

Exoticizing nature in marketing:  
green marketing practices of Lumene and Innisfree

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Sanna Niskakangas

University of Jyväskylä  
Department of Language and Communication Studies  
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Tiivistelmä – Abstract <p>Luonnolla on merkittävä rooli ihmisten elämässä, ja erityisesti ilmastonmuutos aiheuttaa kasvavaa huolta sen tulevaisuudesta. Liiallista kulutusta kehoitetaan välttämään, ja yritykset etsivät jatkuvasti uusia keinoja kehittää toimintaansa kestävämpään suuntaan. Tämä on johtanut siihen, että yritykset markkinoivat itseään ympäristöystävällisinä, minkä lisäksi luontoa käytetään yhä enemmän markkinointikeinona. Tämä herättää kysymyksiä toiminnan eettisyydestä ja luonnon roolista markkinoinnissa.</p> <p>Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on selvittää, kuinka luontoa hyödynnetään kosmetiikkayritysten mainonnassa ja yritysten julkisuuskuvien rakentamisessa. Vertailin tutkimuksessani kahta kosmetiikkayritystä, joiden brändit rakentuvat luonnon ympärille. Näistä toinen on suomalainen Lumene ja toinen eteläkorealainen Innisfree, ja aineistoni koostui kyseisten yritysten verkkosivuista. Analyysimetodeina hyödynsin kriittistä diskurssianalyysiä ekolinguivistisestä näkökulmasta sekä multimodaalista analyysiä verkkosivujen kuvien ja tekstien analysoimiseksi.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen myötä selvisi, että kosmetiikkabrändit hyödyntävät luontoa luodakseen ympäristöystävällisen, luonnollisen ja terveyttä edistävän kuvan tuotteistaan ja toiminnastaan. Markkinoinnissa korostetaan luonnon puhtautta ja autenttisuutta, ja vihreän markkinoinnin keskeisiä käsitteitä hyödynnetään eettisen ja vastuullisen kuvan luomisessa. Huolimatta siitä, että sekä Lumene että Innisfree esittävät itsensä valta-asemassa luontoon nähden, kuvataan yritysten ja luonnon välinen suhde läheisenä. Yritykset myös rakentavat identiteettiään ja brändiään paikallisen luonnon kautta muun muassa korostamalla sen mystisyyttä ja ainutlaatuisuutta. Tulosten pohjalta on mahdollista tutkia lisää muun muassa vihreää markkinointia ja luontodiskurssin hyödyntämistä eri aloilla ja eri medioissa.</p>	
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	3
2	BACKGROUND.....	4
2.1	Critical discourse studies.....	4
2.2	Ecolinguistics .....	8
2.3	Green marketing and sustainability practices.....	10
3	PRESENT STUDY .....	12
3.1	Research aim and questions .....	12
3.2	Data and methods of analysis.....	13
4	ANALYSIS .....	16
4.1	Nature and the natural in marketing.....	17
4.2	The importance of location - portrayals of Jeju island and the Arctic .....	25
5	DISCUSSION .....	34
	REFERENCES.....	37

## 1 INTRODUCTION

There has been a major shift in the cosmetics industry during the last ten years with companies releasing more environmentally friendly products and labeling themselves using green marketing terms such as ‘conscious’, ‘sustainable’, ‘vegan’, and ‘cruelty-free’. Many brands that have always been vegan or cruelty-free have begun labeling themselves and being more vocal about their values, and as the number of ‘green’ products and brands increases, the role of nature as a marketing tool becomes more significant. Nature is a phenomenon that has always been treated as a spectacle in advertising (Howlett and Raglon 2001), but now brands are finding new ways to include elements of nature in their marketing. Due to the lack of official regulations regarding the use of environmental claims in advertising, it is rather easy for brands to make unsubstantiated claims and even engage in greenwashing. In order to reveal how companies are conducting their “greening” practices, this study will critically analyze how nature is used in cosmetics brands’ marketing. Although green marketing and greenwashing have been studied in the past rather extensively (e.g., Howlett and Raglon 2001; Mühlhäusler and Peace 2001; Hansen 2002; Budinsky and Bryant 2013), very few studies have focused on the green marketing of cosmetics brands. Previous studies have mainly focused on industries that are largely considered environmentally damaging, such as the automobile industry, and the findings have emphasized the destructive discourses that are used in these industries. Thus, this study aims to fill the gap by studying green marketing practices in the cosmetics industry. The focus of the study will be on investigating how nature is used to promote two cosmetics brands, Lumene and Innisfree, and their products and also studying how specific geographical locations in Finland and South Korea are used in marketing.

Based on previous research on green marketing, the present study will consider how nature and elements related to nature are used in marketing. In addition, the study will investigate how power relations are realized in discourses regarding human-nature relationships. This will be done using a critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework with an ecolinguistic approach. The ecolinguistic aspect of the framework will offer a viewpoint that focuses on the environment along with human species. This allows the analysis of nature’s role in marketing to consider the relationship between the cosmetics brands and the natural environment they have situated their brand images in. The data of the present study is collected from the brands’ websites, and it includes both images and written text. Because of the nature of the data, multimodal analysis

will also be used to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the different discursive methods that are used to construct images of the brands and the environment.

The present study consists of five sections. The introduction is followed by a background section that covers the main theoretical frameworks and concepts relevant to this study. First, I will discuss the field of discourse analysis and critical discourse studies, after which I will introduce ecolinguistic approaches to critical discourse analysis. Lastly, the section will cover issues of green marketing and sustainability practices. After the background section, I will present the research aim and questions, a description of the data, and methods of analysis. Section four presents the findings of the present study with examples from the data, first discussing how nature is used in the marketing of the two cosmetic brands and followed by descriptions of the main uses of specific geographical locations in the brands' marketing. The analysis is followed by discussion, which summarizes the findings of the present study, lists its limitations and provides answers to the research questions as well as considers the applications of the present study.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Critical discourse studies**

A central concept in terms of the present study is the concept of discourse. Discourse as a phenomenon is multidimensional, which is why it is also a multidisciplinary term, and there are a variety of definitions that reflect its dynamic nature. According to Michel Foucault (1972: 49), discourses are social practices that “systematically form the objects of which they speak”. Thus, they construct for example the recognized normative rules and classifications of society (Foucault 1972: 22). Blommaert (2005: 3) defines discourse based on Foucault's work as symbolic behavior that includes all semiotic action in a social, cultural, and historical context. Similarly, Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2019: 31) define discourse as “language use in a context as a part of social action”, while Van Dijk (1997: 2) sees discourse as one form of language use and mentions three dimensions of discourse: language use, communication of ideas and beliefs, and interaction in social situations. James Paul Gee (2010), on the other hand, has made a distinction between *Discourses* with a capital D and *discourse* with a lowercase d. He uses *Discourses* to refer to language use as meaningful action in a social context that constructs socially situated identities, whereas *discourse* means “language-in-use” and meaning-making

practices, such as conversations and stories, that are used to construct information and understanding about the world around us (Gee 2010: 34). Thus, linguistically oriented definitions of discourse can generally be seen as emphasizing the meaning-making function of discourses, and discourse is usually used to refer to language use in a certain context, which is also how the present study views discourse. Viewing discourse as part of social practice considers how language is used differently in each context and focuses on the interconnection between linguistic and social action (Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2019: 37-38). Although discourse has been defined in many ways by different scholars, the common thread thus seems to be the context-bound nature of discourse. Thus, discourse studies do not focus on language structures but rather on how language is used to construct meanings in different situations. According to Foucault (1972: 27-28), compared to the analysis of language structures, which focuses on the rules that govern the structures that can perform an infinite number of functions, the analysis of discourses is always limited and finite because it considers why a specific statement has been chosen above others in a specific context. Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2019: 37-38) note that meanings are negotiated separately in each situation, which is why one word can have many different meanings that change in different situations and different times. Because discourses are social practice, they are not only spoken language but also signed, written, or multimodal (Foucault 1972: 49; Johnstone 2018: xvii; Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2019: 31). Thus, discourse is also a relevant concept in terms of the present study as it allows us to study the different meanings constructed in the multimodal data and learn more about the emergence of nature discourse in cosmetics marketing.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is an approach to discourse studies that focuses on power relations and specifically power struggles and imbalance (Fairclough 1995: 132). CDA as an established network of scholars emerged in the 1990s following a symposium held by Teun van Dijk, Norman Fairclough, Gunther Kress, Theo van Leeuwen, and Ruth Wodak (Wodak 2001: 4). Afterwards, the network has expanded into an established paradigm in linguistics. The term ‘critical’ in CDA means that the researcher distances themselves from the data and adopts a specific political stance on the topic (Wodak 2001: 9), and much like discourse analysis, CDA studies discourses in their social reality (Blommaert 2005: 6). CDA does not consider language powerful in itself but rather power is given to language by the powerful people who use it (Wodak 2001: 10). Fairclough (1989: 2), one of the central figures in the field of critical language study, argues that the existing conventions and practices of meaning-making and interaction are the cause of power struggles, and he mentions that these conventions are usually

“common-sense” - that is, people are unaware of their existence. These conventions are ideologies that are embedded in language, and the power relations behind the conventions affect the nature of said ideologies, which is why they are closely linked to power and language (Fairclough 1989: 2). Wodak (2001: 10) sees power as “relations of difference” and “the effects of differences in social structures”, and because language is so closely linked to social matters, it can be used to express or challenge power. This function is not limited to grammatical forms as it also concerns genre because the way they are associated with different social situations can be used to manipulate power relations (Wodak 2001: 10-11). Wodak (2001: 10) mentions that interdisciplinary work is important for CDA in order to understand the roles that language takes in different contexts, such as in transmitting knowledge or exercising power. Wodak (2001: 10) adds that a central perspective in CDA is that a text is the result of negotiations and power struggles between discourses and ideologies, which is why it is also important to pay attention to intertextuality and recontextualization of different discourses. The present study will also consider how the different discourses of marketing in the cosmetics industry are combined with environmental discourses on cosmetics brands’ websites. Attention is paid especially to the relationships between nature and the brands and the portrayals of the environment in the context of cosmetics marketing.

