

HALAL COSMETICS DISCOURSE IN SELECTED
MALAYSIAN MEDIA AND CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS

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MALAYSIAN MEDIA AND CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS**

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HALAL COSMETICS DISCOURSE IN SELECTED MALAYSIAN MEDIA AND CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS

ABSTRACT

The global Halal industry is estimated to be worth around USD 2.3 trillion a year and is now one of the fastest-growing markets. With the increase in both supply and demand, halal has turned into a commodity. While many studies have attempted to look at consumers' intention to purchase and behaviour towards halal products and services within the domain of business management studies, the linguistic studies are very limited. To fill in this niche area, the present study, relying on Van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic approach to CDA, aims at identifying the (de)legitimation strategies used in the discourse of halal cosmetics in Malaysian media. The study also goes beyond the portrayal of the halal discourse in the text by attempting to understand the perception of halal cosmetics consumers towards halal discourse as represented in the selected news media. A total of fifteen (15) newspaper articles and eleven (11) magazine articles were analyzed and it was found that the main legitimation strategies employed in the discourses are the strategies of authorization, moral evaluation, and rationalization. Having analyzed the legitimizing strategies, semi-structured interviews were conducted with thirteen (13) participants. Thematic analysis of the data revealed four main themes namely the benefits of halal, the importance and credibility of halal certification and logo, the universality of halal cosmetics, and the marketability of halal products. The combination of the analyzed texts and the interviews suggests that understanding the social and cultural identity is essential in analyzing the perceptions of consumers based on texts, to the social and cultural practices in Malaysia.

Keywords: Halal cosmetics, Critical discourse analysis, legitimation, textual analysis, consumer perception

WACANA KOSMETIK HALAL DALAM MEDIA TERPILIH DI MALAYSIA DAN PERSEPSI PENGGUNA

ABSTRAK

Industri Halal global dianggarkan bernilai sekitar USD2.3 trilion setahun dan kini merupakan salah satu pasaran yang paling pesat berkembang. Dengan peningkatan bekalan dan permintaan, halal telah berubah menjadi salah satu komoditi. Walaupun banyak kajian telah dijalankan untuk melihat niat pengguna untuk membeli dan tingkah laku pengguna terhadap produk dan perkhidmatan halal dalam domain kajian pengurusan perniagaan, domain kajian linguistik adalah sangat terhad. Untuk mengisi kawasan khusus ini, kajian pada masa ini bergantung pada Van Leeuwen (2008) pendekatan sosio semantik kepada CDA, bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti strategi-strategi (de)legitimasi yang digunakan dalam wacana kosmetik Halal dalam media Malaysia. Kajian ini juga melangkaui gambaran wacana halal dalam teks dengan cuba memahami persepsi pengguna kosmetik halal terhadap wacana halal seperti yang dinyatakan dalam media berita terpilih. Sebanyak lima belas (15) artikel akhbar dan sebelas (11) artikel majalah telah dianalisis dan didapati bahawa legitimasi utama yang digunakan dalam wacana adalah strategi autoriti, penilaian moral, dan rasionalisasi. Setelah menganalisis strategi legitimasi, wawancara separa berstruktur telah dijalankan terhadap tiga belas (13) orang peserta. Analisis tematik data itu telah mendedahkan empat tema utama iaitu manfaat halal, kepentingan dan kredibiliti pensijilan dan logo halal, kesejagatan kosmetik halal dan kebolehpasaran produk halal. Gabungan teks analisis dan wawancara menunjukkan bahawa memahami identiti sosial dan budaya adalah penting dalam menganalisis persepsi pengguna berdasarkan teks, kepada amalan sosial dan budaya di Malaysia.

Kata kunci: kosmetik halal, analisis wacana kritis, legitimasi, analisis tekstual, persepsi pengguna

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AT	:	Asia Tatler
BI	:	Beauty Insider
CDA	:	Critical Discourse Analysis
CL	:	Cleo
CLO	:	Clozette
DHA	:	Discourse Historical Approach
DOI	:	Diffusion of Innovation
E-WOM	:	Electronic Word-of-Mouth
F&B	:	Food and Beverage
FDA	:	US Food and Drug Administration
FM	:	Female Magazine
GMO	:	Genetically Modified Organism
HIMP	:	Halal Industry Master Plan
JAKIM	:	Department of Islamic Development Malaysia
KAP	:	Knowledge Attitude Practice
MC	:	Marie Claire
MM	:	The Malay Mail
NPCB	:	National Pharmaceutical Control Bureau
NPRA	:	National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency
NST	:	The New Straits Time
SOR	:	Stimulus-Organism-Response
TPB	:	Theory of Planned Behaviour
TRA	:	Theory of Reasoned Action
TS	:	The Star newspaper

