

Representation of gender in Dove's advertising images

Bachelor's Thesis

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract <p>Tämän tutkielman tarkoituksena on tarkastella naisten ja miesten representaatioita Doven mainoskuvissa. Median luomat representaatiot sukupuolesta ovat keskustelua herättäviä ja niitä on myös tutkittu paljon. Myös mainoksia on tutkittu tähän liittyen. Kuluttajina olemme jatkuvasti erilaisten mainosten ja samalla myös niiden luomien representaatioiden ympäröimänä, joten niiden tutkiminen on tärkeää. Yleensä tutkimus sukupuolirepresentaatioista mainoksissa on keskittynyt vain yhteen sukupuoleen tai vain joko visualisiin tai kielellisiin elementteihin. Tämä tutkielma puolestaan tarkastelee representaatioita sekä naisten että miesten osalta ottaen huomioon sekä visuaaliset että kielelliset elementit.</p> <p>Tarkemmin tutkielma pyrkii selvittämään, kuinka nämä representaatiot rakentuvat multimodaalisesti ja sitä, onko niissä eroja naisten ja miesten välillä. Aineistona toimi kuusi mainoskuvaa, joita tarkasteltiin kriittisen diskurssianalyysin sekä sosiosemiotikan näkökulmista. Visuaalinen analyysi tehtiin Kressin ja van Leeuwenin (2006) visuaalisen kieliopin puitteissa; kielellisessä analyysissä puolestaan kiinnitettiin huomiota kieliopillisiin ja sanavalintoihin.</p> <p>Analyysin myötä nousi esiin eroja representaatioissa naisten ja miesten välillä. Miehet esitettiin aktiivisempina kuin naiset, mikä oli nähtävissä sekä visuaalisesti ja kielellisesti. Naiset puolestaan esitettiin suuremmissa kontaktissa katsojan kanssa kuin miehet. Tutkielman aineisto on kuitenkin melko suppea, joten lisätutkimuksella voitaisiin selvittää ovatko tulokset yleistettävissä. Vastaava tutkimus muiden brändien osalta antaisi myös mahdollisuuden tulosten vertailulle.</p>	
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION.....	3
2 REPRESENTATION AND GENDER.....	4
2.1 Language and representation.....	4
2.1.1 Critical discourse analysis	4
2.1.2 Social semiotics	5
2.2 Gender and language.....	6
3 THE PRESENT STUDY	7
3.1 Aim and research questions.....	7
3.2 The Data	7
3.3 About Dove	8
3.4 Methods of analysis	8
4 ANALYSIS	10
Advertisement 1	10
Advertisement 2	13
Advertisement 3	14
Advertisement 4	16
Advertisement 5	17
Advertisement 6	19
5 DISCUSSION	20
6 CONCLUSION	22
BIBLIOGRAPHY	24

1 INTRODUCTION

Representations of gender created by different media is a topic that is widely discussed and studied. Its importance has risen even more greatly especially in recent years as gender roles are getting redefined. As consumers we are constantly exposed to different advertising messages and the representations they carry. Hence, it is important to study what exactly is being communicated to us. Advertisements for cosmetics products, especially, are good for studying gender representations as they focus largely on looks. The personal care brand Dove is known for trying to break away from stereotypical representations of gender, especially when it comes to the portrayal women, as it has launched projects and campaigns dedicated to raising women's self-esteem and changing the definitions of beauty. Thus, its advertisements provide an interesting case for analyzing gender representations.

A lot of research has focused on the visual portrayal of men and women in advertisements. A seminal work on this topic is Goffman's (1979) *Gender advertisements*, in which he describes gender portrayals as deriving from social situations, recognizing certain categories pertaining to these portrayals. Other studies have built on Goffman's work, for example Bell and Milic (2002), who employ semiotic analysis to examine gender representations. When studying advertisements, visual portrayals seem to get more attention than linguistic elements. Both visual and linguistic elements are studied, for example, by Gregorio-Gideo (2009), who combines semiotic analysis with critical discourse analysis, which is what this study will be doing as well. Most studies seem to focus either on visual or linguistic elements or only one gender. However, this study will focus on the portrayal of both men and women as well as both visual and linguistic elements. Furthermore, for the scope of this study, the focus is on the advertising images of one brand.

