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Bachelor's thesis

**Linguistic representation of beauty standards in Vogue articles and
Instagram posts.**

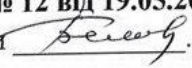
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Abstract

Smirnova E.E. Linguistic representation of beauty standards in Vogue articles and Instagram posts. - Bachelor's thesis

This thesis is developed on the linguistic representation of female beauty standards in contemporary mass media and social media. The research focuses on the ways women's beauty is constructed through lexical and stylistical means in media text, with particular attention to the representation in Vogue and on Instagram. The relevance of the topic lies in the growing influence of the media on public perceptions of femininity, appearance, self-presentation and body image. In modern communication, beauty is no longer represented only as a physical quality but also as an emotional and ideological construct, shaped by media patterns.

The first chapter explores the theoretical foundation of discourse and media discourse. It examines the main linguistic characteristics of media discourse and highlights the specific features of magazines and social media as influential environments in which beauty standards are produced and normalized. The second chapter presents the practical analysis of lexical and stylistic means used to represent female beauty in *Vogue* and Instagram. Special attention is paid to the description of the face, skin, hair, nails, inner confidence, and body. The study analyses evaluative vocabulary, intensifiers, epithets, metaphors, hyperbole, slang, euphemisms, and body-positive language.

The results of the research show that *Vogue* mainly represents female beauty through polished evaluative language, metaphors, epithets, hyperboles, personifications, expert authority, and idealized images of radiance, elegance, fitness, and self-control. Instagram, in contrast, represents beauty in a more personal, emotional, and interactive way through colloquial vocabulary, slang, expressive stylistic devices, and the language of confidence and self-acceptance. Despite these differences, both media platforms actively shape modern beauty standards and influence the perception of femininity and female appearance.

Key words: *media discourse, female beauty, beauty standards, mass media, social media, Vogue, Instagram, lexical means, stylistic means, body representation.*

Анотація

Смірнова Є.Є. Лінгвістична репрезентація стандартів краси в статтях *Vogue* та публікаціях в Instagram- Бакалаврська робота

Цю бакалаврську роботу присвячено дослідженню лінгвістичної репрезентації стандартів жіночої краси в сучасних масмедіа та соціальних медіа. У дослідженні зосереджено увагу на тому, як жіноча краса конструюється за допомогою лексичних і стилістичних засобів у медіатексті, зокрема в матеріалах журналу *Vogue* та дописах в Instagram. Актуальність теми зумовлена зростанням впливу медіа на суспільне сприйняття жіночності, зовнішності, самопрезентації та образу тіла. У сучасній комунікації краса репрезентується не лише як фізична якість, а й як емоційний та ідеологічний конструкт, сформований медійними моделями.

У першому розділі розглянуто теоретичні основи дискурсу та медіадискурсу. У ньому досліджено основні лінгвістичні характеристики медіадискурсу та висвітлено специфічні особливості журналів і соціальних медіа як впливових середовищ, у яких продукуються та нормалізуються стандарти краси. Другий розділ присвячено практичному аналізу лексичних і стилістичних засобів, що використовуються для репрезентації жіночої краси у *Vogue* та Instagram. Особливу увагу приділено опису обличчя, шкіри, волосся, нігтів, внутрішньої впевненості та тіла. У роботі проаналізовано оцінну лексику, інтенсифікатори, епітети, метафори, гіперболу, сленг, евфемізми та лексику бодіпозитиву.

Результати дослідження показують, що *Vogue* переважно репрезентує жіночу красу через вишукану оцінну лексику, метафори, епітети, гіперболи, персоніфікації, експертний авторитет та ідеалізовані образи слява, елегантності, фізичної форми й самоконтролю. Instagram, навпаки, репрезентує красу більш особисто, емоційно та інтерактивно — через розмовну лексику, сленг, експресивні стилістичні засоби, а також мову

впевненості й самоприйняття. Попри ці відмінності, обидві медіаплатформи активно формують сучасні стандарти краси та впливають на сприйняття жіночності й жіночої зовнішності.

Ключові слова: медіадискурс, жіноча краса, стандарти краси, масмедіа, соціальні медіа, Vogue, Instagram, лексичні засоби, стилістичні засоби, репрезентація тіла.

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of female beauty has always occupied an important place in public consciousness. However, in modern society this notion is being transformed by new forms of communication and growing influence of media. Today, beauty is not presented as a physical attribute. It is contrasted as an emotional and ideological phenomenon shaped by media representation and self-presentation. In this respect, mass media and social media have become some of the main instruments in shaping the image of “ideal” female beauty and standards.

In modern linguistics, discourse is seen not just as how people use language, but as a way of interacting that's connected to society. Through this, people create meanings, shape who they are, express ideas, and show what they value. In this framework, media discourse holds a special place because it brings together spoken words, images, institutions, and technology. Public meanings are formed, cultural norms are kept strong, and ways of seeing the world are passed on through media discussions. Looking at magazines and social networking sites as types of media, we see that they shape meaning in different ways. However, both of them help to make certain beauty standards seem normal and accepted.

Among the many different types of media platforms, Vogue and Instagram are particularly useful for understanding beauty standards. Vogue, as a powerful fashion magazine, shapes ideas of beauty by using its editorial influence, storytelling about trends, expert opinions, and careful language to judge and evaluate. Instagram works differently by using things like how much people see it, how users interact with it, the ability to use different types of content, and how users show they are real. This method functions as a powerful discursive environment in which beauty is represented, legitimized, and interpreted through repeated lexical and stylistic patterns. Despite these differences, both platforms serve as powerful discursive environments in which beauty is represented, legitimized, and interpreted through repeated lexical and stylistic patterns. By

looking at how Vogue articles and Instagram posts use language, we can see how modern ideas about what makes a woman beautiful are talked about and made to seem normal in different types of media.

The relevance of the study: this paper is devoted to the study of the linguistic representation of beauty standards in contemporary mass media and social media. The relevance of the research is determined by the fact that beauty standards have become an integral part of modern media culture and significantly influence public perceptions of femininity, appearance, self-presentation, and body image. If we want to understand the concept of female beauty in contemporary communication, it is necessary to study it not only from the point of view of psychology, sociology, and cultural studies, but also from the linguistic point of view. Understanding and analysing this concept will make it possible to identify the role of language in the construction, normalization, and dissemination of beauty ideals in modern media, as well as to reveal their influence on the formation of social values and cultural attitudes. Since beauty in contemporary media is represented not only as a physical quality but also as a social, emotional, and ideological construct, the linguistic study of its representation in *Vogue* articles and Instagram posts is especially relevant.

Although female beauty has primarily been studied from sociological, cultural, and psychological perspectives, linguistics also offers important tools for its analysis. The ideological and cultural construction of female beauty in media has been studied by R. Gill, S. Bordo, N. Wolf, R. Bezuhla, K. Astaptseva, and van Driel and Dumitrica. The problems of discourse and media discourse have been investigated by N. Fairclough, T. van Dijk, R. Wodak, A. Bell, R. Fowler, and M. Talbot. Linguistic and communicative features of media and social media discourse have been researched by S. C. Herring, M. Zappavigna, J. Androutsopoulos, G. Kress, Highfield and Leaver, as well as Ukrainian scholars such as M. Fedorenko, V. Rizun, and O. Selivanova. However, the linguistic representation of beauty standards in mass media and social media, particularly

on the material of *Vogue* articles and Instagram posts, still requires further systematic analysis.

The **research aim** to analyse the linguistic representation of beauty standards in mass media and social media on the basis of *Vogue* articles and Instagram posts.

The following **objectives** were set for achievement this aim:

- to define the notion of discourse and describe its main characteristics;
- to examine media discourse as a specific type of discourse;
- to study the theoretical foundation of female beauty standards in *Vogue* and Instagram;
- to analyze lexical and stylistic means used for the representation of female beauty in *Vogue* articles and on Instagram;
- to compare the representation of the female face, skin, hair, nails, body, and inner confidence in both media formats;
- to identify the main similarities and differences between magazine and social media beauty discourse.

The object of the study is representation of beauty standards in contemporary mass media and social media.

The subject of research is lexical and stylistic means used to represent female beauty standards in *Vogue* articles and Instagram posts.

Research material. The research material consists of lexical units and stylistic devices used to represent female beauty in *Vogue* articles and Instagram posts dated 2021–2026.

Research methods. They are: 1) sampling (to select relevant examples from mass and social media); 2) descriptive (to interpret and generalize the linguistics material); 3) abstraction (to define the key theoretical concepts of the research, such as media discourse, social media discourse, magazine discourse, beauty standards, and female beauty representation); 4) observation (to identify repeated lexical and stylistic patterns in the representation of female beauty); 5)

comparative (to compare representation of women's beauty in *Vogue* and in Instagram).

Practical value of the research paper. Materials and theoretical conclusions can be used in courses of linguistic, discourse analysis, stylistic, and lexicology.

Structure of the paper work. The research paper consists of an introduction, two chapters – theoretical and practical, conclusions to these chapters, common conclusions. The list of references counts 122 positions. The material of the research consists of 69 units of illustration material, namely 40 articles from the official *Vogue* website and 29 Instagram publications represented. Basic text is expounded on 48 pages, a general volume of work is 68 pages of computer text.

CHAPTER 1. CONTEMPORARY STUDIES OF MEDIA DISCOURSE

1.1 The notion of discourse and its characteristics

Discourse is one of the key concepts in modern linguistics and interdisciplinary research, allowing scholars to examine language not as a system of grammatical rules, but as a form of social action. Rather than focusing on isolated sentences, discourse refers to language in use—how people speak and write in particular contexts, for particular audiences, and with particular purposes. It therefore includes both linguistic features and the wider social, cultural, and communicative conditions in which meaning is produced and interpreted. In this sense, discourse is closely connected to social structures and relations: it can reflect shared values and norms while also shaping identities, viewpoints, and forms of power in society [Fairclough 1995, p.17].