Fairclough (1989: 3-4) makes a distinction between the exercise of power through coercion and through the manufacture of consent, the latter of which is mainly done through ideologies. Power relations in social institutions and the society as a whole are enforced by institutional practices that appear universal but are in reality the materialization of ideologies that have originated in the dominant class and thus legitimize existing power relations (Fairclough 1989: 33). Fairclough (1989: 33) refers to this kind of ability to “project one’s practices as universal and ‘common sense’” as *ideological power* and mentions that it is closely linked to economic and political power. Thus, a capitalist society offers great opportunities for unequal power relations, and consumerism and marketing can reinforce said power relations. Marketing would contain what Fairclough (1989: 49) calls *hidden power*: the discourse is one-sided as the participants are separated by time and space instead of adapting to each other and contributing simultaneously. Fairclough mentions that media producers construct the discourse for the *ideal subject* to which the actual audience has to relate themselves. Since media producers are in a position where they can decide what to include and exclude from the texts they produce and also to present things in a certain light, they hold immense power over the public (Fairclough

1989: 50). This is why the present study will focus on how cosmetics brands utilize this power when they use nature in their marketing.

CDA has been criticized for being too partial and selective because of the (generally left-wing) political motivation of the discipline (Breeze 2011, Chilton 2005, Machin and Mayr 2012). Critics have argued that the term ‘critical’ simply means that CDA justifies attacking views that do not line with those of the researcher, thus not reaching the objectivity scientific research calls for (Machin and Mayr 2012: 208; Chilton 2005: 21). According to Hammersley (1997: 244), CDA uses the term ‘critical’ as an umbrella term for “any approach that wishes to portray itself as politically radical without being exclusive in its commitments”. However, Chilton (2005: 21) argues against the claims that CDA is not objective enough by saying that acknowledging one’s position is in fact a form of objectivity, no matter what the position might be in terms of political alignment. CDA is very vocal about its role in generating social change (Blommaert 2005: 6), which has resulted in discussion about whether CDA has truly contributed to social justice and if it is even needed in the first place (Chilton 2005: 21). Hammersley (1997: 244-245) argues that CDA is too ambitious in aiming for social change and wanting to understand not only discourses but also society as a whole because such an approach results in a view of events and actions as only progressive or regressive in nature. According to Hammersley (1997: 245), CDA also often sees only the dominant relationship between the oppressors and the oppressed, thus only focusing on one source of inequality instead of many. In addition to being accused of being too biased, CDA has also received criticism for being too vague and haphazard in its methods instead of systematically applying a theoretical model (Breeze 2011: 498). Widdowson (1998: 137) argues that CDA is done by selecting whichever model or concept fits the analyst best, and as Widdowson (1995: 159) puts it, “interpretation in support of belief takes precedence over analysis in support of theory”. In terms of utilizing more interdisciplinary methods, Chilton (2005: 21) suggests that since mainstream CDA is interested in representations, it should adopt a more cognitive approach and observe the human mind more closely.

The focus of the present study is on cosmetics brands’ marketing. Advertisements have been a major interest of studies in CDA because much like other media producers, advertisers hold a great amount of power because they are able to manipulate their audiences by publishing texts that serve the ideologies of the dominant class (Fairclough 1989). Cosmetics advertisements, for example, can reinforce beauty ideals and gender roles, which is why they have also been



studied extensively using CDA. For example, Kaur, Arumugam and Yunus (2013), Hidayah and Milal (2016), and Renaldo (2017) have studied beauty product advertisements using Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional framework that looks at language on textual, interactive and contextual levels. Xu and Tan (2020), on the other hand, utilized CDA along with systemic functional grammar and multimodal analysis to study beauty advertisements. All of these studies focused on how cosmetics advertisements constructed the image of an ideal woman and upheld gender ideologies, and gender seems to be the typical perspective in studies that look at cosmetics advertisements using CDA. Therefore, I am going to look at beauty marketing from a different perspective by studying how nature is used in the advertisements. I will be utilizing an ecolinguistic framework for critical discourse analysis in this study, which I am going to discuss in detail in the following section.

## **2.2 Ecolinguistics**

Ecolinguistics is a branch of critical discourse studies that focuses on “discourses which have an impact on how humans treat each other, other organisms and the physical environment” (Stibbe 2014: 118). However, according to Steffensen and Fill (2014: 16), ecolinguistics is far from a unified domain because it has formed from different scientific disciplines that have focused on different aspects of language and ecology. Because of this, it is difficult to produce a definition of ecolinguistics that is not too vague and includes all forms of ecolinguistics (Alexander and Stibbe 2014: 104). However, Alexander and Stibbe (2014: 109) argue that the most important task for ecolinguistics is to analyze how all discourses, not only environmental discourses, can influence human behavior in a way that can affect the environment. Much like traditional CDA, ecolinguistics is concerned with power relations, but ecolinguistics expands the oppressor-oppressed dynamic to include non-human subjects and future generations that have not been born yet (Stibbe 2014: 117). According to Stibbe (2014: 125), “ecolinguistics can address how discourses shape vital ... relationships between humans, other species and the physical environment in many different ways”. Steffensen and Fill (2014: 17) define the mainstream ecolinguistic view on language as “ecology is nature, language is culture, and man is a cultural being that exploits nature”. Fill (2001: 43) notes that there are two ways of understanding the concept of ‘ecology’ in ecolinguistics. The first approach is credited to Haugen (1972: 325), who sees ‘ecology’ as “the interactions between any given language and its environment”. In this approach, concepts such as ‘environment’ and ‘conservation’ are used to describe linguistic phenomena instead of the actual ecological systems (Fill 2001: 44).

Languages are seen in relation to each other as well as their environment and treated as species that can become endangered or extinct (Alexander and Stibbe 2014: 107). This approach is mainly used in the study of minority languages, and it can be especially useful in protecting endangered languages (Fill 2001: 44). The second approach to ecology has been greatly influenced by Halliday (2003). Halliday's approach views 'ecology' in the biological sense and focuses on how language can create and sustain environmental issues (Fill 2001: 43). This can be seen for example in the way languages are constructed: most language systems present humans as superior to other life forms through the use of pronouns and certain sentence structures (Halliday 2003: 165-166; Fill 2001: 44; Alexander and Stibbe 2014: 108). Fill (2001: 43) does not see these two approaches - metaphorical and non-metaphorical - as mutually exclusive but rather as complementary, but ecolinguistic studies usually begin with one or the other. This study will focus on the latter one, as I will be studying how nature is described, pictured, and otherwise talked about in relation to cosmetics brands and the advertised products.

The study of meanings is central in the field of discourse analysis, and it is also part of ecolinguistics. With regard to discourse analysis, Mühlhäusler and Peace (2006: 458) define environmental discourse as "the linguistic devices articulating arguments about the relationship between humans and the natural environment" with a focus on the global endangerment of humans and the environment. Steffensen and Fill (2014: 19-20) argue that discourse analysis with an environmental focus should trace back to the "real-life flow of human interactivity" in order to understand the relation between discourse and nature because human behavior (and thus discourse) is closely tied to the ecosystems around us. Stibbe (2014: 122) mentions economic growth, advertising, and intensive agriculture as ecologically destructive discourses, and suggests that ecolinguistics can resist said discourses by promoting critical language awareness, which was first introduced by Fairclough (1992). According to Mühlhäusler and Peace (2006: 472) some of the most common features of green discourse are euphemisms and buzzwords, and Schultz (2001: 111) mentions that expressions such as "improving on nature" and "value-adding" may be used to give the impression that the companies are benefiting nature. Euphemisms can be used to replace words that have negative connotations, such as "to hunt" or "to kill", or to create forms of "formalized collocation", such as "sustainable development" (Mühlhäusler and Peace 2006: 463). Alexander and Stibbe (2014: 108-109) mention that it would be beneficial to seek alternatives to words such as "growth" that reinforce economic discourses that are damaging to the environment and suggest that this could be done by for example replacing growth with wellbeing as the end goal. This is supported by Schultz (2001:

109-110), who notes that seemingly neutral words such as ‘develop’, ‘resource, and ‘growth’ can be used to create positive associations with actions that can be damaging to nature. In addition, Schultz (2001: 110) notes that instead of focusing on development as the goal, emphasis should be put on its role in the process, with the end goal being for example sustainability or survival, which is why she suggests using the expression “development towards sustainability” in place of “sustainable development”. According to Stibbe (2014: 122), ecolinguistics could provide consumers with information about the damaging effects of the discourse and offer guidance in resisting it. In the case of advertising, consumers should become aware of the manipulative effects of advertising and resist it by reducing their exposure to advertising and becoming more critical about their consumption habits.

