

Semiotic Analysis on Fenty Beauty's Foundation Advertising Poster as a Representative of Beauty Diversity

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ABSTRACT

This research conducts a semiotic analysis of Fenty Beauty's foundation advertising poster, employed a semiotic field to convey a message of beauty diversity. The analysis connects a range of semiotic elements and the beauty diversity issue. The descriptive qualitative approach was chosen in this research, and the aims of this research to identify the icon, index, and symbol in Fenty Beauty's foundation advertising poster, and to determine the relationship between signs and the beauty diversity issue in Fenty Beauty's foundation advertising poster. To figure out the answer, the researcher applies a semiotic theory by Charles Sanders Peirce to examine five Fenty Beauty foundation advertising posters. Purposive sampling was used as the data gathering strategy to assess the eight Fenty Beauty foundation advertising posters. Based on the results of this research, the messages contained in all posters can influence individuals to purchase Fenty Beauty's foundation. Fenty Beauty attempts to bring out the theme of beauty diversity in their advertising posters by including models with various skin tones, ethnicities, and religions. Fenty Beauty creates a revolution and reduces discrimination in the cosmetics industry by developing fifty colors of foundation.

Keyword: *Advertising Poster; Beauty Diversity; Semiotics; Signs*

A. Introduction

Women's skin tones around the world can be classified into four main categories: light, fair, medium, and deep. The variation in skin color is caused by genetic influences passed down from their parents. All skin colors are beautiful and have their own unique characteristics but in fact, white people are frequently glorified. The mindset that white people have a higher level of hierarchy is always attached in our society. As globalization grows however, many people want to change about the misconceptions beauty standards in society. They try to raise awareness about the diversity of beauty.

Nowadays, the beauty industry is undergoing a revolution to embrace colored skin women. A well-known cosmetic brand, Fenty Beauty has expanded their shades of complexion product. They also attempt to highlight the concept of beauty diversity in

their advertisement posters by using models with various skin tones, races, and religions. By using models with various skin tones, races, and religions. In this study, the researcher intends to examine the foundation advertising poster from Rihanna's cosmetic brand, Fenty Beauty. Furthermore, this research would focus on analysis of verbal and visual by examined the poster that contained the icon, index, and symbol. The researcher used an example of the study that was taken from Fenty Beauty's official platforms (website and Instagram).

B. Research Method

This research belongs to descriptive qualitative method. Analysis of actual societal phenomena will be done through this kind of research. It is contain of utilizing organized data and describe fact. This method will be used the semiotics analysis and beauty diversity issue in society, through the Fenty Beauty's foundation advertising poster. Furthermore, written and visual forms of the descriptive qualitative data will be provided.

According to Creswell (2014: 32), qualitative research is a method for examining and comprehending the meaning that groups or individuals ascribe to a social or human problem. The theoretical background is used as a reference to explain from field data and uses previous theories as a support, which most likely result in theories being created from these data.

C. Research Finding and Discussion

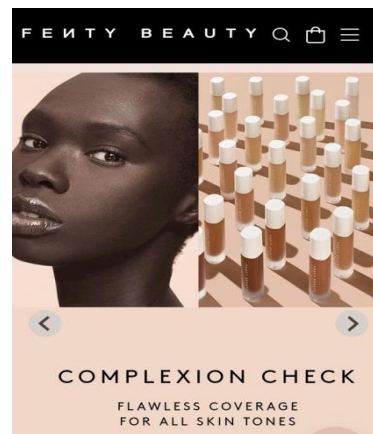
In this chapter, the researcher intends to show the result and discussion related to the signs analysis that depicts the beauty diversity issue in Fenty Beauty's foundation advertising poster. The researcher has analyzed five Fenty Beauty Foundation advertising posters released from January 2019–August 2022 edition. The researcher analyzes the icon, index, and symbol that are found in Fenty Beauty's foundation advertising poster. All posters can persuade people to buy Fenty Beauty's foundation through the message in it.

Fenty Beauty most likely to emphasize the tolerance, harmony, and beauty diversity issue to people through their poster advertisement. There are five posters taken

from Fenty Beauty's official website that shows the beauty diversity issue. All the models in the posters have a different skin colors, body types, genders, religion, and races. The researcher used sign semiotic theory, developed by Charles Sanders Peirce (1931). According to Peirce in Chandler (2009: 29), there are three parts to signs: representamen, interpretant, and object.