International scholarship has explored discourse from diverse theoretical and methodological perspectives. Early linguistic approaches to discourse beyond the sentence level are associated with Harris, while conversation analysis was developed by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson.[Harris 1952, p.25] Halliday examined discourse through the relationship between linguistic form and social function[Halliday 1978], Foucault connected discourse with knowledge and institutional practice, and Critical Discourse Analysis foregrounded ideology and power in public communication[Foucault 1972]. In addition, Deborah Schiffrin examined discourse markers and coherence in everyday communication, whereas M. A. K. Halliday analyzed discourse through the relationship between linguistic form and social function within systemic functional linguistics[Halliday 1976]. Moreover, a philosophical and historical understanding of discourse as knowledge and institutional practice is associated with Michel Foucault[Foucault 1972]. Furthermore, Critical Discourse Analysis, which foregrounds ideology and power in public communication, is represented by Norman Fairclough and

Ruth Wodak [Wodak 1997]. Meanwhile, Teun A. van Dijk has extensively investigated news discourse, racism in discourse and socio-cognitive mechanisms linking text and society [van Dijk 2000].

The idea of “discourse” is complex and has been interpreted differently across various fields, including linguistics, sociology, philosophy and cultural studies. In linguistics, it refers to connected language beyond single sentences; in sociology, it concerns social practices and systems of knowledge; in philosophy, it examines how language shapes thought and reality; and in cultural studies, it looks at how texts and practices communicate ideology and norms [Foucault 1972, p.117] According to Fairclough, discourse is not only a linguistic unit but also a form of social practice that both reflects and shapes social structures, ideologies, and identities [Fairclough 1995, p.54]. His approach, rooted in Critical Discourse Analysis, emphasises the dialectical relationship between language and society, viewing discourse as a medium through which power is exercised and contested. [Fairclough 2010, p.67]. This means that language use in the media is not neutral—it contributes to maintaining or transforming dominant ideologies through subtle linguistic mechanisms such as framing, presupposition, and modality.

Similarly, T.van Dijk defines discourse as “a form of language use, text, and talk, situated in communicative events, which is systematically related to structures of cognition and society” [van Dijk 1998, p. 22]. His socio-cognitive approach integrates linguistic analysis with insights from psychology and social theory, suggesting that discourse both reflects and influences the mental models individuals hold about the world. [van Dijk 2008, p.37] In the context of media communication, his perspective highlights how recurring discourse patterns - such as stereotypes, narratives, and framing devices - shape collective cognition, and public ideology.

Discourse is not merely a static linguistic artifact but an ongoing, interactive process of meaning-making. It unfolds in specific communicative contexts and incorporates participants, purposes and conditions of interpretation [Wodak 2001, p. 63]. Shvets adds that discourse is a process of linguistic communication which manifests itself in a socially conditioned system of meanings and values[Shvets 2018, p. 29]. Thus, while text can be viewed as the material outcome of communication, discourse is its functional and situational realization.

Hence, discourse is a multidimensional phenomenon that transcends the boundaries of purely linguistic analysis. It emerges as a dynamic social practice through which meanings are produced and transformed. Within this broad typology, however, the focus of the present study is media discourse, since it plays a crucial role in shaping public meanings and social norms through recurrent genres and persuasive communicative strategies.

1.2 Media discourse as a type of discourse

Several influential linguists and discourse analysts have significantly shaped contemporary understandings of media discourse, offering complementary perspectives on how media communication is produced and interpreted. In particular, Norman Fairclough (CDA; ideology, power, media language) foregrounds the ideological and political nature of media texts[Fairclough 2010]; Teun A. van Dijk (news discourse; framing, social cognition, public opinion) explains how media discourse influences collective knowledge and attitudes[van Dijk 1988]; and Ruth Wodak (discourse-historical approach; media-mediated political/institutional discourse) connects media representations to broader socio-historical and institutional contexts[Wodak 2001]. Moreover, from the viewpoint of media linguistics, Marina Talbot (media

discourse across formats and genres) highlights how media communication varies across channels and genres[Talbot 2013], while Allan Bell (journalistic/news discourse; audience design, style, production routines) [Bell 1991] and Roger Fowler (language in the news; ideological representation, evaluation, framing) show how journalistic discourse is shaped by institutional routines and evaluative choices [Fowler 1991]. In addition, research on digital and networked environments is developed by Susan C. Herring (computer-mediated discourse; online interaction, hashtags/emojis, platform effects)[Herrng 2013], Michele Zappavigna (social media discourse; hashtags, stance, community)[Zappavigna 2018], and Jannis Androutsopoulos (digital discourse/mediatization; genre hybridity, participation, circulation)[Androutsopoulos 2018], whereas Gunther Kress (multimodality; image–text–design meaning-making) emphasizes that media meaning is produced through the interaction of verbal and visual semiotic resources[Kress 2015]. Taken together, these approaches demonstrate why media discourse is a crucial object of linguistic inquiry.

When applied to media studies, the term “media discourse” refers to communicative practices that occur through mass media channels such as television, radio, newspapers, online platforms, and social networks [Talbot 2013]. It encompasses not only the verbal and textual components of communication but also the institutional routines, technological affordances, and audience interactions that shape the production and reception of messages. In this regard, media discourse is seen as both a product and a process [Fairclough 1992, p.78]: a product in the form of media texts that embody particular linguistic and semiotic structures - and a process involving ongoing negotiations of meaning among producers, audiences, and broader social forces.

Scholars such as Allan Bell define media discourse as “institutionalized communication whose primary function is to construct shared meanings through semiotic systems that extend beyond verbal signs to include images, sounds, and

design” [Bell 1991, p. 13]. This definition emphasizes the multimodal nature of media discourse. For instance, journalistic texts frequently employ formal language, concise sentences, and headlines[Bell 1991, p. 16]. Whereas social media platforms often encourage informal styles, including colloquial expressions, abbreviations, hashtags, and emojis[Herring 2013, p.45]. The interaction of these semiotic resources enhances the persuasive and affective potential of media messages and demonstrates how the medium itself shapes discourse style and structure.

From the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), media texts are viewed as ideological constructions rather than neutral representations. Scholars such as Fairclough, van Dijk, and Wodak emphasize that language in the media both reflects social practices and contributes to shaping them through discursive choices that reproduce or challenge power relations [Fairclough 2001],[Wodak 2001]. Institutional constraints—such as editorial routines and policies - further influence how reality is represented, filtering events through ideological lenses [van Dijk 1988 p. 31]. Linguistic strategies including passive constructions, evaluative adjectives, and selective quotation can subtly legitimize or marginalize particular viewpoints [Fairclough 1995, p. 42].

Persuasion is therefore a central function of media discourse. Holubeva notes that it aims to influence audiences through lexical and visual means[Holubeva 2020, p.56]. Metaphorical framing and vocabulary selection shape attitudes and beliefs, while tabloid journalism often employs sensationalist lexis and exaggeration [Bell 1991, p. 26]. In digital environments, meme-based genres and viral formats combine linguistic and visual resources to accelerate the circulation and reinterpretation of meaning [Herring 2013, p. 51]. Advertising discourse likewise exploits persuasive strategies to address specific audiences and reinforce consumer identities [van Dijk 2008, p. 23].

These ideological and persuasive functions become particularly visible in media representations of women’s beauty. Gill argues that contemporary media

culture promotes tightly regulated aesthetic standards and discourses of self-surveillance, while Bordo shows how female bodies function as cultural texts through which values of discipline and appearance are normalized[Gill 2007, p.162], [Bordo 1993, p.171]. Wolf similarly conceptualizes beauty as a cultural ideology that governs women's lives through imagery and narrative[Wolf 1991, p.10]. In this sense, media discourse acts as a symbolic lens that normalizes beauty standards, influences collective aesthetic judgments and sidelines alternative embodiments.

Ukrainian scholars also highlight how media discourse reflects broader cultural shifts and ideological struggles. Fedorenko [Fedorenko 2021, p. 93] characterizes media discourse as a multi-genre system shaped by technological change, while Rizun stresses the inseparability of interpretation from sociocultural context [Rizun 2016, p.141]. Selivanova observes that digital environments promote the democratization of discourse by enabling users to participate in meaning-making processes[Selivanove 2019, p.188].

Digitalization has fundamentally transformed media discourse into an interactive and multimodal form of communication. Online media integrate text, images, videos, hyperlinks, and comment sections, allowing users to actively participate in discussions and disseminate content globally. This interactivity enables audiences to co-construct meaning, comment on news, engage in debates, and influence the visibility of content through likes and reposts, which reflects a shift from traditional one-way communication to participatory networked communication [Herring 2013 p. 53; Androutsopoulos, 2018, p. 7].

In conclusion, media discourse constitutes a complex semiotic phenomenon integrating language, ideology, institutional practices, and technology. Media discourse functions as a form of social action and symbolic power, shaping how audiences perceive reality and negotiate cultural values. In relation to women's beauty, it actively constructs aesthetic norms and femininity

models, demonstrating the need for critical media literacy capable of uncovering ideological mechanisms in contemporary communication environments.

1.3 Genres of media discourse

Media discourse is not a single uniform mode of communication but a structured field of public meaning-making that operates through genres—relatively stable, socially recognizable formats of texts and interactions such as news reports, interviews, editorials, features, advertisements, lifestyle advice, and platform-native posts [Swales 1990, p.40; Bhatia 1993, p.21]. Genres matter because they function as conventionalized “templates” for communication that help audiences immediately recognize what kind of text they are dealing with and what kind of reading position is expected [Bakhtin 1986, p.61 Briggs & Bauman 1992, p.133].

From a discourse-analytic perspective, genres are forms of social action rather than neutral containers: each genre is tied to institutional routines and ideological expectations about who has authority to speak and what counts as credible knowledge [Fairclough 1995, p.64; Wodak & Meyer 2001, p.29]. This is why genre analysis links micro-level linguistic choices (lexis, syntax, cohesion, evaluation, stance) with macro-level conditions of production (editorial gatekeeping, professional norms, market pressures, platform rules), demonstrating how media texts both reflect and actively shape social reality [Fairclough 1995, p.27; Wodak & Meyer 2001, p.16]. In addition, genres are strongly multimodal: layout, typography, photographic style, montage, sound, and interactivity become part of the genre’s meaning-making resources, especially in magazines, broadcast news, and social media environments [Machin & van Leeuwen 2005, p.581].