### **2.3 Green marketing and sustainability practices**

Terms such as green marketing, environmental marketing, and ecological marketing have been used in the past to refer to the promotion of environmentally beneficial products and services. Henion (1976: 1-2) was one of the first people to use the term *ecological marketing*, defined as follows:

*Ecological marketing* is ... the marketing effort of a profit-making entity or ... a nonprofit entity ... expended directly or indirectly in behalf of selling or marketing goods, services, or ideas whose positive ecological attributes or content constitute a minor or major appeal for the buyer, user, or adopter for the purpose of making, or which tends to result in, a short-term or long-term profit for a profit-making entity.

Henion’s definition emphasizes that in ecological marketing, the promoted products, services, or ideas have ecological qualities that make them profitable and appealing to environmentally conscious consumers. Furthermore, businesses are not only interested in “greening” the images of their products, but they are increasingly interested in building greener brand images as well. This has been studied for example by Howlett and Raglon (2001), who studied green advertising from the years 1910-1990. They mention that natural imagery in product advertisements is nothing new but what stood out in their study is that starting from the 1990s, the corporate image also started to become greener. Instead of associating business with “nature-defying modernity”, companies began introducing themselves as “nature’s caretakers” (Howlett and Raglon 2001: 245-247). This suggests that companies are more inclined to adopt a holistic approach in their greening practices instead of only concentrating on advertising environmentally friendly products or services. This is a relevant point to note in terms of my study, as I will be studying cosmetics brands’ websites instead of print advertisements.

Websites usually offer a more extensive platform for promotion, and companies include “about us” pages that list their core values, history, and other information that is used to construct a brand image. Therefore, I will be paying attention not only to how products are advertised but also the ways in which the brands are promoted.

According to Simões and Tuna (2017: 197), concern for environmental issues along with positive perceptions about nature’s benefits have attracted the attention of advertisers, which has led to advertisers borrowing from environmental discourses in order to achieve credibility. Hansen (2002: 503), on the other hand, mentions that the industrial and modernized societies of today have encouraged advertisers to appeal to consumers with ‘genuine’ and ‘authentic’ products that are also ‘traditional’, meaning rural, idyllic, and harmonious. These points suggest that green marketing is an attractive domain for advertisers because of people’s growing interest in conscious consumption, generally positive associations with nature, and the demand for authenticity and tradition in an increasingly modern and urbanized world. Budinsky and Bryant (2013: 208) argue that although there is a great need for environmental activism due to the negative environmental impacts of capitalism, media and corporations are drawing the public’s attention to green consumerism, which is offered as a solution to environmental problems. This, according to Budinsky and Bryant (*ibid.*), is a deceptive tactic as it places more importance on profit than on protecting the environment. In addition, Bland (2014: 27) highlights that although mainstream consumer discourses suggest that ethical purchasing empowers the green consumer, the main responsibility regarding environmental consequences of capitalism is held by major corporations and governments. However, despite the criticism, green consumerism has generated new markets that consider the environmental impacts of consumerist activities. One of these markets is ecotourism, which has been studied in the field of discourse analysis by for example Mühlhäusler and Peace (2001), Stamou and Paraskevopoulos (2004), and Lamb (2020, 2021). According to Mühlhäusler and Peace (2001: 378), the prefix *eco-* is no longer used to only refer to the “functional interrelationships between the inhabitants of an ecology” but rather it is used for everything that is related to nature in some way, which is why the term “nature-based tourism” would be a more appropriate alternative to “ecotourism”. These new labeling practices diminish the negative impact of consumerism and make it more difficult to identify which practices are “green” and which only appear to be so. In fact, some companies are even participating in greenwashing by presenting themselves as “green” while engaging in environmentally damaging practices (Baum 2012, Budinsky and Bryant 2013). Advertising plays a large role in greenwashing, which is why it is important to identify the destructive

advertising discourses that promote unnecessary consumption and products and ingredients that are damaging to the environment. Baum (2012: 437) notes that green claims in advertising can lead to sustainability practices only when they are supported by scientific information, which is why consumers should actively monitor corporate activity in order to prevent companies from publishing false information about their environmental practices. However, this may be difficult in practice because consumers may not always have access to this type of information, which is why greenwashing still happens. For example, Budinsky and Bryant (2013) analyzed the greenwashing of environmental discourses in cleaning product and car advertisements, and they found that the companies aimed to appear green by for example promoting their products as “all-natural” or by using visual elements, such as flowers or fruit, to create an association with nature. Gargan (2007), on the other hand, has studied the harmful effects of cosmetics advertising. She argues that perfume advertisements have a negative impact on both the environment and on humans as they promote the consumption of toxic chemicals and unrealistic beauty ideals. Analyzing the role of nature imagery in advertising, Chen (2016) studied green marketing in a non-Western context by examining Chinese car advertisements. The study revealed that the advertisements construct an ideological separation between humans and nature, suggesting that nature is there for human consumption. The study is especially relevant in terms of the present study since my data is also partially non-Western as I will be studying the marketing of a South Korean brand. The present study will also expand on the advertisement discourses of the cosmetics industry by studying the environmental discourses in Lumene and Innisfree’s marketing.

### **3 PRESENT STUDY**

#### **3.1 Research aim and questions**

The aim of this study is to analyze how nature is used in the marketing of cosmetics brands. My focus will be on the relationships between the brands and nature, and I will also study how the specific geographical locations of the brands’ countries of origin are used in marketing. I chose two cosmetics brands for comparison, the Finnish brand Lumene and the South Korean brand Innisfree. In the last few years, Lumene has branded itself as a natural and sustainable company, emphasizing “natural Finnish beauty” and the use of quality ingredients from the Arctic (Lumene n.d.). Innisfree, on the other hand, is a brand owned by Amorepacific, a South Korean beauty and health care conglomerate (Forbes 2018), and it has built its entire brand image

around Jeju, the largest island in South Korea, located south of the Korean Peninsula. Jeju Island is known for its volcanic soil and a great variety of animal and plant species, and this is also the root of Innisfree's brand image (Innisfree n.d.). Thus, these brands are suitable subjects for this study as they have a similar brand image that revolves around nature and a specific geographical location. Comparing two brands instead of studying only one brand provides a wider picture of how nature can be used in advertising by different, unrelated brands in different parts of the world. In addition, studying the two brands can provide information about how relating the brand to specific geographical locations can be used as a marketing tactic. My research questions are as follows:

1. How is nature used to advertise products and the brand on Lumene and Innisfree's websites?
2. How do Lumene and Innisfree use location (the Arctic and Jeju island) to construct their brand images?

I chose to analyze websites instead of print advertisements because I wanted to achieve a deeper understanding of how nature is linked to the brand as a whole and how the brands utilize the Arctic and Jeju island in marketing. Since brand websites are used to offer information about the brand to not only consumers but also other stakeholders, they provide a comprehensive portrayal of the companies' values, missions, and identities. Thus, my research questions and data will be used to reveal the role of nature in the production of brand images and the promotion of cosmetic products.

### **3.2 Data and methods of analysis**

In order to answer my research questions, I will be conducting a qualitative study of Lumene and Innisfree's websites. A qualitative method allows for a deeper, more detailed understanding of the phenomenon than a generalizing quantitative method (Trochim n.d.), which is why it is more suited for this purpose. However, due to the highly descriptive nature of the method, the extent of the study is limited, and it will not be possible to make universal generalizations based on the findings (ibid.).

Lumene's website (lumene.com) offers 5 versions of the site for different countries: the United States, Sweden, Finland, Russia, and an international site for the rest of the world. Innisfree's international site (innisfree.com) is offered in 5 different languages: English, Chinese, Thai,

Vietnamese, and Indonesian. The brand has separate websites for the United States (us.innisfree.com) and South Korea (innisfree.co.kr). I chose to limit the data to the international English language websites of the brands due to the size of the study and for better comparison in terms of linguistic choices. The data was collected on November 1, 2020, in the form of screenshots from the brand websites. The total number of screenshots was 61, and it consisted of 5 pages from Lumene and 6 pages from Innisfree. The number of pages was then reduced to 3 pages per brand, 6 pages in total, due to the size of the present study. I chose pages with similar topics such as information about the brand, ingredients, and posts about Jeju Island and the Arctic for a fair comparison. Due to the extent of the study, I will be excluding any video material embedded in the web pages from the data. Since both websites are protected by copyright, ethical issues had to be considered. However, the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture has granted universities the permission to produce copies of copyrighted material for research purposes (Tekijänoikeudet opetuksessa n.d.). In order to comply with fair use guidelines, the referenced materials will be cited accordingly.

As I will be studying web pages that often utilize more than one semiotic mode, I will be combining multimodal analysis with critical discourse analysis (CDA) from an ecolinguistic point of view. Multimodal analysis is a method that focuses on many modes, such as images, sound and gestures, at the same time instead of only studying one, and unlike traditional linguistics, it studies form and meaning together instead of form only (Kress and Mavers 2005: 172). CDA, on the other hand, is both a theory and a method that concerns all forms of semiosis including visual language (Fairclough 2001: 121). I believe it is beneficial to combine CDA with the tools of multimodal analysis in order to achieve a more detailed understanding of the ways in which meaning is constructed through different modes on the websites, and according to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 14), multimodal analysis allows us to “read between the lines” and understand the ideologies that have generated certain images. Images are not produced haphazardly because they are always motivated by the interests and ideologies of the sign-makers who in turn are guided by social, cultural, and psychological influences (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 7-8; Kress and Mavers 2010: 173). *Modality* refers to the “truth value or credibility of (linguistically realized) statements about the world” (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 155), which in visual communication means that images can depict people, places, and things realistically or unrealistically based on what is considered true by the social group behind the representation (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006: 156). Thus, much like narratives in the form of written text can be altered to be more convincing, images can also tell a different story based

on their modality. For example, a landscape image can be enhanced by increasing the saturation of colors and adjusting the brightness of the image. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 20) also note that the different modes in an advertisement may be sending contradictory messages, for example with 'non-sexist' verbal text and sexist visual text. Thus, studying more than one mode can reveal different layers of meaning in a single composition.