The aim of this study is to find out how representations of gender are multimodally constructed, and whether the portrayal of men and women differ from each other. In order to do so, Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) social semiotic framework and critical discourse analysis will be utilized. In the first section of this study, I will introduce the concepts of representation and gender and discuss earlier research on the topic of this study. In the next section, the aim of this study and research questions will be further elaborated on and the data and methods of analysis will be described. Lastly, I will present the analysis of the six advertisements that from the data for this study, and summarize the results of the analysis.

2 REPRESENTATION AND GENDER

In this section I will first introduce the concept of representation, then moving on to critical discourse analysis and the social semiotics, which can be used to examine representations. Lastly, I will discuss gender and language as well as previous research on gender portrayal in advertising.

2.1 Language and representation

Language is a representational system through which we use signs and symbols to represent people and concepts, ideas and feelings in a culture (Hall 1997: 1). Culture is central to the production and exchange of meaning, as participants in a culture are the ones that give meanings to things (Hall 1997: 2-3). Thus, language gives us an insight to how culture and representation work (Hall 1997: 6). Halliday (1985) describes representation as one of three basic functions that language has. That is, it functions as a message, as an exchange of meanings between speaker and listener and as a representation of human experience (Halliday 1985: 58-59).

Hall (1997) describes a constructional approach to representations which sees meaning a being constructed through language using representational systems. He presents two main constructionist approaches: semiotic and discursive. These approaches differ in that the semiotic approach focuses on how language produces meanings and the discursive approach, analyzing discourse as system of representation, is more concerned with the effects and consequences of representation, and how the knowledge produced by discourse connects with power (Hall, 1997: 6).

2.1.1 Critical discourse analysis

In CDA, discourse is taken to mean language use as a form of social practice and is analyzed in relation to wider sociocultural structures (Fairclough 1995:7). Discourse, then, “comprises all forms of meaningful semiotic human activity seen in connection with social, cultural and historical patterns and development of use” (Blommaert 2005: 3). One of the social processes that exist in texts is representation of the world (Fairclough 1995: 6). Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009) define the representational power of discourse as presenting happenings and people as having occurred or true. Having this power then, discourse functions as a site for social differences or conflict, as it makes every aspect of our society meaningful; for something

to be called beautiful, for example, it has to be identified as such by someone (Blommaert 2005: 4). However, there are conditions, both linguistic and sociocultural, to constructing meanings, and not everyone is able to utilize these in the same way (Blommaert 2005: 4).

Thus, discourse practices can contribute to the maintaining or impairing of relations of power (Fairclough 1995: 82). Therefore, the aim of CDA is to examine “opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language” (Wodak and Meyer 2001: 1-2). According to Blommaert (2005: 1) CDA shouldn’t only react to power, but its effects on people as well as how exactly this impact takes place should be taken into account in analysis. Fairclough (1995) presents a framework for CDA, which contains analysis on three different levels: text, discourse practice and sociocultural practice. This framework will be discussed more in-detail in the next section.

2.1.2 Social semiotics

Semiotics is the study of signs and their role as tools of meaning making in culture (Hall 1997: 6). Signs consist of a signifier, a structure that can be observed, and a signified, the meaning the particular structure has (van Leeuwen 2005: 3). In social semiotics, the term “resources” is used instead, and the aim is to examine how these different semiotic resources are used in meaning-making in the context of social situations and practices (van Leeuwen 2005: 3). These resources can be nearly anything, not only limited to speech, writing and images, and a sort of ‘semiotic potential’ has been formed by their past uses, which allows new potential uses for meaning-making in social contexts (van Leeuwen 2005: 4).

Kress and van Leeuwen (1995) introduce a framework for social semiotic visual analysis, a visual grammar, which aims to describe the regularities found in the use of visual elements. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1995: 1), visual elements form kinds of visual ‘statements’ in a similar way words form sentences. The meanings formed by these visual structures indicate to interpretations of social interaction, thus meaning arises from culture instead of a certain semiotic mode (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1995: 2). That is, the selection of how to represent people, objects and events arises from the social and cultural history of whoever is the maker of that representation (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1995: 7). Similar to linguistic elements, visual elements represent instances of experience and social interaction (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 2). The framework of Kress and van Leeuwen (1995) offers

tools for examining the portrayal of participants in the image, their interaction with the viewer and meanings of composition and it will be discussed more in-detail in the next section.

