

Girls' Guide to Beauty: a Semiotic Approach in Analyzing the Concept of Beauty on Teenage girls' Magazine covers in Indonesia "kaWanku"

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Abstract

This study concerns with the features used in the cover page of a teenage magazine in Indonesia, KaWanku. Furthermore, the author also concerns with how features used in the cover deliver the message to the readers and has the contribution in the concept of beauty. This study is also aims to reveal the influence of the magazine cover on female teenagers in appreciating the concept of beauty. In the process of data collection, the author used questionnaires to find out how female teenagers see themselves through the concept of beauty that the magazine offers. In analyzing the data, the author used three Barthes' three types of messages: linguistic message, non coded-iconic message, and coded-iconic message. After analyzing the data, it is found that the both the readers and the magazine are still placing the western figure as their beauty standards and magazine gives a big influence in shaping their readers' mind about the preference of beauty.

Key words: semiotics, concept, beauty, magazine cover, teenager, kaWanku

In numerous kinds of cultural texts especially contemporary ones, feminism no longer discussing about the pursuit of equality to men but started to arrive at the issue of the representation of women and also the beauty concept. There, women often placed as the main focus and even turned into the object of the texts. Naomi Wolf explains in her book, *The Beauty Myth* the concept of beauty can be seen as a social control that is bounding as well as the wife and nanny concept. When women accept and consume it, they eventually entrap themselves into the patriarchal control (Wolf, 1991:1-8). The concept of beauty brings women closer to the stereotype concept, a concept where beauty ideals are counted on social preference or "taste" on mostly physical appearance.

According to Jackson (1993:473), most theories of the media dealing with how people make sense of the pleasures they get from consuming the media where the representations received are often stereotyped and demeaning to women. As a part of media, advertisement is one area which performs women as the main consumer and also the object. There, they are performed in utopias figure: slender, young, fit, fair and sexual - which are sometimes, do not fit with the reality occurs in daily life (Wykes and Gunter, 2005:52). Those figures somehow, shortly positioning women into the stereotypes of fragile, stupid, obsessed with their body, or they even regarded as the subordinates, the second level of human compared to men.

Magazine, as a product of popular culture, is a form of text media which theoretically aims to present information correctly and efficiently (Sobur, 2006:114). According to semiotics, we can only know culture and reality by means of signs through the process of communication. According to John Storey (1996), magazine consists of more than words on the page. We probably are unaware that popular culture products such as magazines, especially those who are aimed to kids and teenagers in some way, are offering us chances to acknowledge the representation of women contained inside.

In Indonesia, there are two types of women's magazine at the moment. One is aimed to adult female readers, like *Femina* and *Kartini*; and another one is for teenage girls, like *Gadis*, *Chic*, *kaWanku* and *Kartika* which are also known as teenage or teen magazine. Sometimes female readers are unaware to give more attention to the representation of women and the beauty concept contained in such magazine. In this study, the author chooses *kaWanku* magazine

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and will use the cover pages of *kaWanku* magazine as the research object. It is considered to be one of the popular magazines for teenage girls in Indonesia with the approximate readers of 381.000 people. The author will use three cover pages from November 2008 to January 2009 editions (editions 33-38) as the sample of this purposive study to be analyzed with semiotic theory. How can the concept of teenage beauty in Indonesia be understood generally? How can the concept of teenage beauty appearing in *kaWanku* magazine covers of November 2008 to January 2009 editions be read in the perspective of semiotics?

Metods

This study used qualitative-quantitative descriptive approach because this study analyzed the beauty concept on the teenage magazine covers and includes the questionnaire to work the analysis. The analysis concerns with the features enclosed in the covers, such as colour tone, headline and sub-headlines, poses and the model also the response of the female teenager readers toward their beauty preference through the questionnaire. Those data will be analyzed by the theory of semiotics proposed by Barthes with the qualitative approach. Hence, the data shown will be analyzed and presented in a form of narration.

The data of the study is the covers of *kaWanku*, a teenage magazine published in Indonesia on November 2008, December 2008 and January 2009 editions. Those periods of time are regarded as the representation of the manifestation of trends during the year, the transition of trends and the prediction of the upcoming year. The author sees that the magazine cover also taking aims in building the beauty construction of women through the presentation of the ideal beauty on it. Therefore, the study attempts to explore the concept of beauty employed in the media. This magazine is chosen because *kaWanku* is a local product but there are many “western taste” on the presentation, especially on the cover. Since *kaWanku* magazine published twice in every month, to limit the study, the author only chooses one from two editions as the representation.

In collecting the data, the author will searching out the November 2008, December 2008 and January 2009 editions of *kaWanku* magazine then determine which three of six editions that is relevant to the purpose of the study. Afterwards, the covers will be scanned both in actual size and the smaller parts (sub headlines, logo, etc.) in order to be able to use them during the analysis. The author will also make a questionnaire as a tool to gain respond from the readers related to the concept of beauty in Indonesia. This questionnaire’s purpose is to see how Indonesian women look at themselves through the concept of beauty that the magazine offers. The type of the respondents is stratified respondents whom are female teenager, age 11-19 years old, student and unmarried.

As soon as the data is completed, then it will be analyzed through semiotic theory proposed by Barthes. Barthes used the concept of connotative semiotics to uncover the hidden meaning in text. For this process Barthes constructs a map to illustrate how the signs work (Figure 1).