Colored Skin Woman as a Model

Figure 1. Colored Skin Woman as a Model



According to Sugiura & Sugiura (2021), beauty implies there are no irregularities in shape or form. The definition of beautiful is no longer pegged to certain beauty standards such as white skin, slim body and straight hair. It shifts to acceptance of the uniqueness of each individual. This theory is related to how the colored skin model is being highlighted on the front page of Fenty Beauty's official website because she does not fulfill the beauty standard criteria by having fair skin.

The poster proves that being a model does not require having perfect face with fair skin, a pointed nose, big eyes, and body goals. In the poster above, Rihanna tries to break the concept of beauty standards and prove that everyone deserves to be a model. This is symbolizing a breakthrough in the beauty industry to appreciate the colored skin woman who does not deserve to be marginalized in the beauty industry.

Moreover, the reversed N means Fenty Beauty try to be unique and break the rules. According to Peate in Fabrik Article (2023), "The font is simple in style, but it does include a backward-facing "N", intended to highlight the unique and forward-thinking nature of the brand". The type of font that being used in the logo is Arial. It is categorized as a Sans Serif font family. The Sans Serif is frequently used since it

contains a simple and elegant design. As claimed by Buriak (2016: 689) that Sans Serif fonts are the best for graphics since they have a clean appearance, so it can engaged the reader to read the text quickly. Fenty Beauty used a neutral color, such as beige, to emphasize the elements on the poster. As stated by Kurt & Osueke (2014: 3) that neutrals are subtle shades from the palest range of color (beige and cream). It is used for balancing vibrant or rich colors.

The slogan complexion check and flawless coverage for all skin tones means Fenty Beauty foundation is a complexion that have perfect coverage allows to conceal flaws like as acne scars, uneven skin tone, dark circles, and blemishes on the face. Fenty Beauty focus on the inclusivity concept by provide light, light medium, medium, medium deep, and deep in color fifty shades of foundation. Since all skin colors is beautiful and deserve an access to wear a proper foundation shade.

Moreover, the black background for the text is used to highlight the white text. Black is used to get a perfect match with white. While the text uses a white color since it is the best contrast for the black background. As stated by Tavaragi & Sushma (2016: 116), black communicates sophistication and is uncompromised promising, and it works particularly well with white. The white color symbolizes cleanliness and black symbolize sophistication.

Fifty Shades of Foundation

Figure 2. Fifty Shades of Foundation



The figure 2 shows fifty bottles foundation with forty caps bottle are closed and ten caps of bottles are opened. The forty closed-cap bottles mean the old edition, and the ten-opened bottles indicate the new addition of foundation shades. The forty number is

associated to the biblical thing. As stated by Wischhover in Racked Article (2018), number forty symbolizes a phase of trial and testing.

The forty symbolisms is related to the Fenty Beauty's first foundation launch which released forty shades as the trial phase for its brand. Furthermore, Rihanna only initially created forty shades, for the first launch in January 2019. Time progressed, Fenty Beauty has expanded their shades into fifty. It is symbolize that Fenty Beauty tries to be more inclusive by fulfill the gap of color of certain shades.

In the past, the colored skin people are truly struggling to find the foundation that matched with their skin tone. The foundations only available for the lighter skin. As a result, the color-skinned people are frequently being left. It inspired Fenty Beauty to create foundation with fifty shades. It is proof that colored-skin women also deserved to be included in beauty industry.

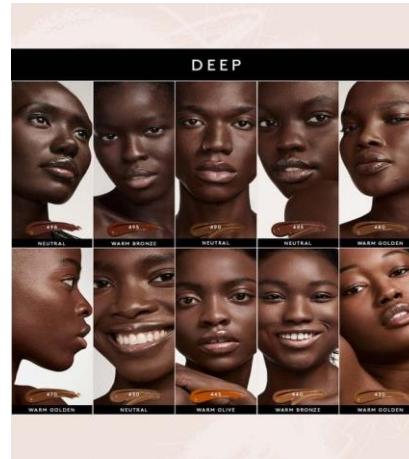
By creating fifty shades of foundation, Fenty Beauty has become the pioneer for inspiring any other makeup brand. They look at Fenty Beauty as the standard for creating foundation shades. If other makeup brands create foundations, they should make them in at least forty or fifty shades to address all skin tones.