A common way to describe genres of media discourse is by their dominant communicative function. Informational genres (hard news, news briefs, live

updates, backgrounders/explainers) typically prioritize factuality and institutional credibility, [Bell 1991; van Dijk 1988]. Interpretive genres (analysis, commentary) foreground evaluation and persuasion [Richardson 2007]. Narrative genres (features, profiles, human-interest stories, documentary storytelling) organize information through storytelling, personalization, and experiential framing [Scannell 1991; Montgomery 2007]. Interactive genres (interviews, debates, talk shows, and panel discussions) institutionalize dialogue and conflict, using turn-taking control and question–answer formats to produce public accountability or entertainment value [Scannell 1991; Montgomery, 2007].

Equally significant are media genres oriented toward promotion and consumption. Forms such as advertising, branded and native content, and advertorials are overtly persuasive, yet in contemporary media, the line between editorial material and commercial messaging is frequently indistinct. This results in hybrid texts in which lifestyle advice and product marketing are integrated into a single communicative format [Machin & van Leeuwen 2005 p.580; Fürsich 2012, p.17].

Genres also change significantly in digital media because platforms introduce algorithmic visibility and new conditions of publicness that shape what becomes seen, circulated, and valued. Research on social networking sites shows that communication is structured by platform affordances (persistence, replicability, scalability, and invisible audiences), which reshape interaction and audience design in networked publics [boyd 2010, p.42]. At the same time, scholars argue that algorithms are not neutral technical tools but key mechanisms that sort information and organize participation, thereby influencing public attention and relevance [Bucher 2012, p.1170; Gillespie 2014, p.180]. In this environment, social media discourse comprises a genre complex (posts, stories, short videos, livestreams, threads, memes, reaction formats, and comment sections) in which meaning is co-produced through sharing, recontextualization, and remixing, and where genres adapt to platform incentives such as attention

capture and engagement prompts [van Dijck 2018, p.11 ;Zappavigna 2012, p.12].

For research on beauty standards, genre is crucial because norms are rarely expressed as explicit rules. Rather, they become culturally powerful through repeated genre routines. Trend genres naturalize what is “in” and desirable, advice genres frame the body as improvable through routines and products, profiles personalize ideals through celebrities and influencers, and highly aestheticized visual genres present particular bodies and styles as self-evidently attractive and socially rewarded [Fürsich 2012 p.24 ; Machin & van Leeuwen 2005, p.600]. Therefore, genre analysis provides a methodological basis for tracing how recurring linguistic and multimodal patterns stabilize beauty ideals and connect appearance to identity and consumption.

1.3.1 Social media as a genre of media discourse

The widespread growth of social networking platforms has reshaped contemporary communicative practices, giving rise to what researchers describe as discourse on social media platforms – a digitally mediated, participatory, and multimodal mode of interaction [van Dijk 2013, p.12]. In contrast to traditional mass-media systems that operate primarily through one-directional transmission, social media discourse unfolds within networked environments where users act simultaneously as creators, disseminators, and interpreters of content [Marwick 2013, p. 17]. Moreover, this discourse is produced across a wide range of platforms, including Facebook, TikTok, YouTube, Snapchat, and Pinterest. However, the present study focuses specifically on Instagram, since its strongly visual and image-centered ecology makes it particularly relevant for examining how beauty standards are shaped.

From a discourse-analytic viewpoint, social media discourse can be conceptualized as a socially embedded semiotic practice shaped by patterns of

language use, visual modes, cultural conventions, and platform-specific affordances [Androutsopoulos 2018, p. 237; Kress 2015, p. 50]. Such practices are inseparable from the technological infrastructures that organize participation and visibility, as algorithms, interface design, and commercial imperatives actively influence the circulation of meaning [Bucher 2018, p. 5; van Dijck 2013, p. 31].

Instagram constitutes a particularly illustrative case within this broader digital ecology because of its emphasis on visual communication alongside textual and interactive components. Highfield and Leaver note that the platform operates through intricate semiotic configurations in which photographs, captions, hashtags, and emojis collectively generate social meanings [Highfield and Leaver 2016, p. 50]. Consequently, Instagram offers a valuable empirical site for examining how discourse operates in highly visual social media environments.

A defining feature of communication on Instagram is multimodality [Kress 2015, p.50]. Typical posts combine photographs or videos with written captions, emojis, hashtags, graphic overlays, and background music, particularly in Stories and Reels. These semiotic resources operate together to create layered meanings that cannot be reduced to verbal language alone [Zappavigna 2018, p.13].

Within this multimodal configuration, visual elements frequently carry the primary communicative load, while captions frame interpretation, provide narrative coherence, or signal stance [Highfield & Leaver 2016, p.51]. Hashtags function as metadiscursive devices that classify posts and connect them to broader topical communities [Zappavigna 2018, p.18]. Emojis and typographic variation supplement verbal language by conveying affect, irony, or alignment with audiences [Herring 2013, p.10].

Another central characteristic of Instagram discourse is its interactive and participatory nature. Posts invite engagement through comments, reactions, tagging, and reposting practices, which transform communication into an ongoing

dialogical process [Herring 2013, p. 10; Androutsopoulos 2018, p. 240]. In this way, meanings are co-constructed by content producers and audiences through sequences of responses and reinterpretations. Moreover, Instagram exemplifies broader shifts toward participatory media cultures in which distinctions between producers and consumers become increasingly blurred [Highfield & Leaver 2016, p. 51]. Influencers, brands, institutions, and ordinary users therefore compete for attention within the same communicative space, shaping discursive norms and stylistic strategies [Marwick 2013, p. 16]. At the same time, engagement metrics such as likes, views, and follower counts function as symbolic resources indexing popularity and credibility [Marwick 2013, p. 73].

Taken together, these observations demonstrate that discourse on social media platforms represents a distinctive form of contemporary communication shaped by digital technologies, participatory practices, and multimodal meaning-making. As illustrated through the case of Instagram, discourse on social networking platforms emerges from the interaction of visual and verbal resources, platform affordances, and algorithmically structured environments that condition visibility and engagement. This makes Instagram especially relevant for the analysis of beauty representation in contemporary digital communication.

1.3.2 Magazines as a genre of media discourse

Magazines constitute a distinctive form of media discourse characterized by periodicity, genre hybridity, and the close integration of textual and visual modes. From a discourse-analytic perspective, magazine texts are not merely vehicles of information but socially situated semiotic practices that construct lifestyles, values, and identities through patterned linguistic and visual strategies [Fairclough 1995, p. 35]. In this respect, glossy magazines are particularly

revealing objects of analysis because they consistently combine editorial narration with advertising logics, producing culturally “legitimate” models of taste and self-presentation.

In contemporary media culture, magazines exist in multiple thematic types that address different spheres of social life: news and public affairs magazines, business and technology magazines, popular science magazines, lifestyle and entertainment magazines, and highly specialized niche titles. Each type forms its own discourse conventions—preferred topics, genres, visual regimes, and value hierarchies—through which readers are positioned and social reality is framed. However, for a study concerned with the discursive construction of women’s beauty, fashion magazines are especially productive, because they place the body, appearance, femininity, and aesthetic evaluation at the center of their communicative agenda.

Vogue occupies a distinctive and arguably dominant position, because its discourse is widely associated with aesthetic authority and institutional prestige in the fashion field. Precisely this symbolic status enables *Vogue* not only to reflect existing beauty ideals but also to participate in their production and legitimation: by selecting bodies, faces, styling practices, and narratives as exemplary, the magazine contributes to the cultural circulation of what counts as “beautiful,” “elegant,” “modern,” or “desirable.” In other words, *Vogue* functions as a powerful gatekeeper of fashion and beauty meanings, shaping aspirational norms that often extend beyond fashion itself into broader cultural understandings of femininity and social distinction.

A defining feature of magazine discourse (the same as in Instagram) is multimodality, that is, the orchestration of written language, photography, typography, layout, and colour into coherent meaning-making ensembles [Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, p. 16]. In fashion magazines in particular, images frequently dominate the page, while headlines, captions, and body text guide interpretation [Barthes 1977, p. 40]. In *Vogue*, carefully staged photographic

compositions, model poses, and lighting techniques work together with evaluative adjectives and metaphorical headlines to frame garments and bodies as desirable or aspirational. Thus, visual grammar and linguistic framing function jointly to naturalize particular aesthetic standards.

Moreover, the language of magazine journalism—especially in lifestyle and fashion titles—is typically marked by promotional and affective registers that simulate closeness to the reader and encourage aspirational identification. Feature articles often rely on evaluative lexis (superlatives and sensory adjectives) and forms of direct address [Fürsich 2012]. At the same time, the boundaries between editorial and commercial communication are frequently blurred, as advertising logics permeate magazine formats and visual-verbal styles [Machin & van Leeuwen, 2005]. Advertising is frequently integrated with editorial material, producing what Bourdieu would describe as symbolic mechanisms through which taste and distinction are socially regulated [Bourdieu 1984 p. 172]. Consequently, *Vogue*'s discourse may be read as simultaneously cultural and commercial: while presenting itself as an authority on fashion and creativity, it also participates in sustaining luxury markets and consumer aspirations.

In addition, magazine content is shaped by institutional routines and editorial policies. Editorial teams, photographers, stylists, and advertisers collaborate within specific production frameworks that influence which bodies, trends, and narratives become visible [Johnson 2015, p. 24]. From this standpoint, *Vogue* does not simply reflect fashion culture but actively curates it through selection, repetition, and exclusion. [van Dijk 2008, p. 23].

Furthermore, the authority of magazines such as *Vogue* is reinforced through celebrity coverage. Interviews with models, designers, and film stars combine confessional narrative styles with glamourized visual representation, producing what Marshall terms a form of mediated persona construction. In this way, celebrity features function as templates for aspiration, linking individual

success stories to broader consumer and aesthetic ideologies[Marshall 2014, p.160].