The first step will be examining the scanned covers to find the non-coded iconic messages or the denotative meaning in each feature. in the covers. Subsequently, the author will analyze the coded-iconic messages or the connotation which appears in the image of the covers, and next step identify the linguistic message that the covers may enclosed. To find the narrative reading and the treatment of the myth and codes, the viewpoint from Naomi Wolf will be used as the device to see how beauty is perceived. The author will also attach the result of the questionnaire to help the analysis. After the data being analyzed, the result will be described in this study a form of words.

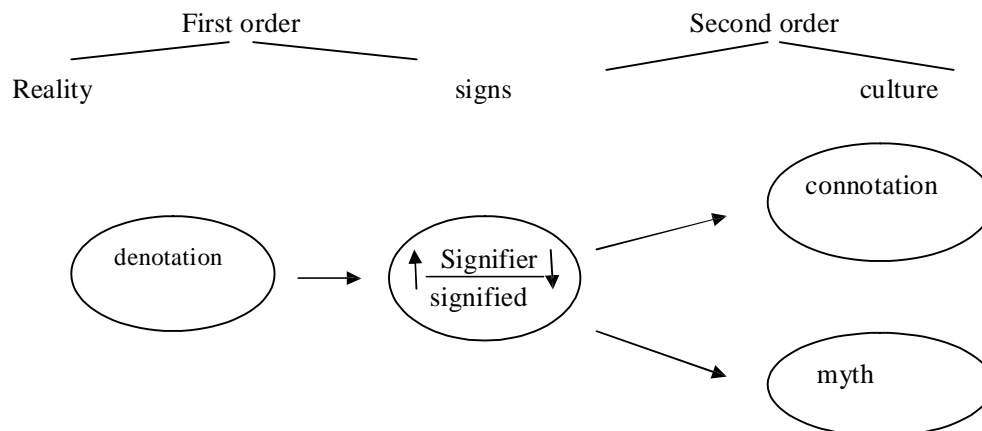


Figure 1. Roland Barthes' two orders of signification (Source: Sobur, 2006:127)

Beauty Myth in General Discourse and Perception

This study entails the questionnaires with the total number of 35 questionnaires distributed to female teenagers on SMP 1, SMPN 3, SMAN 2 and SMAN 9 Surabaya. Both the school and the students are chosen randomly because this study only concern with the stratification of their age. However, there are some broken questioners in the process of tabulation; therefore the author uses 30 questioners as the object of analysis . By using the questionnaire, the author wants to acknowledge the young urban female respondents as the readers of the woman magazine. Subsequently, the questionnaire will be used to help the author in answering the problem number one in this study.

The tabulation of the questionnaires would be divided into two tables; (1) the girl preference of beauty towards the teenagers, (2) how far the magazines influencing the readers in the fashion and mode. The answers of all those two problems are gathered from the question reflected in the questionnaires. Problem (1) is reflected in questionnaire part 1 on the question no.1 to 8. Problem (3) is reflected on all questions in questionnaire part 2. From no.1 to 12, the questions are related to the magazine and questions no. 3 to no. 8 is covering the opinion of respondents.

The author found that more than a half of the respondents (53,3%) choose the figure that has the Indonesian characteristics from her face. Form this, the author considers that the figure of Indonesian girl is still become the one that takes their fancy. Indonesian -Chinese girl figure (26,6%) holds the second position, while for both Indonesian -Arabic and Indonesian-Western are on the third with 10% on the result. In question number 2, both the figure of African and Asian girl hold the 13,3%, or the bottom of the total result. Seeing from the result, although the African figure is the last choice of the respondents, it show s that the figure with dark skin color is still acceptable to Indonesian readers. On the top position is the Latin figure with 53,3% of the choice and the Western is on the middle with 20% vote. Comparing the preference of the list on number 1 and 2, the author found out that 70% of the respondents choose the non-Indonesian figures rather than the Indonesian one.

When they are asked to choose which kind of skin colors is their favorite 46,6% of them agree that yellowish-brown skin are the highest choice. Tanned skin as in the A option holds the second position with 23,3%, colored skin on the third position with 20% and the last is white, with only 10% of the poll. It seems that the respondents are still considering the co mmon skin color for Asian, the yellowish brown is the one they are fond of.

Subsequently, for the preference in the body shape ideals, 56,6% of them choose slim-tall

figure as the first choice. 23,3 % of them choose the medium-tall type. While the rests is 16,6% for slim-short and 3,33% for medium short type.

Approximately, 66,6% of respondents consider that figure with wavy hair is the most likeable for them, while 20% and 13,3% of them choose straight and curly hair, respectively. From this question, none of them choose Afro hair style as their preference. the author found 33,3% of the respondents admit that they are often and sometimes in reading women magazine. It indicates that magazine. For 16,6% of them declare that they are seldom in reading it and 6,6% of them never reading any. Only 10% of them are often reading and subscribing the magazine as well. This indicates that Indonesian female readers probably often reading the magazine but consider that subscribing is not a necessary thing to do. They prefer to buy it every time they want to read.