TSD : The Sun Daily newspaper

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Halal has become one of the fastest-growing markets in the world, encompassing various sectors such as food, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, modest fashion, Islamic finance, media, and tourism. With the population of Muslims in the world reaching 1.94 billion, covering 24.2 percent of world's population, the increase in the number of Muslim populations globally has contributed to the growth and the rise of the economic power of the Halal industry. The promotion of Halal has a major influence on the interest of purchasing Halal products due to the belief that consuming Halal products is healthy other than performing religious obligations (Aziz & Chok, 2013; Karimah & Darwanto, 2021; Majid et al., 2015). Meanwhile, it also appeals to non-Muslim consumers as the health issue is more concerning in today's civilization era (Ayyub, 2015; Aziz & Chok, 2013; F. R. Ismail & Nasiruddin, 2014; Sukhabot & Jumani, 2023). Taking the advantage of the prevalence Halal which has surpassed its origin as a religious term transferring into marketing and business, this study uses van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic approach in analysing Halal cosmetic discourse in English language Malaysian online newspapers and magazines and investigating consumers' perception of the discourse of Halal in the news media.

1.1 Aims of the Study

The main aim of this study is to investigate the (de)legitimation strategies employed in the representation of Halal cosmetics in the selected Malaysian online newspapers and magazines articles published in English. This study also aims to examine the perception of Malaysian cosmetics consumers towards Halal cosmetic discourse as presented in the selected online newspapers and magazines articles. The results from the textual analysis will form the basis of the themes formation, while the consumers' discourse will be used

to explore whether the findings from the textual analysis corroborates that of the consumers' perception.

Halal is an Arabic term that can be defined as permissible or allowable, while its opposition, "Haram", means prohibited or unlawful (Rahman et al., 2015). From the Quran, Halal refers to anything that is permissible under Islam, including food and other products and services, leading to the concept of Halal as an absolute key to consumption. Products that are claimed Halal must follow the conditions in accordance with Islamic law, in the aspects of materials, processing, storage, packaging, distribution, sale, and presentation of the products (Hidayat & Resticha, 2019). This is why the importance of Halal certifications and logos is celebrated by Muslim society as they are a means to inform and reassure consumers of Shariah compliance, safety, and quality of products (Yusuf et al., 2022).

Demands for Halal supplies and products have escalated to accommodate the needs of the fast-growing number of Muslim populations globally, and, as a result, leading Halal to being one of the dominant sectors in the world economy and creating more opportunities in the market for Halal products and services. With the growing population of Muslims, Halal is regarded as important not only for Muslim society but also for non-Muslim society. It is necessary to understand the meaning of Halal as it is more than just a concept of permissibility for Muslims, or for religious purposes; it also brings the concept of social sustainability, where food and other necessities come from natural and clean resources to achieve optimum health and well-being. Therefore, in order to understand the concept of Halal, studies need to be conducted, especially on the discourse of Halal in the media. Media discourse is essential in understanding Halal as it will provide more textual evidence on Halal, along with providing a progression of the topic.

From there, the legitimation of Halal can be analysed using different strategies of legitimation and de-legitimation.

1.2 Statement of Problem

In today's capitalist world, it is inevitable that religion come to be commodified. Islam can be seen as pervading the lives of Malaysian Muslims and non-Muslims in more commodified ways than before. With growing market catering Sharia-compliant goods, Muslims tend to choose and support anything that follows the notion of Islam as 'a way of life' (lifestyle) (Shahid et al., 2023). Islamic commodification is one of the ways of convincing targeted consumers that the products and services are Shariah compliant, and legitimizing Halal is one of the main strategies by which the global Halal industry players promote their products and services. Consumers of Halal products and services put trust in the information received by relying on the seller or outside observer (Azam, 2016). As a result, a growing number of studies (i.e. Harun et al., 2019; Katuk et al., 2021; Quoquab et al., 2019; Shirazi, 2016; Umam, 2021)) have examined some of the strategies applied in commodifying Halal products and have proven how Halal has been used as a marketing tool for the industry players in expanding the market of Halal in various Halal sectors, including food, tourism, cosmetics, property, and fashion, among others.

In the Halal food sector, Halal logo and certification are legitimized for customers' loyalty and trust on Halal fast-food industry (Quoquab et al., 2019) and Halal food tourism (Katuk et al., 2021). Moreover, from fashion, beauty, and skincare to property housing and banking, companies utilized elements of Islamic commodification to promote their brands. These elements are in diverse forms such as advertisement billboards with Islamic/Arabic text, message, logo, and images (Harun et al., 2019), "riba-free" Shariah housing with Arabic calligraphy and religious facilities (Umam, 2021), and recruiting Muslim models in hijab in big brand such as H&M (Shirazi, 2016). The usage

of religion in commercial marketing field not only creates believability but also deceives the public that the products are Shariah compliant and Halal. Studies on Muslims in Malaysia and Indonesia seem to be the focus, as it is where the business is: the largest Muslim population is in Indonesia and Malaysia is a strong promoter and business hub of the Halal industry. This shows how Islam and Halal are being commodified by the power of economy and capitalism and are not necessarily created in respecting religious practices sentiment (Roose, 2020).