Taken together, these features frame *Vogue* as a multifaceted discursive formation in which multimodal composition, persuasive rhetoric, editorial routines, and ideological processes intersect. Consequently, magazines may be understood not merely as sources of fashion news but as influential cultural institutions that cultivate taste, legitimize particular beauty ideals, and mediate individuals' relationships with consumer culture.

1.4 Beauty Standards on Instagram and Vogue

Beauty standards in contemporary culture are not simply “personal preferences”; rather, they are discursively produced norms that circulate through repeated media representations and evaluations. In this respect, both Instagram and *Vogue* operate as powerful sites where ideals of attractiveness are made visible, described, legitimized, and naturalized through patterned visual–verbal strategies. However, they do so under different conditions of production and authority: Instagram relies on platformed visibility and participatory circulation, while *Vogue* relies on editorial curation and institutional prestige.

On Instagram, beauty standards are intensified because the platform privileges constant visual display and rapid circulation. Ruslana Bezuhla identifies visual demonstrativeness as a defining feature of glamour: the impulse to publicly display the body, appearance, luxury, success, and status. This “demonstrative” logic is directly compatible with Instagram’s everyday aesthetics, where the body and face function as publicly evaluated signs rather than private attributes [Bezuhla 2019, p. 3]. In addition, Bezuhla argues that glamorous images exist through media circulation—being created, distributed, and sustained thanks to mass media and communication systems [Bezuhla 2019,

p. 3]. Transferred to Instagram, this supports a theoretical claim that beauty ideals gain force not simply because they are “attractive,” but because they are repeatedly circulated as recognizable visual models that invite imitation and comparison.

At the same time, Instagram legitimizes beauty standards not only through repetition but also through the performance of authenticity. Van Driel and Dumitrica show that influencers’ “authenticity” is something they must carefully produce and manage in their online persona; in practice, this can involve selectively sharing “intimate” snippets of everyday life, and using selfies to signal credibility and “realness” [van Driel & Dumitrica 2020, p.4]. Consequently, platform beauty norms may appear less ideological because they are framed as personal experience; however, precisely this “everyday” framing can make standards more persuasive.

Conversely, *Vogue* constructs beauty standards through the discursive conventions of fashion journalism: curated trend narratives, expert voices, and controlled evaluative language. Khrystyna Astaptseva defines fashion journalism as a field that forms public opinion about fashion and evaluates and forecasts the social significance of fashion phenomena [Astaptseva 2021, p. 2]. Crucially, she also includes the axiological function among the functions of fashion journalism [Astaptseva 2021, p. 2]. This theoretical point helps explain how *Vogue*’s beauty discourse works: when an editorial text labels a look “timeless,” “essential,” or “the season’s key,” it is not merely describing an appearance but performing value-making work—attaching cultural legitimacy and prestige to particular styles, products, and bodily presentations.

Thus, while Instagram tends to normalize beauty ideals through visibility and the performance of authenticity, *Vogue* tends to normalize them through curated authority and institutional evaluation. Yet, despite these differences, both spaces participate in the same broader cultural mechanism: beauty is framed as an object of public judgment and self-management, and media discourse provides

the vocabulary and templates through which attractiveness becomes a socially regulated norm.

Conclusion to chapter 1

The term “discourse” is a complex phenomenon that includes not only language itself but also the social, cultural, ideological, and communicative conditions in which meaning is produced. Discourse functions as a form of social practice because it reflects social values and at the same time participates in shaping identities and relations of power. Therefore, discourse analysis is important for studying the ways language influences public perception and represents social norms.

Media discourse is defined as a specific type of discourse that operates through mass media and digital platforms. It includes verbal, visual, institutional, technological, and ideological components. The research has shown that media discourse does not simply inform the audience but also constructs meanings, influences attitudes and normalizes particular cultural models. This is especially important for the study of female beauty standards, because media representations of appearance often present certain ideals as desirable and socially approved.

The analysis of social media as a genre of media discourse shows that Instagram is characterized by multimodality, interactivity, participation, and algorithmic visibility. On Instagram, beauty is constructed through the combination of photographs, videos, captions, hashtags, emojis, comments, likes, and engagement metrics. As a result, female beauty becomes a public and socially evaluated phenomenon. Instagram normalizes beauty standards through visual self-presentation, authenticity, personal experience, and audience interaction.

Magazines, in contrast, represent a more institutionalized form of media discourse. Vogue constructs beauty standards through editorial selection, expert voices, aesthetic authority, celebrity representation, and polished visual-verbal style. Its discourse combines cultural and commercial functions, since it presents beauty not only as an aesthetic value but also as a part of lifestyle, taste,

consumption, and social distinction. Therefore, Vogue does not only reflect beauty ideals but also participates in their production and legitimation.

Thus, female beauty standards in contemporary media are discursively constructed through linguistic, stylistic, visual, and genre-based mechanisms. Instagram and Vogue operate differently: Instagram relies on visibility, interaction, authenticity, and personal self-presentation, while Vogue relies on editorial authority, expert evaluation, and institutional prestige.

CHAPTER II. LINGUISTIC REPRESENTATION OF BEAUTY STANDARDS

2.1 Lexical and Stylistic means of representing appearance standards

2.1.1 In Vogue articles

Vogue's beauty coverage reveals a consistent set of linguistic and stylistic strategies through which contemporary beauty standards are represented and reinforced. The study focused on recurrent lexical choices, stylistic devices, metaphorical labels, and discursive patterns through which the ideal female image is constructed. Particular attention was given to the ways in which *Vogue* naturalises specific beauty norms by embedding them in evaluative description, expert authority, trend, and procedural advice.

Within this material, several recurring article types can be identified, each of which contributes in a specific way to the construction and circulation of beauty standards. First, Vogue frequently publishes *guidance* articles, presenting beauty through routines, techniques, and step-by-step practices. Second, *recommendation* articles define desirable products and practices. Third, the magazine relies heavily on *trend-based* articles that connect beauty not only with personal appearance but also with cultural relevance and timeliness. Finally, Vogue also includes *expert-driven* articles featuring dermatologists, makeup artists, hairstylists, and other professionals whose authority legitimises particular norms of appearance. Taken together, these articles do more than inform the reader: they establish frameworks of evaluation and shape expectations.

In *Vogue*, women's beauty is represented already at the level of headlines. Headlines do not simply name beauty topics; they shape the ideal image of a woman by emphasizing glowing skin, attractive facial features, healthy hair, a toned body, fitness, and inner confidence. Vogue uses expressive adjectives, metaphorical phrases, and persuasive headline structures such as *how to*, *what is*,

the best, you need, and the trend. Through these linguistic choices, beauty is presented not as something natural and fixed, but as something that can be achieved, improved, and maintained. This persuasive effect is reinforced further by headline-like promise structures such as “how to get...,” “everything you need to know...,” “the best...,” and “the trend that will be everywhere,” which create a sense of urgency and inevitability. At the same time, Vogue strengthens its authority by referring to dermatologists, celebrity makeup artists, and other experts, thereby legitimising the promoted ideal as professional knowledge rather than mere personal preference. Within this broader persuasive framework, different aspects of female beauty are highlighted through different types of headlines. For example, in relation to face and skin, Vogue frequently use such lexical units as *glass skin, sculptured glow, golden hour glow, hydrated skin, great skin, looking more awake skin*:

What Is Glass Skin and Do I Want It? [What]

A Guide to Face Yoga for a Healthy, Sculpted Glow[A guide]

Behold: Salma Hayek’s Makeup-Free_Golden Hour Glow.[Behold]

The Japanese Layering Technique for More Hydrated Skin[The japanese]

These headlines show that facial beauty is associated with brightness, freshness and visible care.

Finally, Vogue also touches upon self-confidence. In this case, beauty is associated not only with physical appearance but also with emotional balance and self-acceptance. For instance:

Ellie Goldstein’s Guide to_Clear Skin and Confidence[Ellie]

Yara Shahidi’s Latest Makeup-Free Selfie Is a Study in Self-Love[Yara]

Well Intentioned: How America Ferrera Is Recognizing Her Own Strength and Welcoming *Inspiration*[Well intentioned]

Kendall Jenner Is In_Her Feelings[Kendal]

Beauty in such headlines is connected with confidence and authenticity, allowing Vogue to broaden the concept of feminine beauty by combining outward attractiveness with inner strength.

The concept of beauty includes several interconnected aspects, such as the face, body complexity, skin, nails and inner feelings. Together, these elements form a complex image of beauty that combines physical appearance with emotional and psychological qualities.

As an international authority on fashion and beauty, *Vogue* serves as a primary vehicle for the linguistic construction of the modern female image. In its beauty coverage, the magazine uses beauty vocabulary built around the ideas of *radiance, hydration, brightness, plump, soft, luminosity, glow, freshness, smoothness, and youthfulness* to characterize female appearance and its idealized qualities. The examples below illustrate this tendency: [How to get]

Originating from Korea's beauty culture, where the trend emphasizes hydration, radiance, and overall skin health, this aligns with the global shift towards skin care as a vital aspect of self-care and wellness. [How to get a]

While primer may be best-known for its ability to lock a makeup look into place—providing a smooth, <...>.[16 best]

Poppy Delevingne's Guide to a Fresh-Faced Glow.[Poppy]

This lexical pattern becomes especially visible in Vogue's coverage of K-beauty trends. This cluster appears across trend pieces and expert advice, and it works like a silent checklist: if the skin is not *radiant* or *even-toned*, it implicitly becomes a problem to solve with routines and products.

Moreover, another important lexical feature of *Vogue's* beauty writing is intensification. The magazine frequently uses emphatic words and promotional markers such as *best, major, must, all-time high, incredible, instant, visible, iconic, absolute, unbeatable, total, remarkable ultimate, defining* and *super flattering* in order to heighten desirability, strengthen evaluation, and make beauty advice sound more urgent and authoritative.