Instead of being inherently meaningful, images are given meaning through negotiations of social values, and for this reason they are linked to power (Stocchetti and Kukkonen 2011: 3). Since the focus of CDA is on power relations, combining it with multimodal analysis thus allows us to examine how power differences are constructed through visual communication, such as written text, images, and videos. In an environmental context, the power relations concern human behavior in relation to nature and the power that humans have over each other and the environment (Stibbe 2014: 118). In order to understand the meanings behind using nature in cosmetics brands' marketing, we need to identify the discourses that the brands are constructing and contributing to through their websites. This can be done by analyzing the different visual elements and their relation to the written texts on the websites. Adopting an ecolinguistic perspective helps reveal the ways in which the discourses are used to shape the relationships between humans and nature (Stibbe 2014: 125), thus allowing us to understand how nature is used in marketing and the possible implications of such marketing practices in terms of human-nature relationships.

The present study thus utilizes multimodal analysis and CDA with an ecolinguistic approach in order to reveal how Lumene and Innisfree use nature and specific geographical locations in marketing on their websites. I began studying the data by analyzing the images using tools for critical multimodal analysis provided by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) and Machin and Mayr (2012). I identified elements in the images that were related to nature and the geographical locations of Jeju island and the Arctic. Next, I analyzed the written texts on the pages from an ecolinguistic point of view by studying how nature is discussed and referred to, after which I identified common themes in the texts and visual elements. Lastly, I looked at the relation between the images and texts and analyzed how their combination contributes to the brand images and product marketing. Due to the size of the present study and the nature of the qualitative methods, the study will not be able to provide universal generalizations on the issue. However, the generated results will offer a detailed description of the green marketing practices



of the two brands that may offer some insight into the ways in which nature is used in marketing by cosmetics brands. In the following section, I will present the findings of the present study.

## 4 ANALYSIS

This section illustrates the main findings of the present study. In Chapter 4.1, I will discuss how nature is used in Lumene and Innisfree's marketing on their websites. Nature is mainly used on both websites to support claims of the naturalness and purity of the brands' products and to portray the brands as environmentally conscious and "green". Natural ingredients and cosmetics are seen as beneficial to one's overall health, which is why the brands aim to be as 'natural' as possible. The purity of nature is also seen as a positive contributor to the quality of cosmetics products, which benefits the brand image. In addition, green marketing terms, such as 'organic', 'vegan', and 'sustainable', are used to emphasize the environmental values of the brands and to market the products to environmentally conscious consumers. The brands also describe their sustainability practices in order to demonstrate their close relationship with nature. However, there is a clear power relation between the brands and nature, as both brands portray themselves as active participants whereas nature is mostly passive.

Chapter 4.2 covers how the specific geographical locations of Jeju island and the Arctic are used to construct the brand images of Lumene and Innisfree. The main findings suggest that the locations are used to emphasize the localness of the brands in the national context and the uniqueness of the brands in the global context. The brands treat the raw materials of the local environment as heritage, and the unique ecosystems of Jeju island and the Arctic are seen as contributing to the uniqueness of the ingredients. Furthermore, the nature in these locations is presented as mysterious and mystical, and this view is supported by references to for example folklore and natural history. The brands use generic images of the locations to emphasize the peacefulness and purity of the local nature, but they also include some recognizable cultural symbols in the images to remind the viewer of the specific context. In addition, the brands discuss their relationships with their main target audiences in the context of the local nature. Nature is used both as a source of inspiration and a frame for green consumerism and sustainability practices.

## 4.1 Nature and the natural in marketing

Both Lumene and Innisfree explicitly express their close relationship with nature on their websites, and one of the main recurring themes on both websites is the ‘naturalness’ of the products and ingredients. This is in line with the findings of Howlett and Raglon (2001: 251) who mention that since consumers generally have positive attitudes towards nature, advertisers promote the naturalness of their products as a way of portraying them as part of nature. According to Lumene, some of their products contain as much as “100% naturally derived ingredients”, and Innisfree claims to be the “first natural brand from Korea”. Thus, it is important to discuss what the term ‘natural’ means. It has become a buzzword in the cosmetics industry as an increasing number of companies advertise their products as natural or naturally derived. Due to this trend, official guidelines and regulations have started to emerge. For example, the South Korean Ministry of Food and Drug Safety (2019) issued regulations that require products to contain at least 95% natural ingredients (meaning naturally produced, non-processed plant, mineral, or animal ingredients) in weight in order to be considered natural cosmetics. As a South Korean brand, Innisfree is required to comply with this regulation. Lumene, on the other hand, is not subjected to such legal restrictions in terms of using the term ‘natural’ because the European Union does not have a harmonized standard for natural cosmetics (European Commission 2015). However, according to Article 20 of the Regulation (EC) 1223/2009 on cosmetic products issued by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union (2020), cosmetics manufacturers are not allowed to make false product claims. In addition, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has issued guidelines that can be used to define natural and organic cosmetics and calculate the percentage of natural ingredients in the final products (ISO 2016, 2017). It is worth noting that *natural* does not always mean *better* in terms of skincare, as for example lead and arsenic, two ingredients that have historically been used in cosmetic products, are toxic despite being natural (Witkowski and Parish 2001). This is why it is interesting how the word ‘natural’ has become a solely positive and desirable characteristic of cosmetic products. Lumene even mentions that they are working every day to make their products “even more natural”, which suggests that the main goal of the company is to be as natural as possible. Innisfree, on the other hand, describes their “devotion to good ingredients” as the core of their mission, as they want to offer consumers a “healthy form of beauty through natural products”. According to Hansen and Machin (2008: 783), in the era of branding, it is common for companies to focus more on associating their products with certain values instead of describing the product itself. Such

value-based marketing can also be seen in Lumene and Innisfree’s marketing with eco-friendliness, naturalness, and “healthy beauty” as the primary focus of the marketing on their websites. Naturalness is seen as a positive attribute that cosmetics brands should strive towards, and an underlying theme in the texts seems to be that natural ingredients and products are the key to a healthy life.

According to Howlett and Raglon (2001: 251-252), the purity of ingredients has been a desirable trait in women’s beauty products for hundreds of years, and the purity of nature is also a recurring theme on Lumene and Innisfree’s websites. Nature is portrayed as untouched and clean, and the purity of natural ingredients contributes positively to the quality of Lumene and Innisfree’s products.



3  
**INNISFREE & JEJU**

This is our commitment to share the natural benefits of pure Island

**Jeju Heritage of innisfree**

Innisfree, the first natural brand from Korea, is dedicated to sharing the clean and pure energy of nature for healthy beauty. We create products with high quality ingredients made from Jeju, the island where possesses all natural purity including the sea, the earth and the forest. For this, we are beloved and trusted by customers all over the Asia as well as Korea.



**Clear fresh air, Soft warm sunlight,  
 Fertile healthy soil, Pollution-free pure water**

Jeju, the home of the four energies of pure nature, is full of the honest and immaculate beauty that innisfree wishes to share with you. innisfree is creating spaces where nature and skin can rest in the green energy of pure Jeju.



Example 1. Page describing Innisfree's connection to Jeju island on Innisfree's website.

In Innisfree's context, it is not nature in general but rather Jeju island specifically that is 'pure'. According to Innisfree, Jeju's natural purity includes the sea, the earth and the forests. Innisfree mentions natural elements, "the four energies of pure nature", which are portrayed in the images shown in example 1: Jeju's "soft warm sunlight" represents fire, earth is the "fertile, healthy soil", "pollution-free pure water" comes from the sea, and everything is surrounded by "clear fresh air". Images show Jeju's lush fields and forests, waves crashing against rocks by the sea, and wind farms on a sunny day. Referring to Classical elements creates a strong association with purity and simplicity because the brand is connected to something that is believed to be a fundamental part of the ecosystem. Furthermore, on a page titled *Ingredients*, Innisfree mentions that the concept of naturalism made them think about the "unique pristine form of nature". Naturalism is a philosophical approach that sees everything in the world as belonging to nature (Jacobs n.d.), which again links the brand to the fundamentality of nature. According to Innisfree, the brand created the phrase "Natural Benefit from JEJU" based on the concept of naturalism, which could suggest that Innisfree sees Jeju's nature as innately pure and thus healthy and beneficial to the human body. Innisfree even mentions that nature and skin can both "rest in the green energy of pure Jeju". According to Innisfree, Jeju island "possesses all natural purity", once again emphasizing that Jeju island is naturally clean and untouched in all sectors. The message is further reinforced through the images that show Jeju's nature. The fields and forests look lush with plants that are almost unrealistically green, and the green tea grows in incredibly clean rows on the field. The seawater is a light blue color and clean - even seaweed and other things native to the sea have been excluded from the picture. The sky is blue and clear with no pollution, and the wind farms symbolize "clean energy". The image of purity is thus constructed through lexical choices in the texts ("pollution-free", "clear", "fresh") as well as through images that depict Jeju's nature in an ideal state.

Kitty's Corner

## Calm down. Winter wilderness is the new paradise.

For some time a new definition of luxury traveling has been emerging. It is something so rare and exclusive that not many places can offer it to a clientele that has seen it all and who are done with the overcrowded resorts. They are places, where you can experience exceptional silence and calmness. Five star yoga retreats, in tropical surroundings are always a good choice, but they don't offer a chance to open up thoroughly to the healing power of nature itself, to conquer yourself and enjoy it all in luxurious surroundings. Lapland is the new definition of luxury.