2.2 Gender and language

As this study examines gender representations, it is first necessary to define the meaning of gender. Gender can be defined as cultural sex, as opposed to biological sex (Wodak 1997: 2). That is, gender is constructed socially, as traits are assigned to a sex by a culture, and therefore is alterable (Wodak 1997: 3). Sex on the other hand refers to biological, anatomical differences that distinguish women and men (Litosseliti 2006: 10-11).

Gender and language research studies how language is used by men and women and how it is used to represent them (Litosseliti 2006: 2). In the past, theorizations considered the language use of women and men, though more recently a greater number of research is concerned with how they are constructed through language (Litosseliti 2006: 2). According to Litosseliti (2006: 92), studying media representations is important since women are not only under-represented in media, but representations of both women and men can also often be stereotypical and limiting. Such representations include women being portrayed “through their physical attributes, as sex objects, as mothers and wives, in passive or supporting roles and as victims” while men are “overwhelmingly depicted as strong, active and independent - but also often objectified too” (Litosseliti 2006: 120). These representations, however, are becoming less consistent (Litosseliti 2006: 120).

One of the most prominent works on gender representations in advertising is Goffman’s (1979) *Gender Advertisements*. He states that gender displays in advertising images use social situations as a resource, thus potentially offering information about our culture, much like a written text tells offers information about its spoken language (Goffman 1979: 27). There are six categories he identifies for the portrayal of gender, mainly concerning the subordination of women; showing them in inferior poses and roles. Three of them are particularly relevant to this study: the feminine touch, the family and the ritualization of subordination. The feminine touch entails women being shown using their hands to trace the outlines of or to caress the surface of an object, instead of grasping or holding it (Goffman 1979: 29). This includes self-touching, which connotes one body being “a delicate and precious thing” (Goffman 1979: 31). When a family is portrayed, the family’s social structure can be communicated through the positioning of the members (Goffman 1979: 37). A special relationship between a girl and

mother and a boy and father is frequently shown, and the father is often portrayed with more distance to the rest of the family (Goffman 1979: 39). Goffman (1979) describes the ritualization of subordination as how one's body position, lowering oneself or holding one's body upright, connotes deference and superiority, respectively. According to him, women are more often shown in these subordinate poses, e.g. bending their knee or canting their head or body.

Bell and Milic (2002) build on Goffman's research, using his concepts as a basis for their hypotheses. In analyzing a vast number advertisements, they utilize Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) social semiotic framework. Through their analysis they found that while some of the results were different to Goffman's findings, there were still notable differences between the portrayal of men and women in some aspects. Gregorio-Godeo (2009), examines the multimodal construction of masculinity in British men's scent advertising. Like Bell and Milic (2002), he utilized Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) social semiotic framework, and in addition, he combines it with critical discourse analysis, forming categories for the analysis based on the two frameworks. He states that his study offers directions for future research and seeks to establish analytical categories rather than giving definite results. This study will not use the categories that Gregorio-Gideo uses, but the methodology used will be the same.

3 THE PRESENT STUDY

3.1 Aim and research questions

The aim of this research is to examine the representation of gender in Dove's advertising through the analysis of both visual and linguistic components. The research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How are gender representations constructed in the images through multimodal resources?
2. Do the portrayals of men and women differ from each other?

3.2 The Data

In order to examine the gender representations in Dove's advertising images, six advertisements were chosen for close analysis. The data was collected online, using a search engine. This was a more useful method than collecting advertisements from magazines as it would be quite

difficult to know which magazines and issues Dove's advertisements would have appeared in or to acquire them. One of the criteria for choosing the data was that the source of the image had to reveal the year the advertisement was released, thus advertisements without information on the year of publication were disregarded. This was to ensure the time frame for the data would not be too broad. Based on the advertisements I found, I chose ones that are from the years 2010-2014. Three of the advertisements contain female participant(s) and three of them contains a male participant for an equal amount of data for both genders.

3.3 About Dove

Dove is a personal care brand founded in the 1950s. The brand states making "beauty a source of confidence, not anxiety" as their mission (Unilever 2019). In 2004 they launched 'Dove Campaign for Real Beauty' the aim of which is to showcase a more expansive illustration of beauty by featuring images of real women (Unilever 2019). In 2017, Dove Real Beauty Pledge was launched containing the following vows: "We always feature women, never models. We portray women as they are in real life. We do not digitally distort our images. We are helping 40 million young people build self-esteem and positive body confidence." (Unilever 2019). Their webpage for their Men+Care products states "Dove Men+Care celebrates a new definition of strength: one with care at its center. Because Dove Men+Care believes that care makes a man stronger." (Dove: Men+Care).