Nearly 46,7% of respondents agree that beauty and fashion are their most wanted rubrics. Only 3,3% choose general knowledge and 6,67% in infotainment and 3,3% of them who select zodiac only. For about 6,67% of them, choose beauty and fashion rubrics and infotainment. While 3,3% choose beauty and fashion rubrics and zodiac. 6,67% select love and friendship and zodiac rubrics. The same proportion also shown for those who choose beauty and fashion, general knowledge, love and friendship rubrics. Then, 6,67% of them choose beauty and fashion, infotainment and love and friendship rubrics. 66,6% of them are still considering which one is should or should not appropriate to be followed, none of them choose to straight forwardly follow all the tips, 13,3% are for the answers of go along as the tips told them to do so and just ignore them away. Last, 6,67% shows that they did not agree with the tips and not have no desire to apply them.

When they are asked about how significance the cover is in the sense of buying the magazine, the results are nearly 50% say that it influencing enough, 26,6% say very influencing, 16,7% state that it is influencing, 6,67% state that it is absolutely not influencing and none of them choose the option of uncertain. In question number 8, 46,7% affirm that the cover model and the magazine are absolutely not influencing their daily style. 33,3% state that they are influencing enough, 23,3% for the option influencing, 10% for uncertain and none of them are very influenced by the model and the magazine

The author found that 56,7% of respondents are desire to be as beautiful and fashionable as the model, yet unnecessary to follow and change themselves just like the figure. Next, 30% of them think that they do not take this as a serious business; therefore it is not necessary to change their own style. Then, 6,67% assert that they want to be as beautiful and fashionable as the model by imitating the style of the model. However, no respondents choose to follow the style and also do sort of things like diets, skin whitening, hair coloured, etc., only to be as beautiful as the model. Through the main result of this question, the author presumes that Indonesian female readers are still confidence with what they have on their body and only regarded fashion or trends as the reference for their style.

In selecting their favourable model from the origin, the respondents choose Western celebrities on their first list (46,7%), 13,3% choose local celebrities while 10% choose them both. 3,3% choose local celebrities and non-celebrity Western model. 3,3% also choose Asian celebrities and non-celebrity Asian model. Another 3,3% choose Asian celebrities and non-celebrity Western model. Last, 3,3% choose local celebrities, Asian celebrities and Western celebrities. Here, the preference of choosing Western celebrities indicates that our society still placed the Western figure as the standard of beauty.

Regarding the female readers' preference in choosing the most beautiful model on the cover of KaWanku. For about 26,7% or the highest one, the respondents choose last picture whose model is Selena Gomez, while 23,3% of them choose local celebrity, Alissa Soebandono. Each 20% of the polls are given to the picture of Risti Tagor and Vanessa Hudgens. The fewest percent is given for the cover of Katy Perry, with the total of (10%). The major cover chosen implies that the figure of woman who has black hair, fair skin, bright eyes and smiling

is the most appealing cover for them.

The analysis is performed by using the semiotic theory proposed by Barthes which categorized the data into three levels and analyzing the beauty myth, to find the concept of beauty that *kaWanku* proposed in each cover page. The data selected are collected from the magazine from November to January editions.

The result shows that magazine is one part that is inseparable from women's life. For Indonesian readers, 33,3% of the respondents admit that they are relatively frequent in reading and buying women magazines. This situation, as Wolf explains, because of women magazines are the only products of popular culture that change with women reality, are mostly written by women for women about women issues and take women's concerns seriously (Wolf, 1991:71). In buying them, the readers sometime are not fully considering about the price. They are mostly attracted to a magazine through the presentation of the beauty and fashion rubrics appeared on the cover. In addition, the role of the model is also considered as the important feature in the sense of buying the magazine. Half of the respondents noted that the cover is influencing enough for them. However, regardless of the influence of the model while buying the magazine, the respondents claims that the appearance and the style that the magazine presents do not turn them into a style-imitating on their daily life, proven by the 46,7% vote of the questionnaire. They do wish to have such the same style or physical appearance as the model had but they think it is unnecessary to follow and change them like the figure. Through the main result of this question, the writer presumes that Indonesian female readers are still confidence with what they have on their body and only regarded fashion or trends as the reference for their style. The result also confirms that *kaWanku*, as one of the teenage girl magazines still be the brand that teenage girl prefers. Although only 10% of the respondents read *kaWanku* than any other brand, but from the tabulation, the magazine appears on the readers' choice. This means that among other brands, this magazine is still become the alternative of reading towards the female teenagers.

The model inside the cover beside works as the chosen figure to be discussed on a rubric inside the magazine also role as the area where the beauty concept is applied. The pose, the makeup and hairdo, the outfit, the figure are features that enable the readers to perceive what trend that the magazine is trying to offer and also designing the characteristics of the magazine towards them. In *kaWanku*, the using of international celebrities on the cover denoting the fact that international figures are appealing to their readers, as shown in the result of the questionnaire as well. When the readers are given the chance to decide which figures are their favourites on the magazine, almost half of the respondents choose Western celebrities. The preference of choosing Western celebrities indicates that our society still placed the Western figure as the standard of beauty. Through the questionnaire also, the writer found that Indonesian readers besides still fancying the Western figure on the model, they also still considering cream coloured skin, and slim-tall body size as the ideal characteristics of a beautiful woman. What is different here is the result of the hair type. They prefer wavy hair as the attractive hair as the ideals than long-straight- black one. This support the Wolf statement that beauty is not changeless, its ideals change at a pace of more a rapid than that of the evolution of species (Wolf, 1991:12).