The poster also also depicts how the foundation bottles are organized in the S line. According to Hogarth in Bertamini & Sinico, (2021: 62), the S line represents the line of beauty. It appears to be a wire wrapped around the beautiful and diverse form of a cylinder. Fenty Beauty is a brand that focuses on the concept of beauty. As a result, the placement of the fifty foundations is not haphazard. It is arranged beautifully in an S-shaped line.

The beige colors are used to balancing the color, so it will make all color look visible. The beige is chosen because it is symbolize the neutrality since beige is included to neutral color. As the foundations colors is the highlight of the poster, so the perfect color to highlighting each foundations color is beige. As stated by Kurt & Osueke (2014: 3) that neutrals are soft color tones from the palest color range (beige and cream). It is used to balance the strong colors.

Inclusivity

Figure 3. Ten Deep Shade of Fenty Beauty's Foundation



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Most cosmetics brands are only focused on creating shades for light to medium skin tones. As states by Fleming and Marshall in Hall (2021: 3) that in contrast to the variety of foundation shades offered to light-skinned people, there are almost no foundation shades available for colored skin people.

They never try to understand that colored skin people also deserve to be treated fairly, as do light and medium-skinned people. They deserve to get the perfect shade for their skin tone. Fenty Beauty tries to make a breakthrough by expanding its deep shades since each person has their own type of undertone. As a result, Fenty Beauty is an answer to colored skin people's problems.

The foundation streaks are matched with the model's undertone, so it will give an overview of the foundation. Next, the ten types of number codes 498, 490, 485, 450, 440, 480, 470, 430, and 445 are considered the undertone names for each foundation. A

kind of undertone is really important to the foundation shade selection. Once people get the wrong shade that does not match their undertone, it will look ashy on their faces.

At this point, Fenty Beauty is detailed and well-oriented to create a shade with ten different undertones. The range's undertones also vary and it is not only stuck in warm, neutral, and cool undertone. As Sugiura & Sugiura said that thoughts of beauty depend entirely on one's background, culture, and country. Women's beauty in various countries in the world has their own characteristics. Each country's beauty is unique as it is influenced by different races, ethnicities, and cultures in different countries and regions.

The word deep explains that the shade is dedicated to people with dark skin tones, and it also becomes the deepest shade of Fenty Beauty's foundation. Moreover, the warm bronze, warm golden and warm olive refers to warm undertones. The warm bronze is a warm undertone that tends to be metallic brown, and there are two types of shades. For the warm golden, which has a warm undertone appearing yellowish and has a similar color to gold, they also appear in three types of shades. The warm olive has a yellow base with a hint of green within the shade. The last, Neutral is a shade that contain of combination between cool and warm colors.

In addition, neutral color such a beige is frequently used in Fenty Beauty's poster advertisement. Beige can make every object will perfectly see since it has a power to balancing the color. The choose of beige color also symbolize the neutrality since beige is included to neutral color. As Kurt & Osueke (2014:3) states that neutrals are subtle shades from the palest range of color (beige and cream). It is used for balancing vibrant or rich color. As the foundations colors is the highlight of the poster, so the perfect color to highlighting each foundations color is beige.

Moreover, the black background for the text is used to emphasize the white text. It is used since black is a perfect match combination with white. As stated by Tavaragi & Sushma (2016: 116), black is communicates sophistication, pure dedication, and it well-blended with white. While the text uses a white color since it its a best contrast for the black background.

The type of the font used in the poster is Arial which a branch of the main Sans Serif categories. Sans Serif font oftenly used because of its simple and clean

appearance. As claimed by Buriak (2016: 689) that Sans Serif fonts are the best for graphics since they have a clean appearance, so it can engage the reader to read the text quickly.

Gender-neutral Makeup

Figure 4. The Man Model



Fenty Beauty involved one man in the poster above, which illustrates that makeup has no gender. The stereotype that makeup is only for women could make a man who wears foundation tend to be claimed less masculine by society. As a result, Fenty Beauty uses some men models to symbolize the masculinity. Hence, everyone can wear foundation, since foundation is used to cover up the imperfection part in the face, to enhance the confident. Foundation is not related to the gender issue.

As claimed by Sugiura & Sugiura (2021), beauty implies there are no irregularities in shape or form. The definition of beautiful is no longer pegged to certain beauty standards such as white skin, slim body and straight hair. It shifts to acceptance of the uniqueness of each individual.