The 41 Best Beauty Products of 2024, According to Vogue's Beauty Team[The 58]

The Best Makeup for Women Over 50[The best]

The Flattering Butterfly Haircut Is Going Viral Again[The flattering]

Maybe it's the lack of venturing out to socialize that has experimentation at an all-time high?[The best beauty, p.1]

It's a shade that you could throw on and instantly feel chic.[The sheer lipskick, p.2]

Another important lexical feature is the constant use of collocations that recur across skincare, makeup, nail, and hair. Phrases such as *glow skin*, *even tone*, *smooth texture*, *lightweight formula*, *universally flattering shade*, and *healthy-looking skin* appear in different contexts. [What is a BB] *It leaves my skin feeling pampered and moisturized—and looking a touch more glowy. .BB and CC creams... impart a more even skin tone and a complexion that improves day after day. Mature skin needs support in three areas: hydration, barrier repair, and stimulation of collagen and cellular turnover.* From a lexical point of view, this repetition creates a recognizable beauty code. Because the same combinations return again and again, they start functioning almost like ready-made formulas. They standardize what beauty should look like: smooth, glowing, even, soft, flattering, radiant. Thus, repetition does not merely connect texts linguistically; it normalizes the same ideal across multiple genres of beauty writing.

The analysis shows that in Vogue, female appearance is constructed not only through individual lexical items, but also through a system of expressive stylistic devices that make the ideal image emotionally attractive, memorable, and seemingly attainable. Among the most prominent devices are epithets, metaphor, hyperbole, intensification, sensory imagery, and recurring formulaic collocations.

Importantly, these stylistic means are distributed quite systematically: from the description of the face, skin, and lips to hair, and nails.

A central stylistic feature of *Vogue*'s beauty language is the active use of metaphors as a naming strategy. Metaphorical labels compress a complex aesthetic ideal into a short, vivid, and easily repeatable phrase. In makeup images, expressions such as *latte makeup*, *peachy glow*, *cherry cola lips*, *vanilla girl*, *strawberry makeup*, *chocolate brown makeup*, *caramel tones*, and *berry makeup*, turn colour palettes and cosmetic effects into sensory, culturally resonant images.

Across makeup, hair and nails metaphors draw on the semantic fields of food, fruit, seasonality, lifestyle, and texture, transforming cosmetic description into something more vivid, emotionally appealing, and easy to imagine. Instead of relying on technical beauty terminology, *Vogue* presents trends through images that evoke taste, colour, atmosphere, and everyday pleasure. As a result, beauty is represented not simply as a set of techniques or products, but as an accessible and desirable aesthetic experience. . For example, *latte makeup* (*Latte makeup, an effortless take on summer bronze, is as addictive as your daily caffeine fix—and has quickly come to dominate TikTok with its modern goddess appeal.*) evokes warmth, creaminess, and brown-toned softness; *berry makeup* (*Fall 2024, however, appears to be the season of berry makeup, where raspberry, blackberry, and blueberry shades juicy color across the cheeks, eyelids, and lips.*) suggests juicy richness and seasonal depth. Stylistically, such metaphors are effective because they replace technical cosmetic description with emotionally charged everyday imagery. As a result, the beauty ideal becomes more accessible, more memorable, and more persuasive.

A similar stylistic function appeared in the description of hair. Shades are often named through food-based or sensorial images, as in *cinnamon cookie butter hair* (*Hailey Bieber's Latest Food-Inspired Beauty Look? 'Cinnamon Cookie Butter' Hair*) or *chocolate brown hair* (*Kaia Gerber's Chocolate Glaze*

Hair Is One of 2024's Biggest Color Trends). These expressions do not merely identify colour; they turn it into an experience associated with warmth, sweetness, softness, and familiarity. The stylistic significance of such metaphors lies in the fact that they humanize and emotionalize beauty language. Instead of sounding technical or salon-based, the description sounds intimate, comforting, and desirable. Hair colour is thus framed not simply as a visual feature, but as part of a pleasurable aesthetic atmosphere.

If to speak about nails, *Vogue* continues the same metaphorical logic. Expressions such as *glazed donut nails*, *blueberry milk nails*, *vanilla French*, and *glass nails* transform manicure trends into highly visual and tactile images. These labels are stylistically powerful because they merge beauty with the semantic spheres of food, glass, sweetness, and surface perfection. For instance, *glazed donut nails* (*attention on Ganzorigt has hit an all-time high thanks to the “glazed donut” nail—a sheer, iridescent, milky white look she created for Bieber ahead of the 2022 Met Gala in a nod to the model’s favorite skin look.*) suggest a shiny, smooth, slightly reflective finish; *blueberry milk nails* (*Dubbed “blueberry milk”, this creamy, powdery sheer blue shade—often applied over a beige, pearlescent or white base—flatters every skin tone.*) evoke a pale, creamy pastel softness; *vanilla French* (*The “vanilla French” manicure is a soft, slightly diffused natural nail look that is super flattering on all who try it. Fans include Kylie Jenner, Adele, and Hailey Bieber.*) gives the traditional French manicure a softer and more refined character; and *glass nails* emphasize transparency, gloss, and flawless polish. Such metaphorical naming makes even small details of appearance sound fashionable, desirable, and sensorially rich.

Thus, based on the analysed lexical and stylistic means, the image portrait of female beauty in *Vogue* can be defined as a carefully constructed ideal that unites physical attractiveness, visible self-care, and emotional confidence. A beautiful woman in this magazine is represented as radiant, fresh, smooth-skinned, toned, fit, well-groomed, and aesthetically controlled, yet at the same

time natural-looking, confident, and emotionally balanced. *Vogue* presents female beauty not as something fixed or purely inborn, but as an ongoing project that should be cultivated through routines, products, expert guidance, and self-improvement practices. Within this framework, true feminine beauty is connected with harmony between outer and inner qualities: glowing skin, healthy hair, polished details, and an image of self-love, strength, and authenticity. However, this ideal remains highly selective, since it privileges youthfulness, radiance, slimness, smoothness, and visible control over appearance. Therefore, *Vogue* constructs female beauty as both naturalized and disciplined: it is made to appear effortless, desirable, and accessible, while in fact being supported by constant maintenance, aesthetic labour, and the internalization of socially approved standards.

2.1.2 In Instagram posts

In contrast to *Vogue*, where female beauty is usually represented through polished editorial language, professional authority, trend framing, and highly standardized ideals, Instagram constructs women's beauty in a more immediate, intimate, and interactive way. Whereas *Vogue* tends to describe beauty through expert recommendations, perfected routines, and culturally approved models of appearance, Instagram beauty posts more often rely on personal voice, emotional spontaneity, colloquial expression, and everyday self-presentation. In this sense, Instagram does not simply reproduce the magazine model of femininity, but modifies it through a more informal and effective communicative style. This contrast is especially important because *Vogue* presents beauty as a curated aesthetic project shaped by guidance, evaluation, and trends, while Instagram more often presents it as lived experience, self-display, and personal narrative.

The material for this study consists of Instagram posts collected from well-known influencers whose content focuses on beauty, makeup, and skincare. The selected accounts include prominent beauty bloggers such as Huda Kattan(5.2m), Nikkie de Jager(18,9m), Jackie Aina(2m), and James Charles(19.6m).

These influencers were selected due to their significant impact on global beauty standards and their active role in shaping contemporary representations of appearance.

Instagram beauty language is strongly shaped by captions, which function as powerful lexical tools for attracting attention and framing the perception of women's beauty. These headlines are typically brief, emotionally charged, and strategically structured to immediately engage the audience in a fast-scrolling environment. At the lexical level, they rely on specific vocabulary choices, repetition, and evaluative language that significantly influence how beauty is constructed and interpreted. One of the most noticeable lexical features in their captions is the use of intensifiers and superlatives, which amplify the desirability of a particular look. For example, captions such as

The best kept beauty secret under \$2 [My shower]

<...>*our best makeup look*<...> [My Makeup]

It doesn't matter if it's perfect. [My Makeup]

<...>*fully obsessed*[My emotional]

are typical of posts by influencers. The words *best*, *must*, *top*, *perfect*, and *ever* function as extreme evaluative markers, positioning a specific version of beauty as the ultimate goal. At the lexical level, these choices create a sense of urgency and exclusivity, suggesting that this look is not just attractive but exceptional. This strongly influences how followers evaluate their own appearance, encouraging comparison with idealized standards. Influencers begin their posts with short, emphatic phrases such as *perfect for all-over setting*, *the best of both worlds*, *this is perfect*, *I'm obsessed*, or *perfect makeup base*. Such expressions function as persuasive evaluative markers that immediately present a product,

look, or beauty result as especially desirable. Words like *perfect*, *best*, and *obsessed* intensify the message and construct a sense of exceptionality, suggesting that a particular version of feminine beauty has already reached an ideal standard. In this way, the language does not simply describe appearance, but actively promotes flawless, highly valued beauty as something to admire and strive for.

A large part of Instagram beauty vocabulary is centered on the idea of ideal appearance, especially in relation to the face, skin, and overall look.

When it comes to speaking about face description, Instagram beauty bloggers consistently employ colloquial vocabulary rather than the polished lexical formulas typical of magazine representation. Their Instagram captions frequently include expressions such as *no filter*, *bare skin*, *soft glam*, *natural light*, *getting ready*, or *breakout*, often used in the context of everyday routines and unedited appearances. For instance, post by Huda Kattan incorporate phrases like *no filter* or *real skin*, explicitly foregrounding authenticity and transparency in contrast to highly retouched editorial imagery. Similarly, Nikkie de Jager often refers to *glam* versus *bare-faced* looks, juxtaposing transformation with natural appearance, while Jackie Aina integrates references to *lighting*, *texture*, and *skin in real life*, emphasizing the variability and materiality of beauty.

<...>*no filter, just real skin* [No filters]

full glam vs bare-faced [Let's find out]

This is me without makeup.[I've got]

In the case of Jackie Aina, captions commonly include references to environmental conditions and realism, such as:

Makeup in natural light hits different [Makeup]

This is how the skin looks in real life [This is]

Here, lexical items like *natural light* and *real life* highlight the variability of appearance and foreground the material, situational dimension of beauty.