As proven by the studies above, Halal is legitimized through certifications and logos, advertisements, tourism, and fashion that are commodified for the interest of the growth of Halal market industry and for the benefit of industry players. Consumers are reported to believe that certification and logo provide assurance towards a healthier lifestyle and religious compliance (Aziz & Chok, 2013, and Hussin et al., 2013), besides influencing consumer's purchase decision (Basri & Kurniawati, 2019; Katuk et al., 2021). From a critical discourse analytical perspective, the positive portrayal of Halal is seen as an issue of debate in which it promotes the dominant discourses, exercising the power of the political economy by marketizing religion for economic gains. All in all, Halal has been commodified as a manipulative tool in making consumers believe that they need to purchase Halal products to be in line with their religious belief.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary approach that perceives language as a form of social practice (Wodak, 1999). It is an analytical tool that is used to describe, interpret, and explain constructive discourses that maintain and legitimize social inequalities (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Legitimation from the perspective of CDA is described as an essential aspect of how ideologies function through discourse since it seeks to monopolize the truth and manipulating the audience (van Dijk, 1998; van Leeuwen, 1995), and to establish legitimacy (van Leeuwen, 1995). From a critical

perspective, portrayal of Halal in the language is not neutral because the media content creation is economically, politically, and ideologically driven (Johnson et al., 2017; Mostafa, 2020). In line with the socio-political forces, media provide a selective representation of reality which promotes the dominant discourses in their context (van Dijk, 2015, p. 470). This representation is an integral part of the hidden forces of society that act as channels of social reproduction through the language of the media (van Dijk, 2015, p. 477).

In Malaysia, there is a scarcity of studies on media coverage of Halal and its legitimation. The limited and existing studies have provided useful insights into understanding how media coverage can influence the legitimation of Halal. Studies on topics such as Muslim-friendly tourism (Janis & Zawawi, 2017) and the role of marketing in social media on Halal cosmetics repurchase intention (Jalil et al., 2021) have proven that legitimation of Halal is indeed a researchable area of study with a lot of potentials. These studies have demonstrated how media can be a great influence and simultaneously seem to exploit and commercialize the Halal concept in order to gain profits. Furthermore, social media marketing is also one of the contemporary field of studies as mobile marketing has become dominant over traditional channels such as televisions, radios, and newspapers; social media is easily accessible due to its interactivity nature, hence, affecting consumers' purchase intention of a product (Alameer et al., 2022).

According to Cook (2001), the language of the media informs, persuade, influence, remind, and probably lead in changing someone's opinions, attitude, and emotion. Language, in particular, the focus of the present study, has also been viewed as a potential area of study, whereby researchers, while very limited in number, have examined the importance of linguistic devices in constructing a positive portrayal of Halal products such as Halal food (Johnson et al., 2017; Thomas & Selimovic, 2015), Halal cosmetics

(Kaur & Mutty, 2016), beauty and skincare (Rohmah & Suhardi, 2020), and Sharia housing (Putri & Sunesti, 2021) presented in the media. Previous studies have examined representations of Halal in different types of media globally, including newspapers in Norway (Thomas & Selimovic, 2015), online comments in France (Johnson et al., 2017), housing advertisements in Indonesia (Putri & Sunesti, 2021), television advertisement in Indonesia (Rohmah & Suhardi, 2020), and marketing websites in Malaysia (Kaur & Mutty, 2016). Relying on Fairclough's approach to CDA, the studies have investigated how language is manipulated in newspapers, social media, product packaging, marketing websites and housing advertisements to convince and persuade potential consumers in choosing their products.

The linguistic studies conducted in the past, while scarce, have exhibited the importance of language of the media in legitimizing the discourse of Halal through the CDA tools provided mainly by Fairclough. They have highlighted some lexical as well as syntactic manipulations such as nominalization, intertextuality, and verbal processes contributing to Halal discourse. Kaur and Mutty (2016) investigated linguistic semiotic features of five Halal cosmetic brands using Fairclough's (1992) CDA model. Their analysis revealed that making use of tools such as positive adjectives, positive verbs, and declarative sentences in the discourses of marketing websites contributes to exploiting religious ideologies for economic gains. Similarly, Thomas and Selimovic (2015) examined the discourse of Halal meat in two major Norwegian national newspapers, employing Fairclough's model. The analysis showed that linguistic tools such as nominalization, positive and negative collocations, and semantic structures had greatly contributed to both positive and negative construction of Halal meat by two ideologically opposing newspapers.

Johnson et al.'s (2017) study which utilized van Dijk's approach to CDA has highlighted the negative representation of others and positive representation of self in delegitimizing Halal. Rohmah and Suhardi (2020) examined the television advertisements for beauty products and found that advertisers employed various visual image as well as linguistic tools including headlines, positive vocabularies, catchy slogans, technical words, scientific information, syntax, pronouns (we) for inclusion purpose, intertextuality, as well as positive self-representation to attract women consumers. Similar to Putri and Sunesti (2021), the usage of Islamic terminologies in housing advertisements influences Muslim consumers in buying the properties that conform to their beliefs. All of these studies stressed on the relationship between Halal, legitimation and commodification through language, and how language has scrutinized the concept of Halal through legitimacy in the media.