### Peace of the Nordic Nature

While you enjoy your cup of hot wine, in front of the fire place, in your arctic treehouse in Rovaniemi or fall asleep wrapped in your reindeer fur blanket, in your warm glass igloo in Kakslautanen, you might not realise it right away, but it is the pace of nature that makes you calm down.



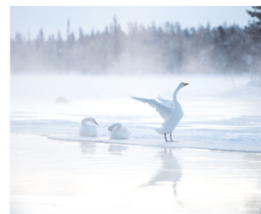
Even the sounds are soothing and inevitably you will calm down and relax.

Nature surrounds you from all sides. For an urban person the lack of artificial light or the lack of other people might be quite distressing in the beginning. In the winter the nature is very silent and the thick snow absorbs almost all sounds. But then again, have you heard the wind whistling the snowy tree branches or the ice singing on the lake, as the locals describe it? Even the sounds are soothing and inevitably you will calm down and relax.

### Sisu and Aurora Borealis

You may, however, be woken up in the night in the howling of the wolves or to a bell, alarming outside, when Mother Earth gives her most fabulous show in the night sky, the Aurora Borealis. The indigenous Sami people believed that it was the "fire fox" lashing the snow blanket, creating sparks to the sky, but the Asians believe that it is the most fertile time to conceive a child and that is why the personnel rattles the bell.

If you can detach yourself from the deep relaxation mode, there is an adventure waiting for you. Keep in mind that you are in the middle of a wilderness. It is the last frontier of Europe. Challenge yourself and awaken something very Nordic, or more precisely, Finnish, in you. It is called "Sisu". It is the core of endurance and success. Even when the odds are against you, you just keep going, being fearless and headstrong.



KITTY'S CORNER

Take a snowmobile safari and drive tens of kilometres, in the snow desert, to the border of Russia, a midnight hike in snowshoes to watch the Northern Lights, catch your fish of the day by ice-fishing or even better, go ice-swimming in a lake that is so pure that even the thought of it cleanses your body. The combination of the "Sisu" and relaxation practice is not only the core of the new luxury, but also amazingly empowering!

The demand of calmness and silence is on an huge rise. The App of the year on AppStore, in 2017 was the Calm application. In our busy lives apps are "life saviours", but it is only by living it, that makes the experience of calmness more lasting. Lapland is one of the last hidden pearls, where letting go doesn't depend entirely of your own willingness. The nature will take care of it for you. Yes, it is cold and harsh, but as the wise people say: "It is not the mountain you conquer, it's yourself".

Example 2. Kitty's Corner article on Lumene's website.

Lumene, on the other hand, emphasizes the purity of nature by describing the wilderness of the Arctic. The texts describe Lapland as characterized by thick, clean snow that silences all sounds, and the lack of people can be astonishing. As can be seen in example 2 showing an article called *Kitty's Corner* on Lumene's website, this view is portrayed in the images that show sceneries with untouched white snow and barely any signs of habitation. Lumene mentions that the lakes in Lapland are "so pure that even the thought cleanses your body" and states that it is the purest in the world according to research. The pure Finnish water is also compared to an elixir, which suggests that the water is so pure that it has healing and life-prolonging properties. This again links the importance of skincare to one's overall health, and the importance of pure water as the base for skincare and makeup products but also the human body is emphasized. It is also mentioned that Finnish water has been purified by nature during the Ice Age, and according to Hansen (2002: 508), similar descriptions have been given in advertisements for mineral water

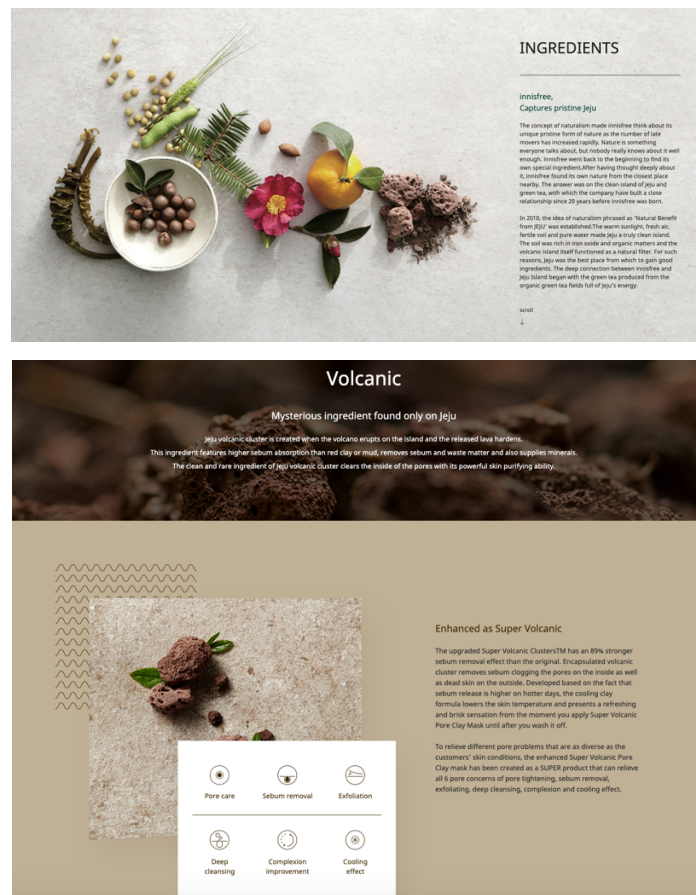
where the product is linked to “‘ancient’ authenticity” by mentioning its origin. In the mineral water advertisements, the water is described as “naturally filtered through ancient volcanic rock”, whereas Finnish water used by Lumene has been “filtered through layers of sand and gravel formed after the Ice Age”. Lumene also mentions that Finnish berries, plants, and mushrooms have evolved in nature for “thousands of years”, which is another instance that suggests “ancient authenticity”. Thus, it could be argued that purity is linked to authenticity by associating it with natural history and by emphasizing the role of nature in the production of natural ingredients such as clean water. Furthermore, the Northern wilderness is seen as authentic due to its untamed nature, and Lumene’s manufacturing practices maintain the natural balance of nature through the use of “handpicked” and “wild-crafted” ingredients. The fact that the ingredients are handpicked means that they are carefully selected instead of being mechanically harvested and only the best are selected, which suggests that the products are made personally with care, thus being authentic. This gives an “artisan quality” to Lumene’s products and makes the brand seem luxurious and unique as well as environmentally conscious.

Defining agency is another way for the brands to construct their relationship with nature. Agency, which is the representation of participants as either “agents” or “patients” in relation to each other in certain contexts (van Leeuwen 2008: 23), is related to power, and it is one of the central concepts in critical discourse analysis. Generally, Lumene and Innisfree depict themselves as the active participant and nature as the passive one. However, Lumene does give some authority and agency to nature in some of the texts on its website. For example, *Kitty’s Corner* mentions that in Lapland, “nature surrounds you from all sides”. In this example, nature is the subject, “doer”, that envelops the object, in this case the reader, and the active verb form shows agency. This suggests that nature is able to capture humans, which is seen as a positive thing in this context since the soothing and relaxing surrounding is described as healing to humans. *Kitty’s Corner* also defines Lapland as the “last frontier of Europe” where “letting go doesn’t depend entirely of your own willingness”. This positioning places nature against humans as a powerful entity but also suggests that nature is something for humans to conquer. Nature’s agency is also brought forward when Lumene describes how nature has produced the rich ingredients that are used in their products. Finnish water has been purified by nature, and Arctic flora and fungi have evolved, survived, and thrived in challenging conditions created by the Arctic light cycle. Nature is thus again portrayed in a powerful and active role, and the Arctic wilderness is a challenging environment for both humans and other life forms. Lumene has also capitalized the word ‘nature’ a few times, which is another way of giving agency.

Capitalization emphasizes that nature is a living thing, and in a way, it is even humanized in expressions such as “purified by Nature” and “allowing Nature to regenerate and remain in balance”. However, in the latter example it is still Lumene that “allows” nature to function normally - that is, Lumene is in control of nature and holds the power in the relationship. Compared to Lumene, Innisfree gives less agency to nature on their website - in fact, nature is almost always the object. The green tea used by Innisfree is “cultivated with great effort”, which implies that Innisfree goes to great lengths to produce the green tea and the plants cannot grow by themselves but rather they need to be assisted by the company. The green tea is “nourished for 3 years”, which emphasizes that it is a temporally demanding process, and the verb ‘nourish’ suggests that Innisfree nurtures the green tea with care. This is related to what Howlett and Raglon (2001: 246) mention about companies presenting themselves as “nature’s caretakers”. The green tea field is also “operated by innisfree itself”, which gives authority and responsibility to Innisfree. The image next to the text features a set of hands cradling green tea leaves, the hands forming a heart shape. This implies that the ingredient is “made with love” and enforces the idea that Innisfree cares about the green tea they are producing. On the *Ingredients* page, the title says “innisfree, Captures pristine Jeju”, which, despite most likely being a metaphorical expression, suggests that Innisfree has gained control over the island by force. Innisfree’s products are “made from Jeju”, which implies that the ingredients themselves are inherently part of Jeju, and the island is an entity that can be turned into beauty products. Again, Innisfree asserts their agency by saying that the ingredients are made “from Jeju” instead of “by Jeju”. Compared to Lumene, Innisfree’s relationship with nature is portrayed in my data as rather unidirectional, which creates a stronger power imbalance than in Lumene’s case.