3.4 Methods of analysis

In order to analyze both visual and linguistic elements, Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional framework for critical discourse analysis combined with Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) framework for visual analysis will be used in analyzing both visual and linguistic elements of the advertisements. Considering how these methods are concerned with language use and meaning making in relation to wider sociocultural practices, they are fit for the analysis of gender representations and combining them will likely allow the uncovering of multimodal resources used in constructing these representations. In addition, I will make use of Goffman's (1979) concepts for the aspects which two frameworks don't cover, e.g. the participants' body positions.

Kress and Van Leeuwen's (1996) framework includes analysis of three kinds of meanings found in visual images: representation, interaction and composition. People and objects in

images are referred to as participants and they can be represented either in a narrative or a conceptual process. In narrative representations there is an unfolding action. This is marked by a vector formed by a participant, the actor, towards another participant, the goal. This vector can be formed by a person's arm, for example, reaching towards another person or object. If the goal is visible in the image, it is called a transactional action and if the goal is not visible it is a non-transactional action. When participants are shown in a conceptual way, there are no vectors, but they are shown in terms of their class, structure or meaning instead. In a classificatory process the participants are represented as belonging to the same overarching category, i.e., showcasing different kinds of something. In an analytical process the participant is called the carrier and has a set of possessive attributes, to be observed by the viewer.

The interaction between participants and the viewer of an image can be set through the representation of participants. One way to do so is through the gaze of the participants. When a participant is gazing at the viewer, it is called a "demand", as they are demanding something from the viewer, and when they are gazing elsewhere it is an "offer". When an image is a demand, the viewer and the participant enter into an imaginary relation, the kind of which is determined by such factors as the participant's facial expression. In addition, the viewer can be positioned by distance of the shot and horizontal and vertical angle. A long distance shot marks impersonality while close distance shot marks intimacy and personality. In a similar way, frontal angle of a participant signifies involvement, the viewer is involved in the world of the participant, while an oblique angle marks detachment between the viewer and participant. When a participant is shown from a high angle, the viewer has power over them, and when shown from a low angle, the participant has power over the viewer. Another factor is how real, i.e. modal, the representation of participants is. Markers of this modality include color saturation, range of colors used, contextualization, lighting, contrast and depth of the image.

The composition of an image relates the representational and interactive meanings, and deals with how they form meaningful wholes. The placement of elements on the left side of an image marks them as something given that the viewer is already familiar with while placement on the right side of an image marks them as something new. Similarly, the top and bottom half of an image mark ideal and real. In an advertisement, for example, the top half often contains the promise of the product while the bottom contains the product itself or information about it. One element in an image can be made salient, attracting the viewer's attention, by placement, size,

color or contrast. Framing can be used to connect or disconnect elements, indicating whether they belong together or not.

Fairclough's (1995) framework for CDA includes analysis of text, discourse practice and social practice. The analysis of text includes choices regarding vocabulary, grammar, cohesion and structure while analyzing the discourse practice has to do with the production, distribution and consumption of the specific text or text-type in society (Blommaert 2005). In analyzing discourse as a social practice, the relations of power which discourse operates in are examined (Blommaert 2005). Considering the scope of this study and the limited amount of text found in the advertisements, the analysis on the level of the text will focus on lexical and grammatical choices. In analyzing the linguistic elements, the headlines or possible slogans will be taken into account while the smaller body of text containing mainly detailed information on the product will not be taken into account.

4 ANALYSIS

In this section I will analyze the representations found in each of the advertisements in their own sections, utilizing the above-mentioned tools.

Advertisement 1

Advertisement 1 is for Dove's Visible Care body wash from 2011. It contains three participants, three women, standing next to each other with the text 'before' and 'after' and a depiction of what one's skin would look like before and after using the product behind them. There are no vectors detaching from them towards a goal, with their arms being the closest thing to a vector as they reach towards their waist, shoulder or thigh in order to strike a pose. The lack of action in the image and a number of other factors point to this being a conceptual representation instead, a classificatory one in particular, as it is showcasing different kinds of women. Some of the other characteristics of a classificatory process Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 79) mention can be observed in this image as well, as participants placed equidistant from each other, shown more or less from the same angle, are of the same size and shown in a fairly decontextualized way, since the background is mostly plain white aside from the skin-colored parts. The decontextualization of the participants combined with the fact that they are all wearing white towels that blend in with the background, highlight their physical features. They all have different skin tones; in fact, they seem to be organized by their skin tone as well, and

their hair colors and styles are different as well, which are more prominent against a white background and clothing. The viewer is likely to register these differences and consider this as a presentation of different kinds of women.



before **after**

Visibly more beautiful skin from the most unexpected of places – your shower.