In addition to captions structures and general colloquial language, Instagram beauty language is further characterized by the extensive use of slang-based expressive units, which represent a more intensified and culturally specific layer of informal communication. While colloquial language creates a conversational and relatable tone, slang functions as a marker of digital culture and in-group belonging, making the image more dynamic and socially embedded. Beauty bloggers such as Huda Kattan, Nikkie de Jager, Jackie Aina, and James Charles, often use slang expressions such as *slay*, *ate*, *serving*, *snatched*, *baddie*, *face card*, and *glow-up*, as well as phrases like *this look is giving*, *she's serving face*, or *this lip combo eats*. For example, captions by Nikkie de Jager regularly include playful formulations such as:

<...>*let's find out if I can still slay full-glam at 80 years old!* [Let's find out]



Fig 2.1 Visualization of the slang expression *slay* in an Instagram beauty post

Similarly, Jackie Aina frequently captions posts with:

Snatched this look with<...>[Snatched]



Fig 2.2 Visualization of the slang expression *snatched* in an Instagram beauty post

These items function as markers of immediacy, in-group belonging, and emotional amplification. Unlike editorial beauty language, which tends to standardize and aestheticize female appearance, Instagram slang verbalizes beauty through culturally coded enthusiasm, performative approval, and digitally circulating forms of praise.

The connection between slang-based expressions and female beauty on Instagram can be understood on several levels. First, these expressions emotionally amplify appearance and performative approval: words like *slay* or *glow-up* do not merely describe beauty but evaluate it culturally and emotionally, presenting it as impressive and desirable. Second, slang functions as an everyday experience: phrases such as *face card is giving confidence* or *this lip combo eats* frame beauty as a lived, performative process rather than a fixed ideal.

When beauty bloggers on Instagram speak about inner feeling, they often use idioms to make emotion sound intimate, relatable, and conversational. Instead of formal psychological vocabulary, they prefer familiar phrases that compress a whole emotional state into a short, memorable unit. Common patterns include *feel like myself again* (present beauty as a return to confidence and identity), *wear my heart on my sleeve* (emphasizes emotional honesty), *fake it till you make it* (reflects insecurity and gradual self-confidence), and *glow from within* (connects appearance with emotional well-being). These expressions are effective because they connect beauty not only with appearance, but with comfort, vulnerability, recovery, and confidence.

13 weeks postpartum and I'm starting to sort of feel like myself again after giving birth... [13 weeks]

I'm wearing what I usually wear: my heart on my sleeve.<...>[I'm wearing]

Instagram beauty language is shaped not only by specific lexical choices, but also by a wide range of stylistic means that make descriptions of female beauty more expressive, intimate, and emotionally engaging.

Starting with the face, beauty bloggers soften potentially stigmatizing terms related to imperfections or features that deviate from idealized standards. This stylistical approach is called euphemism. Influencers such as Mikayla Nogueira often use words like *blemishes*, *breakouts*, *redness*, or *problem areas* instead of harsh terms like *acne* or *spots*. Captions such as *dealing with a **few** breakouts today* or *covering some blemishes, still loving my skin* frame facial imperfections as natural, temporary, and manageable, reducing potential feelings of shame or pressure. Similarly, other face-focused captions may include *my freckles are showing today and I'm embracing them* or *learning to love my natural texture*, which reposition distinctive facial features as part of individual beauty rather than flaws to hide. In this way, euphemistic language does not erase beauty norms completely, but it makes them appear softer, kinder, and more emotionally acceptable.

At the same time, bloggers rely heavily on epithets, or descriptive adjectives, to make facial beauty more vivid, evaluative, and emotionally engaging. These lexical units highlight desirable traits while connecting appearance with confidence, personality, and self-expression. In terms of the face, bloggers frequently use epithets to emphasize clarity, symmetry, and radiance. Words such as *flawless*, *airbrushed*, *dewy*, *gorgeous*, *natural*, *soothed*, *radiant*, *glowing*, and *fresh-faced*, are especially common. In beauty captions, such epithets help present the face not only as visually appealing, but also as energetic, healthy, and emotionally expressive. For example, beauty bloggers use phrases such as as in blogger's captions like:

<...> *fresh-faced and loving it today* or *this glow is everything*..[We]

Fresh faced cuz I'll be showing you how to get a full beat TODAY. [Fresh]

Soft, hydrated skin with a glow you can see. [Soft]

Such epithets highlight aesthetic appeal while also linking facial appearance to vitality, self-confidence, and self-care.

Closely related to facial description is the representation of skin, which occupies a central place in Instagram beauty language. Here, epithets often focus on health, texture, and natural radiance. Bloggers frequently use adjectives such as *healthy-looking*, *smooth*, *supple*, *hydrated*, and *dewy*. This vocabulary constructs skin as something that can be cared for, improved, and nurtured through routines and products. As a result, beauty is presented not simply as an inherited quality, but as something cultivated through effort and consistency. Descriptions of skin therefore combine aesthetic evaluation with the representation of wellness and maintenance: the desired skin is not only beautiful, but also calm, fresh, soft, and cared for.

<...>*dewy, gorgeous, healthy skin*[Trying]

Soft, hydrated skin with a glow you can see.[My]

Another important device in descriptions of the face and skin is personification, when abstract qualities such as glow, beauty, or confidence are presented as if they could act, speak, or appear independently. This can be observed in the content of influencers such as Desi Perkins, Patrick Ta, and Mikayla Nogueira. In their captions, confidence and beauty are frequently represented as if they could act, appear, or express themselves independently. For example, in posts by Desi Perkins that feature bronzed, glowing makeup in natural light, captions often include expressions such as *this glow is back* [This] or *confidence is shining through this look*[Confidence], where both *glow* and *confidence* are presented as active forces shaping appearance. Similarly, in the work of Patrick Ta, who is known for soft glam and radiant skin aesthetics, captions describing clients or models often include phrases like *her **skin** is glowing*, *this look lets her confidence speak*, or *beauty that speaks for itself*, where beauty and confidence are personified as if they could communicate or act. Mikayla Nogueira similarly animates appearance in captions like these *this glow*

has its own agenda, my confidence showed up on its own, or these lashes are ready to tell a story that attributes agency to glow, confidence, and even lashes as if they were independent participants in the beauty narrative. Similarly, Desi Perkins has posted captions like *this bronzed look just walked into the room*, where the makeup itself is described as if it were a character entering space with intention. Other influencers extend this device to beauty products as well; captions such as *this highlighter speaks louder than words* or *this lip combo won't let me stay quiet* suggest that the products themselves have expressive power. Such examples make beauty feel alive, active, and emotionally charged rather than static.

At this point, metaphor naturally begins to play an important role as well. In face- and skin-related content, bloggers often describe beauty through metaphors of light, energy, and transformation. Words such as *glow*, *shine*, *radiance*, and *lit-from-within* do more than describe appearance literally; they metaphorically connect facial beauty with vitality, warmth, and inner energy. The face is represented not simply as attractive, but as if it emits light or reveals an inner state. Likewise, terms such as *airbrushed* or *flawless* metaphorically compare the face to a perfected image or finished artwork, suggesting smoothness, polish, and visual control. Through these metaphors, appearance becomes something artistic, luminous, and emotionally meaningful.

<...>*soft-focus, airbrushed finish* [No filter]

<...>*glassy, lit-from-within glow*. [Glowing]

When describing hair, influencers often use expressive, sensory, and strongly positive language. Words such as *soft*, *glossy*, *shiny*, *hydrated*, *nourished*, and *bouncy* frequently appear in captions and reel previews, presenting hair as healthy, touchable, and emotionally expressive. For example, Jackie Aina describes products that leave her hair *soft, nourished, and with the ultimate shine* [I've got], and in another post says a routine *leaves my hair feeling soft and hydrated* and gives her *way more shine* [How]. Desi Perkins similarly uses phrases

such as *Glossy hair*. *Glowing skin* and describes a hair routine as *lightweight*, *glossy*, *shiny* and something that *gives me so much confidence*[This].

Together, these examples show that hair is framed not simply as a physical feature, but as a visible sign of care, confidence, and vitality.

Finally, all of these stylistic choices lead toward the representation of inner feeling. Beauty bloggers do not describe appearance as separate from emotion; instead, they consistently connect the face, skin, hair, and body with confidence, peace, comfort, and self-expression. This is why abstract nouns such as *confidence*, *self-love*, *acceptance*, *empowerment*, and *comfort* appear so often alongside physical description. Personification strengthens this effect by making confidence seem visible and active, as in phrases where it can *shine through*, *show up*, or *speak for itself*. Metaphors of peace, journey, and ownership further reinforce the idea that beauty is not only external, but also psychological and emotional. As a result, women's beauty is represented not simply as appearance, but as a combination of visible form and inner state. Here, glowing skin, soft hair, or a confident body posture are made to signify something deeper: self-acceptance, emotional well-being, and a sense of harmony with oneself.

In conclusion, Instagram presents women's beauty through a mode of representation that is more personal, dynamic, and emotionally expressive than traditional magazine representations. Unlike institutional platforms, beauty bloggers on Instagram present beauty not as a fixed ideal to be achieved, but as an evolving and individualized experience shaped by everyday life, emotions, and self-perception. Through the use of colloquial vocabulary, slang expressions, and conversational tone, beauty is framed as immediate and relatable rather than distant and perfected.

2.2 Lexical and Stylistic means of representing body standards

2.2.1 In Vogue articles

The representation of the female body occupies an important place in Vogue's beauty and lifestyle coverage. Unlike descriptions of the face, which often focus on complexion, skin texture, or makeup effects, body-related representation brings together ideas of health, discipline, fashion, fitness, and femininity. In this material, the body is not presented as a neutral physical reality, but as an object of evaluation, transformation, and cultural meaning. Vogue constructs the female body through headlines, descriptive vocabulary, metaphors, hyperbole, and euphemistic expressions that shape particular ideals of attractiveness. As a result, the body appears simultaneously as something to be cared for, improved, displayed, and interpreted through broader social values such as wellness, confidence, self-control, and beauty.