Green marketing terms are also used on the websites, and they are meant to reflect the eco-friendly values of the two brands. Lumene mentions that their products are vegan and cruelty-free, and the message is enforced with labels saying “cruelty-free” and “100% vegan”. It is interesting that Lumene has included the cruelty-free label on their website because animal tests on finished cosmetics products have been banned in the EU since 2004, tests on cosmetics ingredients since 2009, and the marketing of ingredients and finished products tested on animals since 2013 (European Commission n.d.). Thus, as a Finnish brand Lumene is “automatically” cruelty-free. However, the label makes the information more accessible to those who are not aware of these EU regulations, and both labels serve a marketing purpose due to the popularity of vegan and cruelty-free products. Interestingly, considering that Lumene describes itself as a cruelty-free and 100% vegan company, *Kitty’s Corner* promotes sleeping on reindeer fur

blankets. ‘Organic’ is another green marketing term that is often used to describe products and ingredients and is associated with environmentally conscious consumerism especially by Millennials (Smith and Brower 2012: 548). Appealing to this demographic, Innisfree promotes the organic green tea that they use in their products, calling it a “reliable ingredient”. In addition, mentions of ingredients are often combined with elements of scientific discourse. For example, Lumene mentions that Finnish water is “pH skin friendly and rich in oxygen” and Arctic plants are enriched with “incredible antioxidant potency”. Innisfree, on the other hand, mentions that Jeju’s soil is “rich in iron oxide and organic matters” and its green tea contains “fruitful nutrients”. According to Simões and Tuna (2017: 197), it is a common strategy in cosmetics marketing to use elements of (pseudo-)scientific discourse to validate advertising claims. On Lumene and Innisfree’s websites, this seems to be a way of building a stronger link between cosmetics manufacturing and the raw materials that contain a number of naturally occurring benefits. For example, Innisfree mentions that their organic green tea “shows its original strength and effects with its natural energy”, which implies that the benefits of the green tea have not been added but rather they exist inherently in the plant.



Example 3. Header from Innisfree’s Ingredients page and the beginning of the “Volcanic” section.



Example 3 shows how on Innisfree's *Ingredients* page, the header image shows all the different ingredients used by Innisfree against a light, textured background resembling concrete. The background is very minimalist, modern, and industrial, which contrasts with the 'naturalness' of the ingredients. Perhaps this is also a way of representing how Jeju's clean nature and Innisfree's modern technology come together. Lumene mentions that they have "thoughtfully selected" their ingredients for their good qualities but also for their "local origin and sustainable source". This suggests that although the company creates products for profit, there is a promise of environmentally conscious actions and values. Similar claims in advertisements have been found already 20 years ago by Howlett and Raglon (2001: 249) who discovered that advertisers appeal to consumers by advertising the products as beneficial to both consumers and nature. The word 'sustainable' is a common green marketing term due to consumers' increasing interest towards sustainably produced goods (Smith and Brower 2012: 538). Lumene addresses sustainability by claiming to allow "Nature to regenerate and remain in balance", which suggests that Lumene does not engage in overexploitation, which is an unsustainable practice and a threat to biodiversity. Innisfree also describes its sustainability practices by discussing the community trade and fair exchange they practice in the Dong-Baek and Bija villages of Jeju. They call this "innisfree's Good Sharing Movement" and define community/fair trade as "purchasing raw materials or thinking local communities in the process of trade". It is explained that the brand uses "directly purchased fresh and clean camellia petals and leaves gathered by old ladies in Dong-Baek village" in their products, which is demonstrated by an image showing the women picking camellia petals off the ground. According to Innisfree, the brand thus contributes to the local community and environment in Dong-Baek and Bija villages. In addition, they follow "the order of nature" and help local residents by offering employment and "economic satisfaction", which develops the local community and is presumably less harmful to the environment. These mentions of sustainability practices are similar to what Howlett and Raglon (2001: 253) call "green advocacy advertising": companies aim to demonstrate their environmental responsibility to the public while showing their ability to take initiative in handling environmental problems. However, both Lumene and Innisfree describe their sustainability practices rather superficially in my data, and it is thus difficult to tell whether this is an accurate representation of the companies' practices.

## 4.2 The importance of location - portrayals of Jeju island and the Arctic

Ingredients  
Skincare elixir: pure water


Did you know that water is the not Skincare ingredient? Besides skincare, water is used for example in liquid face makeup products - such as foundations and highlighters. So wouldn't it matter to know where it comes from? Discover more of pure Finnish water and skin-friendly Arctic Spring Water we at Lumene use in our products.


“ Our Arctic Spring water is pH skin friendly and rich in oxygen - just perfect for your skin! ”


The purest water in the world

Finnish Water is the purest in the world, according to the research of Yale and Columbia Universities in 2005. Besides that, Finnish water quality was ranked the best in the UN's research which compared water quality and amount in 2005. You can drink tap water everywhere. You can also fill your own bottles with clean and refreshing spring water for free, as many locals do.

The pure spring water in Lumene skincare comes from a distant source in Lapland. Our Arctic Spring water is pH skin friendly and rich in oxygen - just perfect for your skin! In skincare and face makeup products, it provides effective hydration and work as a carrier of water soluble active skin care ingredients.







Pure Arctic Spring Water in Lumene products

Finnish water is amongst the purest in the world and our secret to beautiful, healthy looking skin. Our Arctic Spring Water is captured directly from the Spring in Finnish Lapland, where it has been purified by Nature : Filtered through layers of sand and gravel formed after the Ice Age and is beautifully soft due to its low mineral content and skin friendly pH, perfect for supercharged hydration that revives skin.

*Example 4. Lumene's article about Arctic Spring Water.*

Both Innisfree and Lumene seem to use a specific geographical location as a core element in their marketing as a way of emphasizing their locality in the domestic market and construct a unique image for the consumers overseas. Innisfree explains that the brand found “its own nature from the closest place nearby”, meaning Jeju island which lies off the southern coast of the Korean peninsula. This emphasizes that Innisfree is local to Koreans, who presumably are Innisfree’s main target audience, and creating products from local ingredients allows Innisfree to ensure that they meet certain quality requirements. The audience is expected to sympathize with Innisfree and Jeju’s close relationship, and the localness of the brand can evoke feelings of national pride in Koreans. The expression “its own nature” suggests that Innisfree claimed Jeju’s nature and holds ownership over it, and it is exclusively Innisfree’s. The text continues “The answer was on the clean island of Jeju ... with which the company have built a close relationship since 20 years before innisfree was born”, meaning that Innisfree’s parent company Amorepacific has established a connection with the island long before the brand was created. This creates a sense of commitment and shared history, which in turn is related to tradition and legacy. Innisfree discusses their “Jeju heritage” multiple times in my data, for example on their

*Ingredients* page: “Amorepacific’s in-depth study on heritage ingredients enabled the launch of ginseng and green tea cosmetics.” This “Jeju Heritage of Innisfree” could both imply that the island and its nature have been passed down to the brand by the parent company and that the brand shares Jeju’s natural resources as a part of its legacy. Either way, associating Jeju’s nature with the word ‘heritage’ treats it as a commodity that can be controlled. Linder (2006: 113) mentions that especially in the United States unspoiled wilderness is seen as natural heritage, and similar views are presented by both Innisfree and Lumene as the brands emphasize the pure, natural state of nature on Jeju island and in the Arctic while reminding the reader about the specific geographical location that frames the brands as entitled to the nature within the borders of their countries of origin. Innisfree does this by including cultural symbols, such as Jeju’s volcano Mt. Hallasan and *dol hareubang* which are rock statues that have come to symbolize the island, and by mentioning specific place names, such as Dong-Baek and Bija villages and the Seo-Gwang tea field where they grow the green tea used in their products. Lumene, on the other hand, mentions specific place names and attractions in Lapland, including the Arctic Treehouse Hotel in Rovaniemi and glass igloos in Kakslauttanen. Lumene also emphasizes the Finnishness of the brand by using Finnish words, such as ‘sisu’, or by showing a map of Finland while discussing the pure Finnish water, which is shown in example 4. The blue map placed against a white background establishes a mental connection to the Finnish flag, which consists of white and blue, and the map itself is a symbol of the state which in turn is connected to the larger context of the European continent and the rest of the world. Lumene thus constructs an image of itself specifically as a Finnish brand in the global context.

The specific locations of Jeju island and the Arctic and their natural environments are portrayed as mysterious and mystical, which helps construct a unique image for the brands. Innisfree’s website, for example, includes a section about a forest named Gotjawal. According to Innisfree, it is a “secret forest” that has not been visited for more than a thousand years, which contributes to the mysterious, “ancient authenticity” of the island’s nature. Related to this mystery aspect, Gargan (2007: 3) found that perfume advertisements promote the products as magical through explicit lexical choices, such as “potion”, “magic”, and “secret” in order to make them seem more interesting. The word “secret” is also used by Innisfree in this function by creating a link between the magical nature of Jeju and Innisfree’s products which are made from the raw materials of the island. In addition, Innisfree explains that due to the volcanic soil, the Gotjawal forest is abundant with moisture that keeps it warm in the winter seasons, and the forest is filled with unknown plants. Thus, Innisfree also calls the forest “the protector of natural wonders”

and “a place where there are green leaves throughout all four seasons”, evident in the pictures of green leaves, moss, and trees. The text also mentions that due to the unique vegetation, botanists and scientists from the World Conservation Congress frequent the forest. References to “natural wonders” and unknown plant species make the forest and Jeju in general seem more mysterious and special, which again increases the uniqueness of Innisfree’s products. It is interesting that this section about Gotjawal does not mention cosmetics or ingredients at all, and the only time Innisfree is mentioned is at the end of the text where it is mentioned that Innisfree participates in conserving the forest, which is another instance of what Howlett and Raglon (2001: 246) described as companies presenting themselves as “nature’s caretakers”. The text thus focuses on describing the uniqueness of the forest and showing that Innisfree is aware of the special value of the forest, which demonstrates both the untouched nature of the ancient forest as well as Innisfree’s responsible environmental actions. This could be seen as a way to construct a conservationist and sustainable image of the brand that also demonstrates how much the brand values its local environment.