Introducing Dove VisibleCare, our new revolutionary line of body washes that actually improves the look of your skin. With our highest concentration of NutriumMoisture™, you'll see visibly more beautiful skin in just one week. **NEW DOVE VISIBLECARE CRÈME BODY WASH**

dove.com

Average results in 1-3 weeks of daily use, based on clinical testing. In home use testing, consumers noticed visible improvement after 1 week. Photos shown reflect clinical improvement at 3 weeks.

Advertisement 1

In terms of its interactional meanings, the advertisement is a demand for the viewer to enter an imaginary relation with the participants in the image, since all three women are gazing right at

the viewer. In addition, they are all smiling, which indicates that this relation is that of social affinity. Two of the women are pictured from a frontal angle while one of them is slightly angled away from the camera, thus indicating involvement between them and the viewer for the most part. However, they are pictured from far social distance since their figures are seen with space around them, which is a part of the conceptual representation, since it shows the whole of them. Hence, even though the women are shown to interact and involve themselves with the viewer, the far distance creates impersonality between them and the viewer. As mentioned above, the image is fairly decontextualized, with only a floor on which the women are standing being shown as surroundings. The women themselves have rather high modality, though, as they are shown with natural color and contrast.

Two of the women are shown with the feminine touch, as they have their fingers lightly splayed on their thigh and their shoulder, instead of grasping onto the shoulder or material of the towel. Moreover, all of their body positions have aspects of the ritualization of subordination, as they are displaying a knee bend and either canting of their head or body.

In terms of its compositional meanings, the advertisement shows the women as the most salient element as they are in contrast with the lighter colored background. The top part of the advertisement contains the promise of the product with the women and the before and after of using the product, i.e. “the ideal” and the bottom part contains the product picture, i.e. “the real”. The product picture is also on the right but the women are in the middle not so much on the left side, hence there is no clear information value of left and right found.

Much like the visual elements in the advertisement, the text also points conceptual representation of the participants. The headline “Visibly more beautiful skin from the most unexpected of places – your shower” contains no actor or action. It doesn’t tell the viewer to “get” visibly more beautiful skin or promise that “your” skin will be visibly more beautiful. The words “before” and “after” are separated from the picture space where the women are, as they are framed inside the depictions of one’s skin before and after using the product, which is also mentioned by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 79) as one of the characteristics of a conceptual representation.

Advertisement 2

Advertisement 2 is for Dove's bar soap and it appeared in 2012. It contains one participant, a woman. Similar to the first advertisements, the only observable vectors are formed by the woman's arms that reach towards each other as she is cradling her one hand with the other. She is also very decontextualized as the whole background is plain white, which points to a conceptual representation. This is not a classificatory process however, as there is only one participant, but rather an analytical one. In this case there is not much for the viewer to observe of her as she is wearing white clothing that blends in with the background, but perhaps what is to be observed is her "beautiful glowing skin", as the headline of the advertisements says, which is very prominent as everything else is white.



Advertisement 2

In terms of the image's interactional meanings, it is a demand since she is gazing at the viewer. She is also smiling which makes the relationship between her and the viewer that of affinity. The woman is seen from a medium distance and she her frontal plane is aligned with the viewer's. These aspects combined say that she is someone the viewer is supposed to relate to. Despite there being no contextualization, the woman has quite high modality, with her having natural color and contrast. She is also canting her body, and cradling her other hand in her other hand very lightly, showing ritualization of subordination and the feminine touch.

The composition of the advertisements places the product on the left side of the image as something 'given' and the woman on the right as something 'new'. The information value of ideal and real can be observed as well, as the product picture is in the bottom half of the image and the woman's face in the top half. As mentioned above, the woman is the most salient element in the image, against a white background, as the product picture is much lighter in color.

The headline of the advertisement says "Reveal beautiful glowing skin". Thus, there is an action, "reveal", although this action is not clearly observable in the image. There is no actor in the clause, however, and the viewer is not addressed in any way, which supports the conceptual representation of the woman.