Analysis of consumer perception is also used to investigate how consumers perceive Halal cosmetics in the news media. Consumer perception is mainly used in the business industry as it gives impact to the improvement of the business and marketing while concerning how consumers interpret and respond to the message portrayed by the marketers on the products marketed (Agyekum et al., 2015). Understanding consumers' perceptions is important as consumers' decisions to purchase will be influenced by the marketers' attributes, and many studies have been conducted on consumers' perceptions. As for Halal, several studies have investigated the perceptions of consumers. In Halal food sector, Aziz and Chok, (2013), Ismail et al. (2018), and Quoquab et al. (2019) have examined the importance of Halal certification and logos on Halal food products. Meanwhile, Haque et al. (2018) looked at the factors of religiosity in determining consumers' perceptions of Halal food. These studies mainly focus on the quantitative method of a questionnaire, except for Ismail et al. (2018) where the study used interviews with Muslim consumers in understanding their perceptions on Halal food products. In the

Halal cosmetics and skincare sector, marketing promotion is one of the factors examined in comprehending consumers' perceptions of Halal cosmetics products (Harun et al., 2019; Mohezar et al., 2016). The 2016 study used the theory of Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) by questionnaire, while the 2021 study conducted interviews with different ethnic groups in Malaysia. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of interview and questionnaire were used in the past studies mentioned and deal only with the issue of the perception level of consumers regarding Halal certification, Halal logo, religiosity, and marketing promotion. Therefore, a scarcity of study is found in the area of texts, where consumers' perception of Halal based on texts has yet to be explored.

One aspect of turning a critical lens on Halal discourse in the media would be to explore the legitimation strategies through the lens of Theo van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic approach, focusing on Halal cosmetics discourse. Rather than linguistic categories, this approach focuses on sociological categories and provides different elements of social practices including social actions, and (de)legitimation strategies which previously were not considered by the researchers. Without denying the merits of the past studies, the present study aims at accounting for the existing gap by examining the discursive structures of legitimation used in discourse of Halal cosmetics in Malaysia, particularly in newspapers and magazines.

The in-depth review of the related literature indicates that no prior studies have attempted to examine consumers' perceptions of Halal, particularly Halal cosmetics, through interviews and through the lens of newspapers and magazines. Therefore, the present study intends to comprehend consumers' perception of Halal through interviews, as an added dimension of the analysis that complements the discourse analysis in gathering a variety of views on Halal perceptions. More importantly, the current study focuses on Halal cosmetics discourse from online newspapers and magazines in Malaysia

and investigates the perception of cosmetic consumers towards the portrayal of Halal cosmetics in the news media, filling the gap of research in the area of study as no prior research have looked at the perception of consumers from the textual record. The critical factor related to Halal cosmetics and consumers' perception has remained undisclosed and thus needs further investigation.

1.3 Research Objectives and Questions

This study aims to achieve the following two research objectives:

- i. To investigate the (de)legitimation strategies employed in representation of Halal cosmetics in the selected Malaysian English online newspapers and magazines articles.
- ii. To examine the perception of Malaysian cosmetics consumers towards Halal cosmetic discourse as presented in the selected Malaysian English online newspapers and magazines articles.

The study is guided by the following research questions:

- i. What (de)legitimation strategies are employed to promote Halal cosmetics in Malaysian English online newspapers and magazines articles?
- ii. How do selected Malaysian cosmetics consumers perceive the legitimation of Halal cosmetics in Malaysian English online newspapers and magazine articles?

1.4 Significance of the Study

As Halal has become more significant in the global market, the increase in the number of Halal cosmetics demand globally has contributed to several impacts on the industry. This study, while relying on CDA approach, will significantly contribute to several aspects that can be useful for present and future studies, including the impacts on the

industry's stakeholders, educators, and consumers, as well as the impact to CDA field of research.

The result of this study can be used in the context of education, especially in primary and secondary school classrooms, where educators can make use of the findings to create awareness among students on how the language of news media can be used as a tool to persuade and legitimize consumption of (halal) products where hidden ideologies are transmitted implicitly to the readers.

Besides, this study can also be further contributed to the awareness of consumers on the manipulation of news media in legitimizing Halal. Consumers will be more aware of what they read or see in the media and how they perceive the hidden messages transmitted through language. Additionally, this study will also benefit other Halal sectors in Malaysia, other than food and beverage sector, i.e., Halal personal care, Halal pharmaceuticals, and Halal tourism, through promotion of Halal in newspapers and magazines, and how language is used to legitimize Halal.

Given the scarcity of Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) on Halal discourse in general, and Halal cosmetics in particular, the findings of the study can be used by future researchers in expanding the field of the research by looking at different Halal sectors, different sources, as well as by using different CDA approaches. As for manufacturers, the results of the study can be an important reference in improving their marketing and promotion strategies by looking at the language employed in the news media in promoting Halal. Also, the interview data of this study can be used as a reference for a better understanding of how consumers perceive Halal cosmetics as promoted on Malaysian media.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The present study intends to cover the topic of Halal cosmetics limited to only Halal cosmetics discourse found in selected Malaysian English online newspapers and magazines articles. The language of the news is also limited to English language; thus, the findings may not be applicable to other languages such as Malay.