Similarly, Lumene also creates a mysterious image of the Arctic that is based on the wilderness of the Nordic nature. *Kitty’s Corner* portrays the Arctic as something new and unfamiliar by calling it “the new paradise” based on its calming nature. The peaceful Lapland is marketed to the urban population as a place of relaxation, and the text even mentions that the silence and “lack of artificial light” might be distressing at first. The Arctic nature is transformed into a luxury product that is perfect for those who have “seen it all” as it offers an opportunity to surrender to the “healing power of nature itself”. Lapland is thus promoted as unique and exclusive, and the mystical healing powers of the Arctic nature are combined with elements that are considered traditionally luxurious, such as enjoying a cup of wine in front of a fireplace. It is mentioned that the “pace of nature” is a calming force, and the calmness of nature is emphasized with images of clean, white snow and a pull quote saying “Even the sounds are soothing and inevitably you will calm down and relax”. Relaxation in Lapland is portrayed as happening automatically and involuntarily, as “the nature will take care of it for you”. This mysterious and mystical image of the Arctic environment is also constructed through references to folklore. *Kitty’s Corner* mentions local stories about wind “whistling” in the trees and “ice singing on the lake”, which are personifications of nature that make the Arctic nature seem alive and even supernatural. Aurora borealis, also known as the Northern Lights, are a popular tourist attraction in Lapland, and *Kitty’s Corner* describes them as “Mother Nature giving her most fabulous show”. The expression “Mother Earth” is another form of personification that gives

agency to nature while creating a sense of a familiar and caring connection with nature. The indigenous Sami people of Lapland is also mentioned in the article as the text describes different folk stories and beliefs about the Northern Lights. A story about a mythical “fire fox” again suggests a mystery, and the mention of Sami people emphasizes local traditions and history of the Arctic location. Furthermore, Lumene’s ingredients are described as being “born of Arctic light” under “a unique Arctic light cycle”, which portrays the ingredients as rare and mystical while emphasizing the active role of nature in the process. Lumene also describes how the ingredients have survived and thrived under a “uniquely disruptive and challenging annual light cycle”. Not only is the uniqueness of the Arctic light cycle mentioned again, but the description also creates a sense of perseverance, which could be linked to the Finnish concept of ‘sisu’. *Kitty’s Corner* describes ‘sisu’ as “the core of endurance and success” and “something very Nordic, or more precisely, Finnish”. Lumene is thus linked to Finland specifically, and even the Finnish nature can be seen as having ‘sisu’. *Kitty’s Corner* lists different activities for those who might be interested in challenging themselves in the Arctic environment, and many of the activities require one to have ‘sisu’. These activities are linked to the geographical location as they include snowmobile safaris in the snow desert near the Russian border or snowshoe hiking to watch the Northern lights. Combining these activities with relaxation in the pure Arctic surrounding is described as “the new luxury”, and Lapland is called “one of the last hidden pearls” for luxurious relaxation. What is interesting about *Kitty’s Corner* is that it does not mention cosmetics or Lumene at all - rather, it is a tourism ad for Lapland. The absence of mentions about the company and its products is similar to the Gotjawal section from Innisfree, which suggests that the brands aim to construct comprehensive images of their relationship with nature and the specific locations that are implicitly related to their products. Perhaps this makes the marketing more subtle and creates an impression of a truly caring relationship between the brands and nature.

The uniqueness of Jeju island and Lapland is also extended to the ingredients used by the brands. Lumene emphasizes that the spring water used in their products comes from “a distant source in Lapland”, and since the exact location is not mentioned, the water is surrounded by a mystery regarding its origins, and one can only guess where this “distant source” is. The water is described as the purest in the world, which suggests that there is something special about its source. The water is also described as a “secret to beautiful, healthy looking skin”, which reveals hidden information to the reader who now knows part of the mystery. Innisfree, on the other hand, explains that the brand chose Jeju island as the source of its ingredients because of

the island's rich, volcanic soil that has provided an abundance of nutrients for all plant life on the island. One of the cosmetics ingredients used by Innisfree is Jeju's volcanic clusters, which are described as a "mysterious ingredient found only on Jeju". This implies that Jeju's volcanic formations are unique and something secret or beyond understanding. The "Volcanic" section of the *Ingredients* page shown in example 3 includes a description of how the clusters are formed from lava, and the clusters' skin benefits are discussed from a technical perspective. The page lists a variety of benefits, such as sebum absorption and mineral supply, and the clusters are described as "clean and rare". However, the page does not explain what makes the clusters so unique, but it can be assumed that the reason lies in the dormant state of Mt. Hallasan. The volcano last erupted in the 11th century (Korea Meteorological Administration n.d.), which is why new clusters have not been formed. Since Innisfree also claims that the volcanic clusters can only be found on Jeju, it can be assumed that their volcanic source is a major contributor to the clusters' rarity and value. This emphasizes Jeju's uniqueness and the localness of the brand and its volcanic product line.

Both Lumene and Innisfree show rather generic images of Jeju island and the Nordic nature. The images show snowy sceneries, green fields, mountains and forests, whereas buildings and people are mostly excluded from the images which makes it difficult to identify the geographical location of the depicted places without references in the texts. This is a feature that, according to Hansen and Machin (2008: 785), is common in stock images that can be used for example in marketing. Hansen and Machin studied how "green issues" are recontextualized by the image bank Getty Images, and they mention that the images often show peaceful, idyllic scenes, and people are rarely depicted in the images. Both Hansen and Machin (2008) and Chen (2016) found that advertisements use generic, decontextualized images of nature so that they can be used to express a variety of different values in a variety of contexts. However, despite using rather generic images, Lumene and Innisfree both put great emphasis on the fact that it is specifically Jeju island and the Arctic that they have constructed relationships with. Innisfree, for example, includes some recognizable elements in the images, such as Mt. Hallasan and *dol hareubang*. Lumene, on the other hand, includes a map of Finland on one of its pages. Since the images are strongly connected to the surrounding text describing Jeju and the Arctic instead of only showing products in a natural setting, it could be argued that the generic and simple images are used to evoke a feeling of serenity and emphasize the purity of the locations instead of attempting to detach the images from their contexts. Indeed, Linder (2006: 113) notes that environmental groups and Western governments have favored images of nature that are

aesthetically pleasing and evoke a sense of peace in the viewer in order to appeal to viewers who might not want to lose such beautiful nature to climate change. In order to make the images more aesthetically pleasing, Innisfree uses highly saturated images of Jeju's nature that can be seen in example 1. The images are dominated by green and blue, and the colors are bright and clear to a point where they look slightly unrealistic. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 159-160) note that the saturation of colors in an image affects its modality, with maximum color being of low modality and thus seeming "less than real". According to Chen (2016: 15), images of the natural environment in advertisements can be enhanced with special effects to make them look more ideal and attractive, and the enhancement of Innisfree's images also seems to have this function. The saturation of Innisfree's images is only slightly higher than what would be the most naturalistic representation, thus making Jeju's nature seem incredibly clean and lush. The purity of the colors could thus also contribute to the impression of the island's purity and harmony. Chen (2016: 15) indeed mentions that the use of special effects can result in a "conceptual feeling of brightness and harmony" that in Chinese car advertisements presents a fantasy world compared to the polluted cities of the country. Since South Korea also suffers from heavy air pollution, the images and descriptions of Jeju's purity and clean air can seem especially appealing. Lumene, on the other hand, uses images that emphasize the cold, hard Arctic winter. As can be seen in examples 2 and 4, the colors are muted, and the saturation in many of the images is rather low, which gives the impression of cold, cloudy days. Different shades of blue, grey, and white create a harmonious, low-contrast composition that reflects how the snow blanket covering the trees and the ground make everything look softer. The choice of color in the images from the two brands corresponds to the suggested essence of each location: Jeju island is green and sunny year-round, whereas Lapland and the Arctic circle are cold and harsh, covered in snow. Thus, green is the main color in the images used by Innisfree, whereas Lumene's images are dominated by white. Blue is a calming color, which is why it is likely used by both brands on the pages that describe the soothing nature of Lapland and Jeju island, in addition to which it represents the clean water used by the brands. The cohesive color palettes and different levels of saturation and contrast create distinctive profiles of the locations that reflect the atmosphere and energy that the brands want to associate themselves with.

## 5

## INNIRANG

Innirang, the Jeju Pony in search of "My Own Beauty"



### Innirang, the Jeju Pony in search of "My Own Beauty"

The beautiful island of Jeju is green all year around. Near the blue ocean north of the island is Mallang Village where Jeju's indigenous ponies live. The ponies here have an unspoken rule to follow: "Never get out of the village beyond the hill!" In this isolated Mallang Village lived Innirang, who dreamed of nurturing individuality and beauty someday. To Innirang, life in the village with ponies following exactly the same styles and thoughts was absolutely boring. Innirang thought there would be no more newness there and decided to venture out of the village and live a different life in the greater world. Unable to suppress her curiosity, Innirang ran away only to find the vast nature filled with greenness and fresh scent. It was much greater than she had ever imagined. Innirang was overwhelmed with excitement, feeling something good would happen soon.