Advertisement 3

Advertisement 3 is a campaign advertisement from 2014. It contains six participants, six women, who are standing next to each other. There are vectors formed by the arms of four of them, towards their own or each other's bodies, while the arms two them that are visible are just resting next to their bodies. Thus, unlike in the previous images, there is a goal for two women on the left who are reaching towards the person standing next to them. However, for similar reasons as the two previous advertisements, this leans more towards a classificatory representation. Although they are only shown from above from knee-length and are not placed as equidistant as in Advertisement 1, they are placed against a plain white background and given the same size. Though more than in Advertisement 1, the physical differences between them are very prominent. Not only do the women have different skin tones and hair colors and styles, they represent a variety of body types, which is highlighted by the fact that they are all wearing underwear. This is very clearly in order to show different kinds of women, or different kinds of "perfect real bodies", as the advertisements says, thus creating a classificatory process.



Advertisement 3

All of the women are gazing directly at the viewer making the image a demand. Two of them have their frontal planes aligned with the viewer while two are slightly angled away and two are seen more or less from side view. Thus, there are varying degrees of involvement between them and the viewer. However, all of them are seen from public distance. Ritualization of subordination is found in the image, as the three of the women are canting their head and two are canting their body. Judging by the position of their legs, since not the whole of them are visible, all of them are doing a knee bend as well. Again, the women themselves have high modality even though they are very decontextualized.

There is no product picture in the advertisement, but the text “The Perfect Real Body” at the top half of the image could be seen as “the ideal” and the women on the bottom half as “the real”. There is no information value of left and right found. The women are the most salient element in this composition, as the only other element is the text which isn’t nearly as prominent as them.

The headline “The Perfect Real Body” does not include any action or actor, it is simply a noun phrase. It doesn’t tell the viewer to “get” the perfect real body or address the viewer with “now you can get the perfect real body”, for example. The omission of a verb here reveals something about the message of the advertisement though. It is not saying that someone should acquire this perfect real body but is rather implying that this body already exists.

Advertisement 4

Advertisement 4 is from 2010 for Dove Men+Care body wash. The image contains one participant, a man. There are vectors formed by his arms towards his chest, but unlike in the previous advertisements analyzed, this is not simply to an action of striking a pose. There is contextualization to his action as water is falling on him, which makes it observable that he is an actor and the action is that of him washing himself. Thus, he is both the actor and the goal in this process.



Advertisement 4

He is not looking at the viewer, which makes the image an offer, although he has a smile on his face. He is also very slightly angled away from the camera. However, it is a medium shot, thus bringing him a little closer to the viewer as someone they can relate to. The image is taken from a slightly low angle, which means the man has power over the viewer. The modality of the

image is quite low. There is some contextualization with the water being there and a wall that can be seen behind him. However, the image is black and white with some blue detailing on the text and product picture and there is not much contrast. The lighting is somewhat dark as well.

In terms of its composition, the advertisement has the man in the top half as “the ideal” and the product picture at the bottom as “the real”. Information value of left and right is not found, although the product picture is on the left side of the image. The man, his head in particular, is a salient element in the image, but not noticeably the most salient one as he blends quite well with background due to the image being black and white. The headline and product picture stand out more with the color blue and a lighter grey than the background, thus having as much, if not more, salience than him.

The text “It’s about time you had a reason to sing in the shower” contains the action of singing in the shower. It is not clear whether the man is singing in the image but it still connects to the visual of the advertisement as it, together with the water in the image, provide the contextualization for this action. There is also the slogan “Be comfortable in your own skin” which contains a verb, although it is not an action verb. Both clauses address the viewer as “you”, unlike the man in the image.

Advertisement 5

Advertisement 5 is from 2012 for Dove Men+Care deodorant. It contains one participant, one man. His arms form vectors towards the door of an oven and one of the knobs on it. Thus, he is performing an action of opening the oven and turning the knob, with him being the actor and the oven the goal. His action is also contextualized, a kitchen providing the background for the image.

He is not looking at the viewer, making the image an offer. He isn’t smiling either, a very concentrated expression on his face. It is a medium shot and he is facing away from the camera and the viewer sees him from the side. Therefore, even though he is seen from quite close up he is looking and turned away from the viewer implying detachment between him and the viewer. The modality of the image is quite low. There is contextualization with the kitchen providing surrounding for the action but the image is black and white with some blue in the text and product picture, and contrast and lighting are slightly low.