As for the interview, the sample size is limited to Muslim Malaysian women who are also Halal cosmetics consumers, selected by the researcher through purposive sampling as the selection of non-Muslims consumers might affect the outcome of the research. The delimitation is imposed for practical reasons of the research and for the research outcome. In spite of these delimitations, the results of the study can be translated to a broader source and population, in Malaysia and globally.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

The definitions of key terms are provided as a guideline in the study and to maintain the clarity of meaning in this study. The key terms are mentioned as follows:

1.6.1 Halal cosmetics

Cosmetics is defined as substances intended mainly to be applied for external use on human body for cleansing, beautifying, promoting attractiveness, or altering the appearance, that does not include any health claims, according to US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Based on definition stated by National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency (NPRA) under the Ministry of Health in Malaysia, a cosmetic product shall mean “any substance or preparation intended to be placed in contact with various external parts of the human body (epidermis, hair system, nails, lips and external genital organs) or with teeth and the mucous membranes of the oral cavity, with a view exclusively or mainly to cleaning them, perfuming them, changing their appearance and/or correcting body odors

and/or protecting them or keeping them in good condition” (National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency, 2022).

Halal cosmetics can be defined as products that must not have any human parts or ingredients thereof; not containing any animal forbidden to Muslims or are not slaughtered according to syariah law; no genetically modified organism (GMO) which are decreed as najis; no alcohol drinks (khamar); no contamination from najis during preparation, processing, manufacturing and storage; and most importantly, safe for consumers (Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation, 2008).

1.6.2 Discourse

Discourse in general is described as written or spoken communication of particular subjects. From CDA perspective, discourse is “a particular way of constructing a particular (domain of) social practice” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 76); “a socially constructed knowledge of social practices that are developed in specific social context” (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 6). In this study, Halal cosmetics discourse in online newspapers and magazines were chosen as the topic of the study.

1.6.3 Legitimation

Legitimation is one of the main social functions and discursive strategies of power and ideologies that functions through discourse since it seeks to monopolize the truth and manipulate the audience (van Dijk, 1998). In the study of CDA, ideology could be seen as “a means to reflect society” (van Dijk, 1998, p. 135) and legitimation serves to “legitimate different social practices” (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 20). In this study, legitimation is defined as the strategy to manipulate the audience towards the legitimacy of Halal by depicting a specific discourse of Halal cosmetics as portrayed in the newspapers and magazines.

1.6.4 Consumer Perception

Perception is defined as a process, by which an individual selects, organizes, and interprets information inputs to create meaningful picture of the world (Markin, 1995). The quality of perception depends on how the message is processed and interpreted. Consumer perception is concerned with how consumers interpret and respond on the message portrayed by the marketers on the products marketed (Agyekum et al., 2015). Understanding consumers' perception is important as consumers' decision to purchase will be influenced by the attribute provided by marketers. The perception of consumers towards Halal cosmetics as portrayed in the news media can be interpreted, regarded, or understood negatively or positively, according to each consumers' connection, knowledge, and experience with the topic.

1.7 Summary

The research background and the statement of problem were elaborated in this chapter in highlighting the importance of this study and to bridge the gaps from past research. All in all, while Halal industry boosted in the global market thanks largely to the high global demand of Halal products and the increasing number of Muslim populations in the world, capitalists see this as an opportunity to globalize Halal industry. In this neoliberal society, different approaches have been used to perpetuate and legitimize Halal, and one of it is using Halal discourse in the main media sources of the country, which are newspapers and magazines. Halal cosmetics discourse – the topic of this research, is used in depicting the image of Halal cosmetics to convince readers and potential consumers of the benefit of Halal in the cosmetic industry, which is beyond the typical Halal food and beverages sector. What is more, this study also looks at the perception of consumers on how Halal cosmetics are being portrayed in the news media discourse. Two research objectives and two research questions are discussed in this chapter, and the significance of the study is highlighted at the end, manifesting the urgency in conducting the research, especially in

the linguistics field. The delimitation of the study has been discussed, along with the definition of the key terms used in this study. The following chapter presents a review of the literature that connects the CDA approach and field of linguistics with the commodification of Halal.

Universiti Malaya

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The introductory chapter provides descriptions of this study relating to matters such as aims of the study, statement of problem, research objectives and questions, significance of the study, scope of the study and definition of key terms. In chapter two, the previous literature related to this study is presented and discussed. Specifically, this chapter is divided into three major fields of study – Halal as commodity, consumer perception and legitimation in Critical Discourse Analysis.

2.1 Halal as Commodity

The Halal commerce has made a name for itself as a new contributor to the global economy and has grown to be widely recognised. The marketing of Islamic businesses has significantly increased in recent years (Dalir et al., 2020), and the existence of Halal consumerism provides an advantage over the developing source markets (Han et al., 2019). Halal products, specifically food and cosmetics are seen as having a huge potential for foreign businesses to compete on a bigger scale (Naseri et al., 2022). With this huge potential, comes the need to gather information on Halal market consumers' preferences to gain insights for the benefit of the businesses.