In relation to the body, the most commonly used words and collocations are *body-sculpting workout*, *boxing workout*, *body positivity*, *signature silhouette*, and *feminine curves*. This can be seen in headlines such as:

Michelle Obama's Self-Care Sunday Includes a Serious Body-Sculpting
[Michelle]

Workout, Inside Gigi Hadid's Boxing Workout: Fashion's Golden Girl Holds No
Punches[Workout, p.2]

Lizzo Wants to Redefine the Body-Positivity Movement. [Lizzo, p.1]

Already at the level of the headline, the female body is presented as strong, active, disciplined, and aesthetically visible. At the same time, beauty is often described through the language of wellness, youth, empowerment, and bodily improvement. Thus, *Vogue* frames the female body both as something to be cultivated through discipline and as something to be discussed through contemporary social values such as inclusivity and self-acceptance.

At the same time, *Vogue* also incorporates the image of body positivity, which complicates and partly softens its idealized representation of the female body. Alongside headlines that emphasize sculpting, training, and bodily refinement, the magazine publishes articles that foreground inclusion, visibility, and resistance to narrow bodily norms. This can be seen especially clearly in *Lizzo Wants to Redefine the Body-Positivity Movement*, where body positivity is presented not simply as self-love, but as a broader attempt to normalize different bodies and challenge exclusionary beauty standards. A similar tendency appears in *Size Inclusivity at Fashion Week: Is My Body About to Go Out of Style?*, where the female body is discussed critically in relation to fashion trends and the instability of size inclusivity.[is my body about] In this way, *Vogue* introduces a tension into its own representation: on the one hand, the body is represented as something to be optimized, trained, and refined; on the other hand, it is framed as something worthy of acceptance, visibility, and respect regardless of size or shape. Therefore, body positivity in *Vogue* does not replace the ideal body language, but coexists with it, creating a more complex and sometimes contradictory image of femininity.

Nevertheless, *Vogue* still plays a major role in the linguistic construction of the ideal female body. In its coverage of body care, fitness, and appearance, the magazine regularly employs vocabulary associated with tone, strength, slimness, controlled femininity, and visual refinement. Accordingly, qualities of the female body are represented through such lexical units as *toned*, *strong*, *lean*, *sculpted*, *well-proportioned*, *statuesque frame*, *elegant posture*, *balanced physique*, *fit*, *healthy*, *curvy*, *elongated*, *defined*, *slim*, *muscular*, *flexible*, *lifted*, and *confident*, as well as through phrases such as *fit body* and *long legs*. This is reinforced in examples such as:

<...>controlled movements to build long, lean muscle [work out]

<...>a low-impact workout that emphasizes core strength, flexibility[how pilates, p.2]

Karlie Kloss—whose 6'1 frame has never looked longer, leaner, or stronger—prepped for the runway [working out]

Women noted for their seemingly ageless, sculpted bodies.[the ageless]

Even the phrase *The decline of the 'slim-thick' era* shows that bodily form is treated as something culturally coded and trend-sensitive. In all these cases, the female body is not described neutrally; rather, it is evaluated according to a set of visible norms linked with discipline, attractiveness, elegance, and control.

When *Vogue* moves to the body as a whole, the dominant stylistic devices become hyperbole and intensification. The body is described through expressions such as *off-the-charts-toned bodies (Women in their 40s and 50s ... with their exquisite, off-the-charts-toned bodies ... are transforming our notions of a mature woman's figure)*, *leaner (<...>has never looked longer, leaner, or stronger)*, *longer, stronger*, and *modern goddess appeal(has quickly come to dominate TikTok with its modern goddess appeal.)*. These forms exaggerate value and raise the status of the body being described. Hyperbole presents bodily appearance not as ordinary attractiveness, but as something exceptional, elevated, and aspirational. Comparative and intensified forms make the body seem continuously improvable and permanently in need of refinement. In other words, the ideal body is represented as desirable but never fully complete. This contributes to the persuasive force of the text because the norm appears both attainable and always slightly beyond reach. As a result, the female body becomes a site of permanent optimization.

First, the body is described through positively marked epithets and adjectives such as *lean, strong, toned, sculpted, ageless, fit, and longer*. These words do not simply describe the body neutrally; they assign value to particular bodily qualities and present them as desirable norms. For example, descriptions such as *leaner, longer, stronger, fit and toned, or beautifully sculpted arms* evaluate the body in explicitly positive terms and frame certain physical features as signs of success, discipline, attractiveness, and self-control. As a result, the

female body is represented as something that should be disciplined, visually refined, controlled, and constantly improved.

And second, *Vogue* relies on metaphorical language to make bodily transformation sound vivid, dynamic, and aspirational. Phrases such as *lift and tighten from hip to toe*, *sculpt your silhouette*, *reshape your frame*, or *the decline of the slim-thick era* do not describe the body literally; instead, they transform it into an object of movement, design, fashion change, and aesthetic intervention. The body is metaphorically represented as something that can be shaped like an artwork, engineered like a project, or redefined like a trend. Such metaphors compress physical change into compact, dynamic formulas and make the body appear flexible, improvable, and culturally responsive. In this way, metaphor helps aestheticize bodily discipline and present transformation as both desirable and natural.

In addition, one of the most important devices that *Vogue* uses in its representation of the body is euphemistic vocabulary. In this context, pressure is rarely expressed in openly harsh terms. The magazine usually avoids direct and stigmatizing words such as *fat*, *skinny*, *flabby*, or *problem areas* and replaces them with softer, more socially acceptable, and more aspirational expressions. As a result, bodily regulation is presented not as punishment or deprivation, but as refinement, wellness, and self-improvement. Euphemism is persuasive precisely because it masks the strictness of the norm while preserving its force.

This euphemistic strategy works, first of all, through the language of health and functionality. Instead of directly saying that the body should be smaller or thinner, *Vogue* often speaks of *core strength*, *flexibility*, *alignment*, *mobility*, *low-impact movement*, or *bodycare*. At first sight, such phrases seem to belong purely to the sphere of well-being. However, in context, they often support a highly selective body ideal associated with visible control, firmness, and slimness. In articles on Pilates and similar workouts, the body is not openly ordered to become

thin; rather, it is encouraged to become stronger, more aligned, more supported, and more engaged. This can be seen in examples such as:

<...>*flexibility, strength training, and dexterity or mind-body connection.*[how pilates]

<...>*increased core strength, injury prevention, correcting muscle imbalances, improving posture, flexibility.*[a guide]

<...> *optimize postural alignment through building strength and stability.*[this new]

Thus, the emphasis shifts from appearance to function, yet the aesthetic norm remains present underneath. In this way, euphemism gives beauty pressure the respectable language of health.

Overall, the analysed material demonstrates that *Vogue* constructs the female body through a highly complex discursive system. On the one hand, the body is represented through evaluative, and metaphorical as something to be sculpted, lengthened, strengthened, and continuously improved. On the other hand, the magazine also incorporates the language of body positivity, inclusivity, and bodily acceptance, especially in articles that challenge narrow fashion norms or problematize the treatment of body shape as a trend. However, even these more inclusive representations do not fully reject the traditional ideal. Instead, they coexist with the language of bodily discipline and refinement. As a result, the female body in *Vogue* is presented simultaneously as an object of empowerment and an object of aesthetic control. This tension is central to the magazine's representation of femininity and reveals how contemporary beauty language combines self-acceptance with continuous self-improvement.

2.2.2 In Instagram posts

On Instagram, the female body is represented through a different lexicon. For the analysis of this representation, particularly productive material can be found in the Instagram posts of Iskra Lawrence(5.1m), Ashley Graham(21m), Remi Bader(837k), Jackie Aina(2m), Huda Kattan(5.2m), and Mikayla Nogueira(3.4m). These bloggers and influencers are especially relevant because they combine body-positive language, evaluative vocabulary, emotional self-commentary, and metaphorical expressions, thereby constructing the female body not simply as an aesthetic object, but as a site of identity, agency, confidence, and self-expression. In their posts, the body is presented not only as something visible, but also as something lived, felt, negotiated, and publicly reinterpreted. As a result, Instagram beauty bloggers represent women's bodies through a combination of lexical and stylistic devices that foreground acceptance, vulnerability, empowerment, and aesthetic self-presentation.

A particularly important lexical feature in body-related captions is the growing use of empowerment and body-positive language. Influencers working within beauty and body-image representation often use formulations that foreground acceptance, agency, and self-worth. For example, Iskra Lawrence writes *I am so grateful to be at peace with my body and confident enough to post a pic that isn't trying to be 'perfect [I am]*; in another post, she tells followers, *YOU are more than your size [I've joined]* and uses the tag *#everyBODYisbeautiful*. These captions rely on personal pronouns such as *you* and *my*, together with abstract nouns like *confidence*, *peace*, *acceptance*, and *love*, which universalize the message and make it feel personally relevant to each follower. At the lexical level, this marks a shift from judgment to affirmation, although it still remains within a broader beauty framework in which appearance continues to be discussed and evaluated.

More broadly, the vocabulary used to describe the female body on Instagram is rich and ideologically loaded, because it reflects a shift from purely aesthetic evaluation toward a combination of appearance, function, emotion, and self-perception. One dominant lexical group is formed by evaluative adjectives that describe shape and physical form. Words such as *toned*, *sculpted*, *fit*, *strong*, *athletic*, *firm*, *shapely*, *balanced*, *defined*, and *lean* are frequently used in captions like *toned silhouette*, *sculpted body*, or *strong physique*. These terms originate partly from fitness language and emphasize muscle definition, visible effort, and bodily control, presenting the body as something shaped through discipline. At the same time, softer descriptors such as *curvy*, *feminine*, *soft*, and *natural* are used, especially in content that promotes body diversity. Phrases like *embracing my curves* or *loving my natural shape* reflect an attempt to balance traditional beauty standards with inclusivity. However, even these softer terms remain evaluative, since they still classify and aesthetically frame the body. This duality can also be seen in formulations such as *Every BODY is beautiful*, *Embrace your curves and own your confidence* *Love your body, love yourself*, where the body is represented as worthy of love and pride, but still remains central to beauty language.