Dove
MEN
+CARE
DEODORANT

**REAL MEN
OPERATE
COMPLEX
MACHINERY.**

**[TOUGH ON SWEAT,
NOT ON SKIN.]**

NEW
Dove
MEN
+CARE
CLEAN COMFORT
POWERFUL PROTECTION
NON-IRRITANT
48h
ANTIPERSPIRANT
DEODORANT
69g/150ml

Dove
MEN
+CARE
CLEAN COMFORT
POWERFUL PROTECTION
NON-IRRITANT
48h
ANTIPERSPIRANT
DEODORANT

Dove
MEN
+CARE
CLEAN COMFORT
POWERFUL PROTECTION
NON-IRRITANT
48h
ANTIPERSPIRANT
DEODORANT

ASC: 1102591026120

Advertisement 5

Information value of both left and right as well as top and bottom are observable in the advertisement. The man is placed at the top left in the image to represent the “ideal” and “given”, while the product picture is placed at bottom right to represent the “real” and “new”. The column on the right with the text and product picture is perhaps the most salient as it differs in color from the rest of the image, while the man blends in with the black and white part of the image.

The headline “Real men operate complex machinery” contains the action of operating, which connects to the visual of the advertisement. It addresses the viewer as “real men”, thus relating him to the man in the image, as being part of these “real men”. There is also the slogan “Tough on sweat, not on skin”, which does not contain an actor or action.

Advertisement 6

Advertisement 6 is from 2012 for Dove Men+Care deodorant. There are two participants, a man and a little girl. There are vectors formed by the man's arms as he is holding the girl in the air, making him the actor and the girl the goal in this action. The surroundings of the action are provided by an empty park.



Advertisement 6

Neither of them is looking straight at the viewer, although the girl's gaze is more turned towards the viewer than the man's whose head is completely turned to the side, making the image an offer. Both of them are smiling. It is a medium shot on the man's part and a long shot on the girl's part as she is small enough to fit into the image entirely. They are both seen from the side, denoting detachment between them and the viewer. The image has quite low modality as there is contextualization but it is black and white with blue details in the text and product picture and has slightly low contrast and lighting.

The information values are the same as those of Advertisement 5. The man and girl are at top left as the “ideal” and “given” and the product picture at bottom right as the “real” and “new”. The column with the product picture and text has the salience in this advertisement as well.

The headline ‘Real men do the heavy lifting’ contains the action of doing heavy lifting, which connects to the visual of the image. Similar to Advertisement 5, the viewer is addressed as “real men” thus connecting them to the man in the image. There is also the slogan “Tough on sweat, not on skin” that does not contain an actor or an action.

5 DISCUSSION

Through the analysis of the six advertisements, several representations pertaining to gender were found. The portrayal of men in narrative processes and women in conceptual ones was very prominent in the advertisements analyzed. Men were shown to be active and doing something, while women were just posing, to be observed by the viewer in terms of their physical qualities. This was evident in the text as well, as the headlines for Dove Men advertisements all had and an action and actor in them while only one of the women’s advertisements had an action in the headline, and it had no actor. This is similar to the findings of Bell and Milic (2002) as they found that women were more commonly presented in conceptual processes and men in narrative ones.

Moreover, there were clear patterns in the modality of the images. Women were always very decontextualized, shown against a white background. They still had high modality themselves, which highlighted their physical properties. They were also clearly the most salient element in the images. In addition, the fact that women were always wearing white, and that when multiple women were shown, they were wearing similar clothing, contributes to this. They were not shown having any individual style, for example, but the clothing was only to showcase their physique and make it comparable to that of the other women. Bell and Milic’s (2002) also concluded that women were most likely to be shown with low modality.

Men in the advertisements on the other hand had lower modality than women, being shown in black and white. They were not the most salient feature in the images either, not standing out within the black and white images. An interesting effect off this is that, while Advertisements 5 and 6 are creating a contrast between “complex machinery” and “heavy lifting” and using an oven and lifting a child, thus trying to challenge stereotypes about “real men”, the lowered

modality takes away from this representation. The men performing these actions were not shown as real as they could have been. Instead, they are shown as some kind of a fantasy image, not realistic.