Muslims in general want to comply with Sharia, and the way for them to do it is by ensuring that the product they buy is Halal-certified – be it from their country or abroad. In Malaysia, the Halal logo has been used as a sign that a product is safe for Muslims. An authoritative council then, becomes the reference for Halal issues in Malaysia i.e., the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia or popularly known as JAKIM, a federal government agency in Malaysia that administers Islamic affairs in Malaysia. The Malaysian Halal Management System 2020, a rigorous Halal certification process governed by JAKIM enables Malaysian and abroad consumers to feel confident that the ingredients and the manufacturing process of the products manufactured in Malaysia has

followed Sharia law and thus safe for consumption. This ease of purchase is one of the bases of appeal of Halal products to Muslim consumers, which has inevitably contributed to the commodification of Islam in marketing products. To understand the phenomena of Halal consumerism, a number of studies had attempted to gather insights on the factors that influence consumers to purchase Halal products such as cosmetics, which the next section is dedicated to.

2.1.1 Halal Cosmetics

In purchasing and using Halal cosmetics, Muslim users need to make sure that the ingredients are not prohibited (*haram*) or doubtful (*mushbooh*). One of the ingredients that might cause this issue in selecting a cosmetic product is the colour, as the colour red might originate from Cochineal bugs, which is prohibited for consumption in Islam. By ensuring that a product is Halal such as through branding or using a certified Halal logo, a Muslim can buy products such as food or cosmetics with ease.

A number of studies have looked at the relationship between consumers and Halal cosmetics and personal care products. Aisyah (2017) examined the influential factors in Muslims consumers' decision to purchase Halal cosmetics and personal care products by the brand *Wardah* in Indonesia using the TPB model. The findings show that attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control and purchase intention are positively related to the consumers' decision to purchase Halal cosmetics and personal care products. The more favourable the consumers' attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control, and consumers' intention, the greater their decision to purchase Halal cosmetics and personal care products. Interestingly, Haro (2018) in his study found the results to be opposite, where it was observed that perceived behavioural control had no significant influence on customer purchase intention, which significantly differed from the findings in Aisyah (2017).

Apart from that, numerous elements might affect a customer's decision to buy a product and their actions concerning a particular brand or product. Al-Hajla (2017) purported that consumers' alternatives for deciding whether or not to acquire a service or a product are referred to as their buying or giving intentions. Additionally, they emphasised that a consumer's original desire to buy a product can alter after doing so and that the consumer might decide to buy it again depending on the product's performance following the initial purchase.

Meanwhile in Malaysia, two studies had investigated the important determinants that affect the purchasing behaviour of Halal cosmetic products (Haque et al., 2018; K. Kaur et al., 2014). All the above-mentioned studies had also used the TPB model and framework. The results reveal that all three factors: attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control significantly affected the behaviour of the consumers.

Other than factors such as attitude, perceived behavioural control and subjective norms in TPB model, as well as knowledge and religiosity, several studies have looked at Halal awareness as a deciding factor on consumers' purchase intention. In Pakistan, Majid et al. (2015) studied the relationship between awareness, religious belief and Halal product certification towards consumer purchase intention. From the data gathered involving 300 female participants, his study found that awareness, religious belief, and Halal certified brands of cosmetics positively influence the intention of cosmetic consumers towards Halal brands. Muhamad and Latiff (2019) seek to identify the level of perception of consumers and the relationship between knowledge, attitude, and practice toward consumer perception on the Halal cosmetic product using the Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) model. They found that consumers have a high level of perception of Halal cosmetic products and have sufficient knowledge with the attitude towards the Halal cosmetic products. However, the consumers showed a moderate practice level on

the Halal cosmetic products as they are more prone to used products from overseas. Meanwhile, Basri and Kurniawati (2019) analysed the factors that influence consumer's purchase intention towards Halal products, with religiosity, Halal awareness and Halal certification as moderating variables. The results of this study show that religiosity, Halal awareness, and Halal certification had simultaneously affected the purchase intention significantly.

Other than TPB, studies involving Muslim consumers had also adopted the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) to investigate factors influencing Muslim women in purchasing Halal cosmetics products (Mohezar et al, 2016; Rahman et al., 2015). In the former study, the results demonstrate that perceived product characteristics, social influence, and consumer innovativeness had influenced young Muslim consumers to adopt Halal cosmetics products. Meanwhile, in the latter study, the findings show that the relationship between knowledge and attitude is insignificant, but there is a significant positive relationship between religiosity and attitude. This study indicates that there is a positive relationship between attitude and intention to choose Halal cosmetic products. For that reason, Malaysian consumers seemingly have more positive attitudes and intentions towards Halal food products than Halal cosmetics.

The studies above underlined the factors that were found to determine consumers' purchase intention of Halal cosmetic products and had subsequently called the attention to the importance of Halal cosmetics for consumers. Although these studies had shed light on the relationship between consumers' purchase intention with influencing factors, due to the background of the researchers, the studies were not related to the field of linguistics, which is the focus of this study. Observing consumers' purchase intention has given us much information on consumer behaviour which in turn informs businesses and other stakeholders on future decisions. However, knowing their behaviour is not the only way

of analysing consumerism. From the linguistics point of view, analysing textual evidence is also helpful in understanding consumerism, especially when it comes to the media and its influence on consumerism.