From the description above, it is shown that the globalization has been through almost all aspects in human life even in the woman's beauty, a part which is regarded as the form of self-identification. The features that appear in the magazine inevitably are the adaptation of the western styles although the magazine itself is published in Indonesia. Through this analysis, it is shown that people perceive what is offered in the magazine. The codes came out clearly shows the "girls guide to beauty" concept through the teenage girl models who are famous in our time so it contributes the understanding that what is "hip" on the west is also a trend in the east: beautiful, energetic, famous, fair skin and consistently smiling (happy). Through globalization also, the borderless world has drag the beauty concept on female teenager to be that universal and identical as if all beautiful teenagers will also entail the same characterization or appearance. What then remains

are lesser chances and spaces to acknowledge to the different concept of beauty.

KaWanku Cover Page November Edition



The linguistic message is in the form of every word, sentences and dialogues appear in the commercial. It is commonly the first type of message which could directly be recognized by the viewers of the commercial (Cobley & Jansz, 2002, in Sari, 2007:16). Since the object of the study is not commercial, therefore, the understanding of linguistic message will observing at the first type of message in the front covers which could directly be recognized by the readers of the magazine. For this reason, the linguistic messages in the front covers are the headlines the sub rubrics title, the logo and the motto of *kaWanku* and also the other written texts on the covers.

There are six headlines displayed on the cover with the proportion of two sub-headlines and one headline on the left side of the model and three other sub-headlines on the right side. The analysis of the linguistic message found in the cover is starting from the top left of the cover with the aim of arranging the analysis in order. The first linguistic message is below the logo of *kaWanku*. There is one rubric entitled “Bongkar Cowok Dari Gaya Rambutnya” or in English the translation is “Reveal Boys from Their Hairdo”. This headline tries to give the readers opportunity to peek at the correlation between boys’ hairdo and their personality. The bold style on the word “Cowok” indicates that the magazine is attempts to emphasize the object of the rubric, which are the boys. The highlight effect on the word “rambutnya” has the meaning of notifying the female teenagers’ readers who might have not known about the extra information about hair which in this case, can be an element to answer their curiosity about the personality of their opposite sex.

On the right-centre of the cover is “Robert Pattinson Korban Kutukan” or the translated version is “Robert Pattinson the Victim of the Curse”. Robert Pattinson here is the name of one of the breakthrough Hollywood actors. He became well-known after his participation in a novel-adaptation movie, *Twilight*. He plays the character of Edward Cullen, a 17-year-old vampire who fallen in love with a human girl. *Twilight* is a movie version of *The Twilight Saga* by Stephenie Meyer.

Beneath the rubrics about Robert Pattinson is the last rubric the writer finds, “SMPK Penabur Gading Serpong Full Ekskul” or in English the translation would be “SMPK Penabur Gading Serpong Full Extra Curriculum”. The rubric signifies the profile of the school that the magazine has chosen for having certain achievements in giving extra curriculum to the students.

Through the headline and sub headlines, the writer sees that the titles are written in two languages: English and Bahasa Indonesia. The English words appear in three titles, while the rests are in Bahasa Indonesia. The use of English here implies many things. Firstly, English is the

language that had become the international language which almost all people are able to use it. For Indonesian young people, applying English in their daily life can show the degree of intelligence of a person and how up-to-date a person is (Saxby, 2006).

The Logo and Tagline of KaWanku

On every editions, the logo and motto of *kaWanku* are placed in the top left of the cover page. As the writer has explained in the first chapter, the logo of *kaWanku* is a capital letter of “W”, written in a certain kind of Latin script font with big size and italic bold style. The letter is identical of hand writing. On the lower part of the letter, lays the space between the letters KA and ANKU. Here, the point of the second curve of the “W” letter is filling the space. Afterwards, the combination of those letters can be read as the whole word: KAWANKU. The “W” letter set with a square colour-blocked background. Between the “W” letter and the K, A, A, N, K and U letters, the tagline: *unbeatable fun girl* is placed.

The printed “W” letter is identical to the style of a swift or immediate handwriting. Here, the style of the *kaWanku* logo implies as if it is an expressive writing style. That kind of writing somehow represents the attributes of teenagers whom are dynamic and want fewer boundaries. Meanwhile, the square-coloured background intends to give a visual assertion towards the “W” letter. By using background, the reader will notice the magazine through the logo, regardless what the layout of the cover page is. From this interpretation, the product attempts to send message to the readers that it can be the suitable option for teenagers in searching for the information about their world because they present the idea of creative, colourful, dynamic and original through the design of the writing.

As mentioned in Chapter I, the tagline of *kaWanku* is *unbeatable fun girl*. Noeryani (2008) mentions that tagline becomes important to shape what the product is about and what contribution it gives to the consumers. Thus by combining the meaning from the words of the tagline, the understanding of *unbeatable fun girl* can be interpreted as the character of the female readers which are the combination of a young girl who is tough yet still has the attractive side.