In terms of interaction with viewer, women tended to interact with the viewer directly, through eye contact, and more frequently than men, having their frontal planes aligned with the viewer's. Bell and Milic (2002) also found that women were more likely to gaze at the viewer, which in turn is contrary to Goffman's (1979) findings. Even though they were shown from a public distance, they were still demanding something from the viewer and involved with them. They were all shown smiling, which indicates a relation of affinity between them and the viewer. In linguistic terms, only one of the headlines referred to the viewer as "you", but even then, it was not the subject in the clause. Therefore, even though women were mostly shown as more impersonal due to their conceptual representations, they were still shown as interactive with the viewer.

Men on the other hand did not look at the viewer at all, instead, the viewer was addressed through textual means as "you" or "real men". This also created some involvement between the viewer and participant in the image as they were addressed as part of "real men", such as the one in the image. Visually men were not portrayed as very involved with the viewer, as only one of the advertisements had the man not turned away from the viewer, and even then, his frontal plane was not completely aligned with the viewer's. Hence, even though men always shown from a closer distance, the other factors distanced them from the viewer. Even though in two of the advertisements the men were shown smiling, it did not have the same effect as the women since they were not looking at the viewer. Instead, they were offered for the viewer to observe, without indicating a relation between them and the viewer. There was not much found with regard to the angle of the image in the advertisements. Thus, men were shown at a more personal distance, but not as interactive with the viewer. This is contrary to what Bell and Milic (2002) discovered, as men were shown more at an impersonal distance.

There were no observable patterns of vertical angle in the advertisements, as only one of the images was taken from a visibly low angle. In terms of composition, both women and men seemed to be placed in the ideal-real structure the same amount. The given-new structure seemed to be more prominent when it comes to men. As noted above, women, or their skin that was visible, were always the most salient element in the images, due to the use of white for

their clothing and the background. Men on the other hand were not even nearly as salient, not even necessarily the most salient element in the images.

The ritualization of subordination and feminine touch described by Goffman (1979) were also found in the advertisements portraying women. Women were shown bending their knee and canting their head and body, while men were not performing these gestures. The feminine touch was present in the advertisements as well, notably also one male participant was portrayed in a display of it. There was only one instance of portraying a family relationship in the advertisements, in which a close relationship between the father and a girl was shown, contrary to what Goffman (1979) found in terms of family displays.

Adjectives used in the advertisements portraying women were “beautiful”, “unexpected”, “glowing”, “real” and “perfect”. They were mainly used to modify words related to physical appearance. The advertisements portraying men included the adjectives “comfortable”, “complex”, “heavy” and “tough”. These were used to modify a noun related to the activity the men were performing or as a predicative. Moreover, the adjective “real” was used in the portrayal of women as a modifier for “body”, again showing focus on physical features, and for “men” in the portrayal of men. All of this is in line with the above notions of active and conceptual portrayals.

6 CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to discover how gender representations in advertisements are constructed multimodally and whether the representations differ between men and women. Through the analysis, it was shown that there were clear differences in the portrayal of the genders and the visual and linguistic representations were in line with each other, especially in presenting the participant either narratively or conceptually and interaction with the viewer.

Women were shown conceptually, to be scrutinized by the viewer while still directly interacting with them and men were shown as actors in narrative processes, less interactive with the viewer. Some of the findings were similar to those of earlier research. Most notably the findings on narrative and conceptual portrayals of gender and the gaze of the participants were similar to those of Bell and Milic's (2002). Some of the codes presented by Goffman (1979) were found in the advertisements, mainly the ones portraying women, pertaining to his notions on the differences in gender displays.

The scope of this study is limited. Hence, it offers some insight to the gender representations in the advertisements of the particular brand in question. However, the small amount of data allowed a much closer and detailed analysis than a larger one would have. Instead of simply placing advertisements in one category or another, there was room for describing these choices. Moreover, even within the six advertisements some of the representations were very prominent, some even without exception. A larger scale study of Dove's advertisements could reveal whether these results would apply to their advertising as a whole. Similar studies of other brands could also allow comparisons of findings.

Another thing to take into account is that even though multiple methods of analysis were employed, there could still be aspects that these methods do not cover. For instance, the few advertisements that showed a group of women in a very conceptual way based on the analysis, were noticeably encouraging body-positivity in doing so. Hence, using different approaches to examining the advertising images, or perhaps also collecting data on consumer response to them, could give even more insight on the representations.

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