2.2 Consumer Perception

For marketers, the perception of the consumers is necessary for providing insights into the betterment of the business and marketing strategies. One of the ways to gather information is by analysing the media, which has revolutionised the way consumers receive information on products. Nevertheless, regardless of the evolution of the media, consumers remain the main target for many stakeholders, especially business owners to gain information. Newspapers are known as the best source of information – for shopping and entertainment as they provide the best advertisements that are truthful, and informative (Larkin, 1979). Other media such as television, radio, and magazine are also the major pioneer of information sources (ibid). Our recent world is also revolved around the usage of social media for various purposes, and marketing is one of the main agendas of social media. Not only the media is used for spreading the news, but it is also used as a manipulating tool in convincing readers of the presented information. It is then essential to understand how and what readers or consumers perceive of the information received from the media, firstly, in comprehending how they respond and interpret the messages, and secondly, how they are influenced by the attribute provided by marketers (Agyekum et al., 2015).

Halal, as the focus of the current study, has been debated throughout various fields of research, and understanding consumers' perceptions of Halal is one of them. Many studies conducted on Halal have examined Halal certification, Halal logo, and Halal awareness as factors that may influence consumers to purchase Halal products (Haro, 2016; K. Kaur et al., 2014; Khan & Haleem, 2016). Several studies have also investigated

whether the factors indeed influence consumers' perception of Halal products, particularly in countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia where there is a large Muslim population. Consumers' perception of Halal food products is the dominant topic that was being studied as shown in past studies (Aziz and Chok, 2013; Ismail et al., 2018; Haque et al., 2018; Quoquab et al., 2019), as the concept of Halal is mainly concerned with Halal food products. Furthermore, some studies also examined the perception of Halal cosmetics consumers of Halal cosmetic products due to the emerging market of the Halal cosmetic sector (Harun et al., 2019; Mohezar et al., 2016)

Several studies had examined the influence of Halal certification and logo (Aziz and Chok, 2013; Ismail et al., 2018; Quoquab et al., 2019), religiosity (Haque et al., 2018; Harun et al., 2019; Mohezar et al., 2016), and marketing promotion (Aziz & Chok, 2013; Ismail et al., 2018; Harun et al., 2019) towards the perception of consumers. The studies on Halal do not only involve perceptions from Muslim consumers but also involve the perspective of non-Muslim consumers (Aziz & Chok, 2013; Haque et al., 2018).

Majority of the past studies investigated consumers' perception of Halal food and cosmetics had used the quantitative method of questionnaires (Aziz & Chok, 2013; Haque et al., 2018; Mohezar et al., 2016; Quoquab et al., 2019). These studies used different instruments and theories of analysis in analysing the questionnaires including the stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) theory (Quoquab et al., 2019) and Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory (Mohezar et al., 2016). On the other hand, Ismail et al. (2018) and Harun et al. (2019) conducted semi-structured interviews with the selected participants, as interviews are believed to be more appropriate for understanding consumers' perceptions since the interviewees are allowed to express their feelings and thought, which is limited in a questionnaire. Ismail et al. (2018) only interviewed Malay Muslim consumers with the help of visual aids that display images of Halal product

packaging with the presence of ambiguous semiotic cues on the product. Meanwhile, Harun et al. (2019) investigated the perception of consumers from different races in Malaysia including Malay, Chinese, Indian, and Iban on local beauty brand advertisements of Halal cosmetics and skincare. These two studies used multimodal analysis by looking at both text and image in understanding the perception of consumers.

Halal certification, Halal logo, and Halal awareness have played a major role in influencing consumers' perceptions of Halal, in both food and cosmetic sectors. Consumers build a strong trust and perceived reputation for products displaying Halal logos or certifications (Ismail et al., 2018; Mohezar et al., 2016; Quoquab et al., 2019) which suits their lifestyle and culture; although, the presence of ambiguous cues on the product packaging may create a doubtful feeling towards the Halal logo displayed (Ismail et al., 2018). For non-Muslim consumers, having knowledge of Halal, besides the marketing promotion of the product is equivalently important in persuading and motivating consumers towards buying the products. More importantly, elements of religion has been commodified for marketing purposes with the presence of Islamic values in the advertisements of Halal cosmetics and skincare products (Harun et al., 2019).

Although the studies above have used both qualitative and quantitative methods of interview and questionnaire, there is an absence of studies on consumers' perceptions through the lens of materials published on newspapers and magazines on the topic of Halal cosmetics. The connection between the materials printed in the media and the consumers' understanding towards them provides insights into how the materials influence the consumers' decision with regards to Halal cosmetics. What is more, there are no prior studies conducted by interviewing consumers in understanding their perceptions of Halal products from newspapers and magazines. As a result, this study

attempts to bridge the gap in the literature by analysing consumers' perceptions through interviews and more interestingly, based on the texts from online newspapers and magazine articles focusing on Halal cosmetics in Malaysia. The current study aims to provide an analysis of the news media texts where Halal is legitimized through certain legitimation strategies. The results of both textual and interview analysis will contribute to novel findings in the field of linguistics, specifically in Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth, CDA).

