cosmetic products, proposed fantasies for women to pursue the ideal self. However, it was noted that these are all based on real-life fantasies but not cause-effect relations, and the WMAs intended to cater for consumers' imagery of an ideal lifestyle and self-image.

## 5. Conclusion and Implications

The WMAs were known as a marketing technique, but they also conveyed an idea about females' relationships with others as well as women's self-value [27]. These advertisements were specifically aimed at the female group and were expressed with a colloquial language style, and they implied some "feminist" ideas that could influence women to purchase things. However, marketers often implied erroneous correlations such as "purchasing for yourself is independence" and "others buying you gifts indicates you possess the privilege of being loved", behind those advertisements that appeared to speak for females. Different ideal images made up numerous contradictions that would undermine the value and self-worth of women.

A limitation of this study was the sample of advertisements. Because of the limited samples, quantitative analysis of word frequency might not be able to yield general results that applied to similar cases all around China. In addition, future studies could compare the difference of WMAs of skin-care products, cosmetics, and other categories of products, to draw a fuller picture of WMAs discourse.

Implications were highlighted from both theoretical and practical perspectives. Theoretically, this study extended critical discourse analysis from the mainstream advertisement platforms to the relatively unsupervised WMAs, and added to the findings of women's images research in the advertisement by discussing WMAs. Practically, the findings would be useful for future advertisements monitor and supervision in WMAs. Government administration in social network platforms might scrutinize the posts on WeChat, formulate guidelines for advertisement promotions in WeChat stores, and shield WMA posts that did huge harm to gender equality from people's view.

## References

- [1] J. Xia, "Loving you": Use of metadiscourse for relational acts in WeChat public account advertisements. *Discourse, Context*

- & Media, 2020, 37, Article 100416. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcm.2020.100416>
- [2] A. R. Jung. The influence of perceived ad relevance on social media advertising: an empirical examination of a mediating role of privacy concern. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2017, 70, 303-309. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2017.01.008>
- [3] T. Teng, H. Li, Y. Fang, and L. Shen. Understanding the differential effectiveness of marketer versus user-generated advertisements in closed social networking sites: An empirical study of WeChat. *Internet Research*, 2022. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1108/INTR-04-2021-0268>
- [4] N. Z. Nawaz, M. Tao, M. Ahmad, M. J. Haque, S. Nawaz and M. N. Shafique. Youngsters and WMAs (WeChat Moments Advertisement): Do we need the English language in WMAs? *SAGE Open*, 2020, Online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020922840>.
- [5] L. De Vries, S. Gensler, and P. S. Leeﬂang. Popularity of brand posts on brand fan pages: An investigation of the effects of social media marketing. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 2012, 26(2), 83-91. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2012.01.003>
- [6] X. Li, C. Wang, and Y. Zhang. The dilemma of social commerce why customers avoid peer-generated advertisements in mobile social networks. *Internet Research*, 2020, 30(3), 1059-1080. <https://doi.org/10.1108/INTR-02-2017-0045>
- [7] H. Jin, S. T. Park, and G. Li. Factors influencing customer participation in mobile SNS: Focusing on WeChat in China. *Indian Journal of Science and Technology*, 2015, 8(26), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.17485/ijst/2015/v8i26/80714>
- [8] K. P. Vanyoro. Feminist discourse analysis of gendered online miracles, advice, advertisements, and testimonies. *Consumption Markets & Culture*, 2022, 25(4), 342-355. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10253866.2021.1974009>
- [9] S. Hall, *Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse*. Birmingham, England: The University of Birmingham, 1986.
- [10] S. G. Barsade. The ripple effect: Emotional Contagion and its influence on group behavior. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 2002, 47(4), 644-675. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3094912>
- [11] M. Lazar. Recuperating feminism, reclaiming femininity: Hybrid postfeminist I-dentity in consumer advertisements. *Gender and Language*, 2014, 8(2), 205-224. <https://doi.org/10.1558/genl.v8i2.205>
- [12] M. D. Zuraidah and E. L. K. Ling. The overweight female body in Malaysian slimming advertisements: Problem and solution. *Social Semiotics*, 2018, 28(1), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330.2016.1191145>
- [13] N. Fairclough, *Language and Power*. London: Longman, 1989.
- [14] R. Goldman and S. Papson, *Landscapes of Capital: Representing Time, Space, and Globalization in Corporate Advertising*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Press, 2011.
- [15] Y. Feng, H. Chen, and Q. Kong. An expert with whom I can identify: The role of narratives in influencer marketing. *International Journal of Advertising*, 2021, 40(7), 972-993. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2020.1824751>
- [16] L. M. Kenalemang. Visual ageism and the subtle sexualisation of older celebrities in L'Oréal's advert campaigns: A multimodal critical discourse analysis. *Ageing & Society*, 2022, 42, 2122-2139. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X20002019>
- [17] Y. Seo, X. Li, Y. K. Choi, and S. Yoon. Narrative transportation and paratextual features of social media in viral advertisement. *Journal of Advertising*, 2018, 47(1), 83-95. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2017.1405752>
- [18] D. B. Kontsevaia and P. D. Berger. Mobile marketing in China: Can WeChat turn their new advertising strategy into a sustainable advantage? *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 2016, 8(4), 37-43. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijms.v8n4p37>
- [19] K. L. Ellison. Age transcended: A semiotic and rhetorical analysis of the discourse of agelessness in North American anti-aging skin care advertisements. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 2014, 29, 20-31. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2013.12.003>
- [20] C. Chen. Advertising representations of older people in the United Kingdom and Taiwan: a comparative analysis. *International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, 2015, 80, 140-183. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091415015590305>
- [21] T. van Dijk, *Discourse and Power*. New York, US: Houndmills, Basingstoke, 2008.
- [22] M. Hoey, *Textual Interaction: An Introduction to Written Discourse Analysis*. London: Routledge, 2001.
- [23] B. Choi and I. Lee. Trust in open versus closed social media: The relative influence of user-and marketer-generated content in social network services on customer trust. *Telematics and Informatics*, 2017, 34(5), 550-559. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2016.11.005>
- [24] N. Kim, D. Song, and A. Jang. Consumer response toward native advertising on social media: The roles of source type and content type. *Internet Research*, 2021, 31(5), 1656-1676. <https://doi.org/10.1108/INTR-08-2019-0328>
- [25] A. Cortese, *Provocateur: Images of Women and Minorities in Advertising*. Lanham, MD: Rowmen and Littlefield, 2004.
- [26] K. Jean, *Deadly Persuasion: Why Women and Girls Must Fight the Addictive Power of Advertising*. New York: Free Press, 1999.
- [27] H. L. Che and Y. Cao. Examining WeChat users' motivations, trust, attitudes, and positive word-of-mouth: Evidence from China. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 2014, 41, 104-111. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2014.08.013>