The Non-coded Iconic Message

The non-coded iconic messages in this cover are consisted into some elements: the images, the colour symbolism, and the fonts. The first image on the cover is definitely the model. In this edition, the model is a woman whose picture is taken in the medium close-up pose or angle. According to Monahan (2003), there are several types of shots or angle in photography and cinematography. The close-up angle is a shot of a person’s head and shoulders. There is not much, if any; background detail appears in the frame. Besides, the medium angle shows a character from the waist upwards. The audience will be able to see his/her reactions but the background is also important (Monahan, 2003).

The model has a tanned skin and long black curly hairs with some of the locks are falling onto her cheeks. Her eyes are dark brown, a natural colour for a mongoloid and Hispanic race. Hispanic refers to the state of being a person of Latin American descent living in the USA, especially one of Cuban, Mexican, or Puerto Rican origin (as cited in www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Hispanic.html).

The one who is chosen to be the model in this cover is Vanessa Hudgens. Vanessa Hudgens is a young female artist from USA. The expression of Hudgens in this cover is smiling with showing her teeth. She is also in a pose with placing her left hand on her waist. She wears a white tube top. Tube top is a term for a kind of outfit which are sleeveless and covering the body only from the chest until waist. The model also wears a necklace made of wooden beads with the natural colours, such as black, white, brown and gold. On the right side of the model placed a rubric title “25 Semifinalis Moka 2008”. On top of the number 5, there is an image of fairy wearing a red dress and olive green stocking. She is sitting on the number and crossing her legs

The Coded Iconic Message

The coded iconic message is the connotation of the image. From the cover, the first image that is going to be analyzed is the model. The model is portrayed in a “dressed up” situation. The make-ups work in two ways: to enhance or improve the physical beauty and to cover up the imperfection on their look. In the cover Hudgens is wearing a tube top which only covers her chest to waist. This kind of cloth enables the user to expose the opened area of her body, such as the shoulder and chest. When we take a closer look on the models that KaWanku uses, the figure appeared there is a famous young celebrity. The choosing of Hudgens here signifies that the magazine uses model that is popular.

Hudgens in this cover applies a gesture where she is placing one of her hands on the hips. This gesture is included as one of the 13 Most Common Female Courtship Gestures and Signals. Here, placing hands on the hips is a signal used by women to show a man that she could be available (Pease & Barbara, 2004:293). The opened arm signifies a subtle way for the model to show that she cares about how she looks to a man. She builds up a sense that by putting up a concern about the look, she expects the man will notice her afterwards.

Another gesture to be analyzed is coming from her head. Pease & Barbara also suggests that by pulling the chin a bit lower and looking up, like the one we find in Hudgens’ pose is a submissive gesture that appeals to men. By performing so, it makes the eyes appear larger and makes women appear more childlike (Pease & Barbara, 2004:173).

The Beauty Myth

The gestures that the model applied reflecting of what ever happened in the 1990s; where there was a trend on the images of women models dressing up as sexualized little girls demonstrated the prevalence of cultural figures of infantilized femininity. There, women is frequently portrayed as child-like, dependant and passive (Wykes and Gunther, 2005:46). However, the child-like gesture is actually a way of children who are so much smaller than adults and spend their looking time gazing up and creates a parenting reaction in both men and women (Pease & Barbara, 2004:173-174).

On the cover, Vanessa Hudgens is looking at the camera, bending her head a bit lower and smiling with showing off her teeth. By performing this kind of pose, it can be interpreted as if she is in a childlike pose. This pose represents a sign of control of the gaze. By widening her eyes, she appears herself to be more submissive because, on a subconscious level at least, they know it is appeal to men (Pease & Barbara, 2004: 172). It can be said that she is aware of a situation where everyone is looking at her or she is consciously being looked at. By smiling and showing her teeth, it gives the interpretation that she is confidence and happy.

Beside the pose, the hairdo also contributes to the beauty construction on the page. There, the hair of Hudgens is presented as curly in almost all parts of the hair. However, the curly hair that is presented here is not the natural curls; it has been through a process with using a curling iron tool. Wavy hairdo, as Hudgens performs here is a sign to a certain kind of hair style which female readers consider as a today’s trend. As reflected in the questionnaire, wavy hairdo get 66,6 % of the total poll of the readers. So far, the media presents the Asian beauty standards through the appearance of long black hair in most of the shampoo advertisements broadcasted in Indonesia. Thus the large number of the poll result can be the sign that Indonesian women starts to see that wavy hairdo is one of the characteristics that a beautiful woman entails. The writer presumes that wavy hairdo presented here, beside a trend, it is also a representation of an adjustment of the beauty standards in Indonesia, where women begin to accept another hair type beside straight and black.

Through the questionnaire as well, the writer found that the cover page with Vanessa Hudgens gains the third position of the questionnaire result (20%). The figure that is smiling and happy is still attractive to Indonesian female readers.

As the writer perceives, there are some correlations found among the headlines. First is between the top headlines and the sub headlines. These two elements are connected through the major theme for this edition which is “hair”. Two of the six headlines of

this KaWanku edition are mentioning about “hair”. Secondly, the connection between the top headlines “97 Amazing Hair Ideas Bye - Bye Bad Hair Day” and the presentation of the model. The writer sees that by presenting the figure with the hair is exposed —as seen in the Hudgens picture, it is such a way to help the readers noticing the theme of this edition. Here, the point of the headlines is to inform about the beauty tips related to the hair.