Another important lexical feature is the use of emotionally charged bodily vocabulary, especially in posts that foreground vulnerability and self-acceptance. In this kind of representation, influencers frequently rely on *self-commentary*, *disclaimers*, and *performed vulnerability*. Captions such as *Enjoying my curves today — feeling confident and strong*, *Not perfect, just learning to love this body*, or *I spent years hiding my body* show that bodily representation is often accompanied by reflection, emotional framing, and self-evaluation. In posts by Ashley Graham, phrases such as *stretch marks*, *bloat*, *saggy skin*, and *rolls* foreground bodily features that beauty representation has traditionally omitted or softened. The lexical significance of such words lies in the fact that they reframe

these features not as shameful deviations, but as part of a broader narrative of self-acceptance and bodily visibility. In this way, the female body appears more material, real, and lived, rather than abstractly idealized.

At the same time, influencers continue to use both euphemistic and evaluative strategies. Potentially stigmatized features are often reformulated through softer vocabulary. Instead of openly judgmental terms, bloggers such as Remi Bader and Iskra Lawrence use words like *curves*, *shape*, or *different body types*, which normalize diversity and reduce harsh evaluation. Captions such as *learning to love my curves*, *feeling confident in my shape*, or *every body is different* emphasize acceptance and personal empowerment rather than social judgment. Similarly, discussions of features traditionally stigmatized in media, such as stretch marks, cellulite, or weight fluctuation, may be reframed through neutral or experiential formulations such as:

I accept all my curves, stretch marks, and my current size and shape[Iskra Lawrence]

<...>*this is my body, I love it, it's real* [This]

<...>*curves ain't going anywhere*[Just]

These lexical choices frame the body as dynamic, lived, and worthy of care, while promoting inclusivity and emotional legitimacy.

In stylistic terms, metaphor becomes especially important in body language. Bloggers often represent the body not merely as a physical object, but as a space of ownership, a process of becoming, or a site of self-definition. Expressions such as *body journey*, *learning to love my curves*, or *reclaim my body* metaphorically present the body as something that can be rediscovered, accepted, protected, or won back. Ashley Graham's phrase *I had to reclaim my body as my own* [I had to] is especially significant because it frames the body as contested

territory and self-acceptance as an act of repossession. Remi Bader's statement that *Learning to accept your body is a process and a challenge* [Learning] draws on the metaphor of movement and development, while Iskra Lawrence's phrase *at peace with my body* [I am] presents embodiment through the metaphor of reconciliation. In all these examples, the body is represented not as fixed or passive, but as part of an ongoing emotional relationship.

At the same time, Instagram beauty language also uses metaphors that frame the body as a project, a work of art, or something that can be designed and refined. Words such as *sculpted*, *toned*, *shaped*, *defined*, and *snatched* imply that the body can be visually perfected through discipline, beauty work, and self-management. This creates a productive tension in influencer messaging: the body is simultaneously presented as something to accept and something to improve.

This duality is especially visible in the role of body positivity. On Instagram, body positivity is often articulated through first-person, emotionally charged, and openly interpersonal language. It is not only a theme, but also a communicative strategy: bloggers address followers directly, speak from personal experience, and frame bodily acceptance as a shared process. In this sense, the representation of the female body becomes more dialogic and community-oriented. The body is not simply shown; it is explained, defended, reclaimed, and emotionally contextualized. Through this, influencers construct women's bodies as valid, expressive, and socially meaningful even when they do not conform to idealized norms.

Overall, Instagram beauty bloggers represent the female body through a form of expressions that combines evaluation with acceptance, visibility with vulnerability, and aesthetic self-presentation with emotional self-definition. Lexically, this representation is shaped by evaluative adjectives, body-positive formulations, concrete bodily vocabulary, and euphemistic expressions.

Stylistically, it relies strongly on metaphor, especially those of ownership, reconciliation, process, and transformation. As a result, the female body in Instagram beauty content is represented not simply as an object of appearance, but as a lived and meaningful aspect of identity, through which bloggers negotiate confidence, self-worth, and beauty on their own terms.

Conclusion to chapter 2

This research demonstrates that beauty standards in mass media and social media are not represented as neutral descriptions of female appearance, but are linguistically constructed through specific lexical and stylistic means. The study of Vogue and Instagram has shown that both platforms actively participate in shaping the image of female beauty, although they do so through different communicative strategies, linguistic choices, and modes of influence.

In Vogue, female beauty is mainly constructed through the language of radiance, youthfulness, smoothness, health, elegance, and self-care. The magazine frequently uses lexical units such as glowing skin, sculpted glow, hydrated skin, smooth texture, toned body, lean muscle, and healthy-looking skin. These words and collocations create a stable beauty ideal in which a woman is expected to look fresh, well-groomed, fit, confident, and aesthetically controlled.

Stylistically, Vogue uses metaphors, epithets, hyperbole, intensification, and euphemistic vocabulary. Metaphorical expressions such as glass skin, latte makeup, glazed donut nails, chocolate brown hair, and sculpted body make beauty standards more vivid and attractive. Intensifiers such as best, ultimate, iconic, visible, and super flattering strengthen the persuasive effect of beauty discourse. In relation to the body, Vogue often uses the language of wellness, strength, flexibility, and body care, which softens direct pressure and presents bodily discipline as self-improvement and health.

Instagram, in contrast, represents female beauty through captions, personal stories, emotional self-presentation, slang, and direct communication with followers. Beauty bloggers and influencers use expressions such as no filter, real skin, soft glam, glow-up, slay, snatched, face card, and this look is giving. These lexical choices make beauty discourse more informal, relatable, and emotionally expressive.

The representation of the female body on Instagram is especially connected with body-positive and empowering vocabulary. Influencers use expressions such as every body is beautiful, embrace your curves, at peace with my body, and learn to love this body. Such language presents the body not only as an object of appearance, but also as a part of identity, self-worth, and personal experience.

Thus, the comparison of Vogue and Instagram shows that modern beauty standards combine physical, emotional, and social meanings. Vogue constructs beauty mainly through authority, trends, discipline, and refinement, whereas Instagram constructs it through personal voice, authenticity, emotion, and self-expression. Nevertheless, both platforms continue to connect female beauty with visibility, confidence, self-management, and social approval. Therefore, beauty in modern media is represented not as a purely natural quality, but as a linguistic and cultural construct shaped by repeated lexical choices, stylistic devices, and media strategies.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the linguistic representation of beauty standards in *Vogue* articles and Instagram posts allows us to come to the following conclusion:

1. Discourse is a complicated way of communicating that is not just about words on a page. It involves more than just language itself. It covers more than just words; it also includes social, cultural, idea-based, and ways of communicating situations. Media talk is especially important for this study because it does not just show what is happening in the world. It also explains things, judges them, and can even change how people see reality.

2. The theoretical part of the research made it possible to define media discourse as a complex multimodal phenomenon that combines verbal, visual, institutional, ideological, and technological components. It was established that Instagram and *Vogue* represent two different but interconnected types of media discourse: Instagram is characterized by interactivity, authenticity, emotional self-presentation, and participatory communication, while *Vogue* relies on editorial authority, expert evaluation, institutional prestige, and polished visual-verbal representation.

3. The language analysis showed that *Vogue* constructs female beauty through a standardized and aesthetically controlled discourse. The magazine frequently uses lexical units connected with radiance, smoothness, freshness, youthfulness, health, elegance, self-care, and discipline. As a result, beauty in *Vogue* is represented as an ideal that should be achieved and maintained through routines, products, expert advice, beauty practices, and self-improvement.

4. In *Vogue*, the main topics that shape how women are seen as beautiful include beauty, style, health, taking care of yourself, fashion, confidence, and controlling your body. The most common word groups are related to skincare, makeup, hair, nails, fitness, wellness, and fashion. The magazine frequently uses words like glow, smoothness, freshness, toned, strong, and sculpted. As a result, the image of a *Vogue* woman is that of a well-groomed, stylish, healthy-looking,

confident, and aesthetically controlled woman. Beauty in *Vogue* is shown as more than just looking naturally attractive.

5. On Instagram, the way women show their beauty includes themes like being real, feeling confident, expressing emotions, loving their bodies, looking attractive, and how they present themselves in daily life. Beauty bloggers like to use everyday words, catchy phrases, and expressions that show their feelings. They might say things like real skin, no filter, bare-faced, glow-up, obsessed, confidence, and self-love to describe their looks and feelings. A picture of a beautiful woman on Instagram feels more personal and lively. She is not just pretty and nicely dressed, but she is also friendly, honest, real, sure of herself, and shows her feelings clearly.

6. Body representation is one of the most important aspects of beauty discourse in both media spaces. In *Vogue*, the female body is often described through the vocabulary of fitness, wellness, refinement, and control: toned, lean, strong, sculpted, fit, core strength, flexibility, and body-sculpting workout. This represents the body as something that should be shaped, improved, and maintained. Instagram, however, gives more space to body-positive vocabulary, using words and expressions such as *curves*, shape, real body, stretch marks, acceptance, confidence, and love for your body. Nevertheless, even Instagram combines self-acceptance with aesthetic evaluation.

7. The comparison of *Vogue* and Instagram proved that both platforms construct female beauty through repeated lexical choices and stylistic devices, but they use different communicative strategies. *Vogue* represents beauty through authority, trends, discipline, refinement, and aesthetic control, whereas Instagram represents it through personal voice, authenticity, emotion, and self-expression. Thus, modern beauty discourse appears as a dynamic field in which traditional ideals of attractiveness interact with the linguistic representation of beauty standards in *Vogue* articles and Instagram posts with new values of confidence, inclusivity, self-love, authenticity, and emotional well-being

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