Tolerance

Figure 5. Hijab Woman as a Model



Fenty Beauty includes one hijab-wearing woman with colored skin to symbolize that she is a Moslem. It is related to the tolerance and unity in diversity concept, especially in the religion concept. As we know, there are some types of discrimination among Muslims that sometimes happens in the United States. According to Weichselbaumer (2020: 573), since 2001, the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has recorded that Muslims are being discriminated against. Muslims are portrayed as religious fanatics, terrorists, wild, and poor. It is a prejudice that can damage Muslims social lives.

As she is Muslim and has a colored skin, it represents the struggle she has had to face discrimination within society and the makeup industry. They experience a discrimination and elimination in society. As a result, they should be treated properly, and they should also have the same opportunities as other people. Fenty Beauty involves a colored skin woman wearing a hijab to make them feel accepted, even in society or the makeup industry.

Fenty Beauty tries to support and appreciate their existence by including them as a model in the beauty industry. It also gives the stigma that every woman is still beautiful with her covered or uncovered hair. As claimed by Sugiura & Sugiura (2021), human skin attractiveness is greatly influenced by individual emotions, and different people have different criteria for beauty. The perception of beauty is influenced by people's individual experiences of what it means to identify something or someone as beautiful. Beauty is not always about appearance; we can see someone's beauty through their attitude and behavior.

The word before illustrate the bare-faced look of the model. It depicts the real appearance of the model's skin with her dark circles and acne scars. Furthermore, the word after refers to the look of model's skin after being applied by Fenty Beauty's foundation. The dark circle and acne scars were covered up perfectly; her skin looked smoother, and her skin tone also looked even. It depicts the credibility of Fenty Beauty as they show the realistic before and after that look not drastic changed. Lastly, the word medium deep indicates the model's skin tone. She has a medium, but it also tends to be a deep shade.

It portrayed skin tone as varied; there are also people with a combination of medium and deep skin colors. It is such awareness to other makeup brands that shade cannot be restricted to medium only and claims it as the deepest shade that they must dig up and explore more about the skin tone and undertone theory.

Lastly, the number code 410 reflects the skin tone and undertone types. The 4 refers to skin tone, which is called medium-deep shade. The bigger number demonstrates that the shade is getting darker. For the rest, two digits indicate the undertone category; 10 mean a warm golden undertone.

In addition, the white background is used to depict clearly about the content of the poster. Fenty Beauty make the hijab woman is the main character on the poster. They try to make everyone recognize her existence. Moreover, as it contains a comparison thing, so the white color will make everything look visible. As a result, the before and after appearance showed the performance of Fenty Beauty's foundation. Based on Tavaragi & Sushma (2016: 116), white is a color associated with cleanliness.

According to Tavaragi and Sushma (2016), black expresses elegance, pure dedication, and it works properly with white. Black background for the text is used to enhance the white text. Black is used to get a perfect match combination of colors. While the text uses a white color since it's a best contrast for the black background.

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D. Conclusion

It can be concluded that the sign elements were discovered by the researcher in the eight data of Fenty Beauty's foundation advertisement poster. By using semiotic sign analysis, it would be the perfect method to elaborate on each Fenty Beauty foundation advertising poster. The icon, index, and symbol are clearly portrayed in each poster. Fenty Beauty presented fifty shades of foundation on models of various skin tones, ethnicities, religions, body sizes, hair colors, hair types, and genders.

Based on Sugiura & Sugiura (2021) definition of beautiful are consist of four categories. First, beauty implies there are no irregularities in shape or form. The definition of beautiful is no longer pegged to certain beauty standards such as white skin, slim body and straight hair. It shifts to acceptance of the uniqueness of each individual. Second, thoughts of beauty depend entirely on one's background, culture, and country. Women's beauty in various countries in the world has their own characteristics. Each country's beauty is unique as it is influenced by different races, ethnicities, and cultures in different countries and regions.

Third, no certain concept of beautiful human skin exists. All skin tones are acceptable, from light to deep. Every woman is beautiful in her own way, and there is no beauty standard in society. Each person's beauty is unique because of their skin color and physical appearance. Last, human skin attractiveness is greatly influenced by individual emotions, and different people have different criteria for beauty. The perception of beauty is influenced by people's individual experiences of what it means to identify something or someone as beautiful. Beauty is not always about appearance; we can see someone's beauty through their attitude and behavior.

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