KaWanku Cover Page December Edition



The December edition here conducts as the representation of the transition from year 2008 to 2009. Usually, in the last month edition of a year, a magazine offers its readers slight predictions about what are the things going to be “in” in the upcoming year. Here, the readers are guided to peek out what are the predictions according to the magazine’s version.

The Linguistic Message

Likewise the November edition cover, this edition also contains six headlines spreading on the page. The location of the logo and the tagline of *kaWanku* is still the same, yet the font colour and background are different.

The headline is presumed to invite the readers to check out the “love meter” prediction from the readers who is still single with their future partner. It seems like the magazine is trying to role themselves as the alternative solution for those who is still confuse in deciding their action in dating.

The Non-coded Iconic Message

Similar to the November edition, the background of this cover is still white. In most cases, white is seen as the neutral background colour. Even when used in smaller proportion, white is the colour that conveys the most meaning in a design (as cited in www.desktoppub.about.com/cs/colourselection/p/green.html). One thing that is different is the position of the model. In December edition, the model is taken in a more close-up pose. She poses straight forwardly looked at the camera with a shocked expression. Her hair is medium length, wavy, dark brown and ponytailed. She has blue eyes and a white skin. These physical characteristics show that the model is Caucasian. Susanto (2008) mentions in his study, Caucasoid have the physical characteristics such as, fair skin, pointed nose and blonde to brownish hair. This race consists of several sub-races: Nordic, Alpine, Mediterranean, Armenoid and Indian.

There are also non-coded iconic messages that can be found through the colour symbolism and the fonts used. First, the capitalized word “green” in the “be GREEN on XMAS god bless greenilicious girl” signifies the relation between Christmas and green. It

resembles the colour of Christmas along with the red.

Second, from the third headline “contek gaya keren Taylor Momsen” which is consisted in two colours, pink and white. The words “contek gaya keren” are printed in white with pink highlight, the word “Taylor” is in white also and “Momsen” is in pink. According to the origin, pink is a softer, less violent red colour. In USA, it represents *sugar and spice and everything nice*. Pink denote love, romantic and charming. White is regarded as something absolutely pure and unmixed (Mahnke, 1996:69).

The Coded Iconic Message

The first image is the model of the cover, Katy Perry. Through the makeup, the image of Perry here shows how the colour pink can form synchronization between the colour themes of the edition and the makeup tone. By performing the model with a certain makeup tone, the magazine is trying to show the readers about their power to offer such influence in asserting the image of a beautiful girl on this edition.

In this cover, Perry poses by pulling up one of her shoulders, glares and opens her mouth. From the pose, it can be seen that she is performing a style as if she is shocked while she is looking at the camera. However, this pose is an intentional pose where Perry tries to perform the variety in posturing herself in front of the camera besides smiling or laughing poses by using a shocked expression.

The Beauty Myth

The second cover here is also presenting a figure of a young international celebrity. Likewise Vanessa Hudgens, Perry is a single-young woman who has been succeeded in her career as well. To be successful is not only enough by leaning on the great talents they had. There are some factors that one should accomplish. One of the factors is the attractiveness in physical appearance. The magazine uses international celebrity in this edition that has the elements of the western taste of beauty ideals. They somehow perpetuate the concept of beauty via the presentation of Caucasoid figure (fair skin, blue eyes, slim, etc.).

Myth is basically works to accept phenomena as cultural convention. In Indonesian society, white skin signifies the element of beautiful. This is reflected from the questionnaire result where the 70% of the respondents are appeal to the Caucasoid figures than the Indonesian ones. To Indonesian readers, this figure fascinates them, proven by the 46,7% of the total polls who chose Western- Caucasoid celebrity as their most favourable figure that they want to see on the magazine. The respondents also mentioned that compared to the other types of the physical characteristics, Caucasoid figure placed on the second position with 20% vote after the Latin one. Accordingly, through the presentation of the result, what can be perceived here is that the practice of putting Caucasoid figure on the front cover carries on the myth that Caucasoid is still has the value of selling point in entertainment industry. As mentioned in the book *the Media and Body Image*, the media assumed to portray images which suit the interest of both capital (particularly the fashion and diet industry) and patriarchy (in the portrayal of women as frail, young and sexual) but rarely has it researched these assumptions on the theorised effect (Wykes and Gunther, 2005:62).

KaWanku Cover Page January 2009 Edition



The Linguistic Message

The last cover in this study is the January 2009 edition. From the arrangement of the headline and sub headlines, this cover shows a little changing, compared to the previous covers. The texts are mostly placed on the left of the page, with only let two sub-headlines left on the right.

From all covers, the position of the magazine's title is not changing at all. It is only printed in certain colours accustomed to the colour theme of each edition. Currently, the logo and the tagline of the magazine are divided into two colours; the "W" letter is printed in yellow, while the background is in crimson red. The first sub headline is "15 CARA NGE-GAP DIA SELINGKUH" ("15 WAYS TO CATCH HIM CHEATING"). From the purpose of the title, the writer perceives that this sub-headline intends to draw the readers' attention by using the highlight on "SELINGKUH" word. Moreover, the yellow colour is actually become the best used for highlight since the point of the colour itself is function to attracts attention (as cited in www.sibagraphic.com/colour.php).