Fortunately, Innirang ran into Fruty who was in search of environment-friendly ingredients and Camely who was in charge of protecting Jeju. Innirang and her new friends started a journey in search of "My Beauty Recipe" reserved for themselves.



*Example 5. Excerpt from the story of Innirang on Innisfree's website.*

Lastly, both brands also construct images of their target audiences through a connection to the local nature. Innisfree's website has a page about a Jeju Pony called Innirang, which can be seen in example 5. The text is written in a story format, and it is combined with cartoon-like



illustrations depicting the characters of the story. Innirang is an indigenous pony from an imaginary village called Mallang (lit. *soft*) that is located in the northern part of Jeju. According to the story, she represents the Millennial consumers who are “proactive and bold in character” and characterized by individuality and personal style. Innirang resembles Jeju’s indigenous horse breed *Jejuma* with its off-white coat, but it has a green mane, which gives the character a more cartoon-like appearance while representing boldness and eco-friendly values. It is mentioned that Innirang enjoys eating Jeju’s famous tangerines, which connects the brand to another cultural symbol. Tired of living in the isolated village with the other indigenous ponies, Innirang leaves the village and finds that nature is “filled with greenness and fresh scent”. Innirang then meets *Fruty* “in search of environment-friendly ingredients” and *Camely* “in charge of protecting Jeju”. Fruty, who is later called Purutea due to inconsistent romanization of the Korean name 프루티, represents Innisfree. Fruty is “a researcher in pursuit of healthy beauty through natural ingredients”, which is the brand’s mission. Fruty’s journey describes Innisfree’s brand development on Jeju island as the character grew up on a green tea farm, and after doing research on the green tea, Fruty left the farm in order to find more ingredients. Fruty is a round, green figure with goggles on top of its head and a flask in hand, which refer to the research conducted by Innisfree. The appearance and description of Fruty reflect Innisfree’s environmentally conscious values as well as its application of modern technology in researching natural ingredients. Camely, the third character in the story, represents Innisfree’s fair trade. Camely is “a native of Jeju Island” and designed to look like a camellia flower, thus having a direct physical association with Innisfree’s “Good Sharing Movement”. It is mentioned that Camely is familiar with Jeju and its stories, which creates a connection between Innisfree and Jeju’s local cultural heritage and tradition. In the story, Camely volunteers to guide Innirang and Fruty along their journey, which implies that Jeju’s local community has welcomed Innisfree’s actions on the island. While the story portrays consumerist actions in a positive light by using a children’s story format and describing the friendly relationships between the characters, it also discusses Innisfree’s commitment to research and community trade. The colorful images depict the characters in Jeju’s nature and surrounded by cultural symbols, such as Jeju tangerines, Mt. Hallasan, and *dol hareubang*, and the story describes Jeju’s green nature as fresh and clean. The story thus strengthens Innisfree’s portrayal of Jeju and perhaps encourages especially younger consumers to learn more about the brand and its mission.

Our Story

## Wild-crafted, sustainable Nordic beauty

Inspired by Nordic women



*Example 6. "Nordic women" on Lumene's website.*

Lumene approaches the topic quite differently by discussing the source of the brand's inspiration. According to Lumene, the brand is inspired by Nordic women, who presumably are also their main target audience. Lumene's depiction of Nordic women in example 6 shows them wearing minimal makeup that is simple yet sultry, giving them a feminine but not overly glamorous appearance. A neutral color palette has been used to create a smokey eyeshadow look that puts emphasis on their blue eyes, and their lips are full and glossy. Their eyebrows are voluminous but not unkempt, and their wind-swept hair neatly frames their faces. Both of the women have an even and glowy complexion, and one of the women has freckles, making her look sunkissed and outdoorsy. The women are wearing white, loose-fitting clothing, which gives them almost an ethereal essence. Overall, the women look "naturally beautiful", which suggests that using Lumene's natural products, anyone can be naturally beautiful. It also depicts Nordic women in general as naturally and effortlessly beautiful since the brand uses them as their source of inspiration and produces natural cosmetics. In the image, the women are associated with nature by depicting them against images of tree branches and a lake scenery. The sun is softly shining on the women, their bodies half cast by a shadow. The lighting looks

warm and natural as if the women were standing outside under a tree, compared to the harshness of artificial studio lighting. This perhaps is related to *Kitty's Corner's* mention about the lack of artificial lighting in Lapland. The subtle nature imagery in the picture creates the impression that the women are part of nature. In fact, Howlett and Raglon (2001: 251) state that advertisers portray beauty products in natural settings in order to associate them with natural beauty, and presenting the women in a naturalistic setting could also be a way of emphasizing their natural beauty and the naturalness of Lumene's products. The emphasis on Nordic women specifically also connects the brand to the Nordic context, which is interesting since Lumene also highlights the brand's Finnishness. This suggests a multidimensional brand identity that is constructed differently in national, transnational, and international contexts.

## 5 DISCUSSION

Due to the critical state of global warming, companies are pressured to act more responsibly and become "greener", which has resulted in emerging green marketing practices. Especially in the cosmetics industry, companies are becoming increasingly conscious about environmental issues, and many brands market themselves using terms such as 'vegan', 'natural', and 'cruelty-free' in order to appear environmentally conscious and non-exploitative under the critical eyes of consumers. Brands are not only greening the images of their products, but also extending the process to concern the image of the entire brand, and this is done for example by engaging in sustainability practices and active communication of the company's environmental values and responsibilities. The field of green marketing thus offers a plethora of research topics as it lies in the intersection of discourses regarding for example nature, advertising, veganism, and corporate social responsibility.

The aim of the present study was to analyze how nature is used in the marketing of two cosmetics brands, Lumene and Innisfree, on their websites. In addition, the study aimed to provide information about the ways in which the brands utilize the specific geographical locations of Jeju island and the Arctic to construct their brand images. The data consisted of 6 different web pages from the brands' English language websites, and the pages discussed topics such as the ingredients used in the brands' products, descriptions of the brands' relations to nature, and posts about Jeju Island and the Arctic. The data was analyzed using multimodal

analysis in combination with critical discourse analysis (CDA) from an ecolinguistic point of view.

The findings from the present study suggest that nature can be used in a variety of ways in marketing, and surprisingly, the two brands analyzed in this study utilize almost identical discourses in their green marketing practices. Both Innisfree and Lumene use images and descriptions of nature to portray the brands' products as 'natural' and healthy, and the brands aim to be as 'natural' as possible. Nature is depicted as clean and pure, which is seen as contributing positively to the brand images and products of Innisfree and Lumene. Green marketing terms, such as 'organic' and 'vegan', and descriptions of sustainability practices are used on both websites to portray the brands as environmentally conscious and "green". In addition, the brands construct familiar and special relationships with nature in order to appear responsible and caring, but at the same time there is a clear power relation between the brands and nature because the brands portray themselves as the active participants while nature is mainly shown as passive. Interestingly, the brands do not discuss their manufacturing processes or production facilities in the texts, but rather focus on describing the characteristics of the local nature and the benefits it offers. This emphasizes the special role of nature in the brands' marketing, and it is clear that nature is the base of the brand images for both Lumene and Innisfree. The specific geographical locations of Jeju island and the Arctic are also a significant part of the green marketing practices of the brands. The locations are used to emphasize the localness of the brands in the national context and the uniqueness of the brands in the global context, and the natural environments of Jeju island and the Arctic are portrayed as mysterious and mystical. This contributes to the overall image of the brands, making them appear as unique and interesting. Nature is also treated as heritage that is passed down to the brands, and the raw materials of the local nature are portrayed as special and rare due to their high quality, natural benefits, and unusual origin. The brands use generic images of the locations to emphasize the peacefulness and purity of the local nature, but they also include some recognizable cultural symbols in the images to remind the viewer of the specific context, which further constructs the appearance of localness. The local nature is also connected to the main target audiences of the brands through associations with local culture and people.

The methods used in the present study proved to be suitable for the aims of the study as I was able to analyze the combination of images and written text in the multimodal data while applying a critical perspective on the environmental and advertising discourses that emerged

from the data. However, due to the extent of the study, I was not able to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the websites, which is why the present study does not provide an accurate representation of for example the validity of the brands' sustainability claims or practices. Furthermore, it is not possible to make generalizations based on the findings due to the small size of the data. Nevertheless, the methods allowed for a detailed and descriptive analysis of the web pages and thus provided insight into the green marketing practices of cosmetics brands from two different countries.

Due to the increase in the number of cosmetics that are marketed as 'natural' and 'green', it is important to study the reach of environmental discourses in cosmetics marketing. Nature is a central element in these discourses, and because of its vulnerable state, environmentally destructive discourses should be prevented from gaining further momentum in advertising. Based on this study, it will be possible to study the green marketing practices and the use of nature in advertisements not only in the cosmetics industry but also in other markets. Because of the multimodal methodology, my study will also benefit further research on green marketing in different media, including websites, YouTube videos, newspapers, television, and movies. It would also be useful to study how green marketing practices are used in different countries and by different types of organizations, since the present study focused only on cosmetics brands from Finland and South Korea. By expanding the size of the data, it would be possible to conduct more comprehensive studies of specific brands and companies, which would provide a wider picture of the different types of green marketing practices.

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