The Non-Coded Iconic Message

The first non-coded message is gained through the image of the model. Unlike the previous two covers, KaWanku here presents the figure from Indonesia. This can be seen through the physical characteristics that this figure has. She has black hair, coloured skin and dark-brown eyes, which are the physical characteristics of Asian people. The model poses by turning her body to the left and her head is bending to the right. Her head is not in a vertical position; she bends it slightly to the back. The pose can be identified that she is looking at the camera. She smiles happily to the camera and showing her white teeth. The model is presumes to wear a blue dress with a shade of purple on the shoulder. The colour of the dress is still connected with the colours applied on the texts spread on the cover. On her face, the noticeable part is her eye make-up. Equals to the other two covers, the model here is wearing a make up with the focus of the application is on the eyes. The eyelids are brushed with dark colour. The underside of the eyes is painted with dark eye -liner and added a blue shade on it. Her cheeks are powdered with the blusher to give a fresh look. On the lips, the model put on a natural colour of lipstick. She also added a lip -gloss to bring the effect of a wet and glossy look on her lips.

As mentioned before, the hair of the model is a black-medium size. She has a fringe over

her forehead which also covers up her eyebrows. On the style of the hair, it is curled with an iron-curling tool only on the half-length of her hair. The composition of the layout design of this edition is: most part of the body of the model is placed on the right side of the cover page with 3 of the 6 sub-headlines and top headlines are on the left. Similar to the other two covers, the background of the cover is still white. White background can be as bright as any other colours applied on this cover, so that they are maximally displayed.

Another symbolism comes from the headline “DAVID COOK & ARCHULETA Perang (lagi!)” (DAVID COOK & ARCHULETA Are Battling (again!)). The lavender colour is applied in the words DAVID and Perang (lagi!) and yellow is for the words COOK & ARCHULETA. The application of yellow colour on the last names of the object of the title implies the emphasis on the two names directed.

The Coded-Iconic Message

From the image presented on the cover, it can be seen the significant difference on the cover models used. The writer counts, from November – December 2008 until January 2009 editions, the international models appears more frequently than the Indonesian models. The one presented on this edition is the model who has a strong characterization of an Asian figure. Through the skin that the model owns, the magazine tries to prove their readers that those who have not had bright or fair skin also has chance to be in the cover which is rich with the beauty construction inside. As the beauty construction by this way, the magazine offers the readers but they can be considered as beautiful indeed. From the questionnaire result, it is concluded that Indonesian female readers still consider the one who has Indonesian characteristics.

The make-up here also plays a role. From the personal information of the model, the writer notices that she is still a 16 year-old girl, an age where putting too much make-ups on their face could be such an uncomfortable thing to do. Thus by giving a portrayal of a young girl on a light make-up, the magazine is trying to give an idea about the appropriate make-up choice for teenagers. In this case, the magazine portrays a situation when it is all right to put you make-ups on regardless you are still teenager. The image here can also considered to run as the beauty guide towards the teenager.

The pose that the model performs is still in a same theme as the concept of childlike view. Instead of positioning her body directly to the front, the bending of her head a little bit backwards gives a message that she seems shy to straightly looking at the camera, whose in this case is the readers. This is possibly not an odd thing to see since based on the reality, the model itself is still a young girl whom usually, a young girl is still fragile and inhibited in expressing themselves.

The Beauty Myth

From the information above, Nadhifa Syahfitri is one of the winners in MOKA 2009. In this sense, the one presented on the cover is the representative of a young woman who already has an achievement at her age. By this kind of achievement, the magazine decided that she is deserve to has a chance to be on the cover. Through this understanding, the magazine occupies they who are, once again, successful. The degree of success according to the magazine is merely close to the entertainment area. The two figures on the previous covers analyzed were celebrities who can sing, dance well and have a good career at their young age. The same thing also relevant to the figure of Syahfitri. Through the MOKA event, she subsequently has her chance to be presented as equal as the other international or Indonesian celebrities on the KaWanku covers. It is proven by the result of the questionnaire which shows that the readers are still fascinate the local or Indonesian figure and they choose the figure as the most beautiful one among the others who is mix-blood. They choose the cover page with Indonesian celebrity in the second position of the poll with 23,3% vote. However, the magazine seldom or even never uses successful teenager from any other area beside entertainment, for example, the

winner of Math Olympic competition or the winner of Best Robot Competition. The writer presumes that the figures outside entertainment sphere is probably less interesting than those who are famous for their career as a celebrity or their achievement in entertainment competition.

Results and Discussion

There are some interpretations that could be taken from the analysis above. The analysis is performed by using the semiotic theory proposed by Barthes which categorized the data into three levels and analyzing the beauty myth, to find the concept of beauty that *kaWanku* proposed in each cover page. The data selected are collected from the magazine from November to January editions.

Result shows that magazine is one part that is inseparable from women's life. For Indonesian readers, 33,3% of the respondents admit that they are relatively frequent in reading and buying women magazines. This situation, as Wolf explains, because of women magazines are the only products of popular culture that change with women reality, are mostly written by women for women about women issues and take women's concerns seriously (Wolf, 1991:71). In buying them, the readers sometime are not fully considering about the price. They are mostly attracted to a magazine through the presentation of the beauty and fashion rubrics appeared on the cover. In addition, the role of the model is also considered as the important feature in the sense of buying the magazine. Half of the respondents noted that the cover is influencing enough for them. However, regardless of the influence of the model while buying the magazine, the respondents claims that the appearance and the style that the magazine presents do not turn them into a style-imitating on their daily life, proven by the 46,7% vote of the questionnaire. They do wish to have such the same style or physical appearance as the model had but they think it is unnecessary to follow and change them like the figure. Through the main result of this question, the writer presumes that Indonesian female readers are still confidence with what they have on their body and only regarded fashion or trends as the reference for their style. The result also confirms that *kaWanku*, as one of the teenage girl magazines still be the brand that teenage girl prefers. Although only 10% of the respondents read *kaWanku* than any other brand, but from the tabulation, the magazine appears on the readers' choice. This means that among other brands, this magazine is still become the alternative of reading towards the female teenagers.

The model inside the cover beside works as the chosen figure to be discussed on a rubric inside the magazine also role as the area where the beauty concept is applied. The pose, the makeup and hairdo, the outfit, the figure are features that enable the readers to perceive what trend that the magazine is trying to offer and also designing the characteristics of the magazine towards them. In *kaWanku*, the using of international celebrities on the cover denoting the fact that international figures are appealing to their readers, as shown in the result of the questionnaire as well. When the readers are given the chance to decide which figures are their favourites on the magazine, almost half of the respondents choose Western celebrities. The preference of choosing Western celebrities indicates that our society still placed the Western figure as the standard of beauty. Through the questionnaire also, the writer found that Indonesian readers besides still fancying the Western figure on the model, they also still considering cream coloured skin, and slim-tall body size as the ideal characteristics of a beautiful woman. What is different here is the result of the hair type. They prefer wavy hair as the attractive hair as the ideals than long-straight- black one. This support the Wolf statement that beauty is not changeless, its ideals change at a pace of more a rapid than that of the evolution of species (Wolf, 1991, p.12).

From the description above, it is shown that the globalization has been through almost all aspects in human life even in the woman's beauty, a part which is regarded as the form of self-identification. The features that appear in the magazine inevitably are the adaptation of the western styles although the magazine itself is published in Indonesia. Through this

analysis, it is shown that people perceive what is offered in the magazine. The codes came out clearly shows the “girls guide to beauty” concept through the teenage girl models who are famous in our time so it contributes the understanding that what is “hip” on the west is also a trend in the east: beautiful, energetic, famous, fair skin and consistently smiling (happy). Through globalization also, the borderless world has drag the beauty concept on female teenager to be that universal and identical as if all beautiful teenagers will also entail the same characterization or appearance. What then remains are lesser chances and spaces to acknowledge to the different concept of beauty.

Conclusion

Media, especially magazine sometimes work as a tool for exhibiting the beauty values on women. However, the values presented are still mostly surrounding about physical beauty, or in other way, what are beauty features they had on their appearance. What is found on the society is that they are pursuing the beauty ideals just in order to satisfy men towards their body. They are feared to be fat, ugly and innatractive, so that they need to find a way to construct their body to be an attention - grabbing ones. Moreover, the situation here which entrap women into the beauty myth. The myth perpetuates the beauty ideals on women are the image of fair skin, slim, long hair, etc.

Generally, the linguistic messages which appear in the covers are: the headlines (top and sub headlines), the colors and the logo and tagline of kaWanku. The usage of English in the headlines shows how this language is enriching the international taste on the magazine. It represents the prestige of the speaker – in this case young urban society, who have to be broad minded and up to date with all the information in their surrounding no wadays. It is also work as the connector between the readers (teenagers) and the magazine. While the colors represent the symbolic effect or the expression of what the texts would try to convey.

In general, the non coded-iconic message gives the first impression about the cover. On the cover there are images that the readers can catch when they are reading or looking at it. In other words the first impression is useful to build basic knowledge about the product -the magazine so that the readers will be familiar with the product would be. This way will be efficiently delivered to the readers and will be easily remembered. The coded-iconic messages cover up the implicit meaning that relies on the images on the covers. Here, the messages are come out through the appearance of the model, whether it is from the makeup, hairdo, pose, facial expression and gestures. From the three messages discussed, the beauty myth is constructed through the viewpoint of Naomi Wolf and the questionnaire result to reflect the myth from Indonesian readers’ opinion.

The cover magazine contributes this idea of continuing the myth because the images presented there are not only beautiful figures but also those who had bright careers, styli sh and famous. Through the attributes behind the model, the myth here now is shifting. Someone who fulfil the quality of those features can be regarded as “beautiful”. Each magazine has their own taste in offering the “guides to beauty”. For magazine who is aimed to the teenager, it is essential to put international perspective in their presentation, such as the lifestyle, fashion, celebrities, beauty and health guides and so on. This method is used to gain a view in enhancing their product towards their segment. Through the application, the viewpoint of the readers will also be changed according to what the magazine is offered. From this study, it can be seen that magazine affecting the teenage readers on their style attitude. kaWanku, as one of the Indonesian teenage magazines, has the contribution in “homogenizing” the concept of beauty which is reflected through the western standard of beauty ideals. The writer believes that semiotic theory can be applied in many forms of situations and so does in the cover of the magazine. The application of this theory in the magazine helps people to acknowledge more about the features of beauty guides presented in the front cover.

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