2.3 CDA and Legitimation

2.3.1 Approaches in CDA

Discourse analysis is one of the factors that has been explained through the processes of social thoughts and the human realities in the construction of meaning of the world (Van Dijk, 2015). Discourse is both socially constitutive and socially conditioned, in the sense that it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Discourses can be compared to icebergs where only the tip can be seen on the surface; what is unseen is much bigger in size. i.e., the larger part of the iceberg hidden beneath the surface of the sea water. In other words, discourse exhibits only the most relevant information that is actually expressed in the semiosis of texts. Texts, as instances of discourse, provide an incomplete projection of discourse, the meaning of which is only complete by integrating context and interpretation. As discourses are social cognitions - socially specific ways of knowing social practices – they can be and are used as resources for representing social practices in text. This means that it is possible to reconstruct discourses from the texts that draw on them. In Foucault's words (1977, p. 135), discourses not only involve “a field of objects,” but also “the definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge” in a given context (ibid.). In many texts, these aspects of representation become far more important than the representation of the social practice itself.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approaches are one of the key theories which can describe the overall aspects of the ideological character in discourse. The main focus of critical discourse analysis is defined as a theoretical perspective on language, and an element of the material social process which promotes ways of analysis of the language in a broader process. The roots of the CDA are based on classical rhetoric, text linguistics and sociolinguistics, as well as it being beneficial for Applied Linguistics and Pragmatics. The concept of CDA derived from the research of the socio-linguistics concepts and the concepts of power and hierarchy (Afandi et al., 2022) where in the 1970s, Roger Fowler and fellow scholars developed a new set of concepts in the field of sociolinguistics at the University of East Anglia.

The effectiveness of the CDA program lies in the belief that social practice is tied to specific historical contexts and that there are different interests being served. The overall concept of the analysis is formed from the time of neo-Marxism and postmodernism approaches of social theorists. In the process of understanding the ideology of the modernist approach, it was observed that the scholars had used several processes of the social issues in research in various fields – feminism, ideology, politics, policy – and many more (Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

CDA commonly focuses on the strategies of manipulation, legitimation, manufacturing consent and other discursive ways to influence the minds (indirect actions) of people in the interest of the powerful authority. It (may) pays attention to all dimensions of discourse, such as grammar (phonology, syntax, semantics), schematic organisation, strategies of pragmatic, speech acts, interaction, and et cetera. On the other hand, it also centres on other dimensions like semiotic (sound, music, picture, film, videos, gesture, etc) on communicative events (Salma, 2018). CDA analyses texts, and the meaning of the texts can only be complete by integrating context and interpretation

through language, which is a powerful tool, as a form of communication that includes social convention. Only language users and the targeted audiences can understand the texts with the help of social and cultural knowledge that provide local coherence to global topics.

The repository of the old knowledge and the new knowledge are linked to the texts or discourses and are needed for both producers and consumers of texts in order to establish whether a discourse is meaningful (van Dijk, 2003, p. 92). CDA brings the critical tradition in social analysis in language studies and contributes to the critical social analysis and relations between discourse and other social elements (Purwanto et al., 2020). Moreover, CDA explicates the dynamics of communication and society through language and what is perceived by the society. Furthermore, the impact of CDA means to represent the patterns of experiences and the process can be beneficial for human beings to build a mental picture of reality in the society.

One of the keys of CDA is the linguistic manifestation of power (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Power may influence knowledge, beliefs, understandings, ideologies, norms, attitudes, values, and plans, and CDA seeks to uncover, reveal, and disclose implicit or hidden power relations in discourse (van Dijk, 1993). Having said that, language has a pivotal role in re/producing, re/creating and re/shaping ideologies (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Van Dijk, 2001; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). CDA then, aims to analyse the existence of power, dominance, and control in linguistics and also critically analyse it through the models of discourse.

There are several approaches to CDA based on different schools of thought with different linguistic analytical tools in analysing discourses. Mainly, they are, Fairclough's socio-cultural approach, Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach, Wodak's discourse-historical approach, and Van Leeuwen's socio-semantic approach. As there are different

approaches to CDA, the definition of CDA varies according to the approaches, however, they share a set of core assumptions: the relationship between language and social practice (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). CDA as an interdisciplinary approach that perceives language as a form of social practice analyses the dialectical relations between discourse, social practice and social structures as well as connecting text to context (Fairclough, 2002). CDA enables researchers to interpret texts in contexts i.e., social practice, power, and ideology (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). What is more, it also aims to critically investigate social inequality as it is expressed, signalled, constituted, legitimized and so on by language use (or in discourse) (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). CDA research deals with social wrongs and intends to expose social and political inequality so that justice and equality in politics and the economy for all segments of society can be achieved. In this study, van Leeuwen's socio-semantic approach, in general, and his strategies of legitimation, in particular, have been adopted as a framework that will be explained in detail in the next section.

2.3.2 Van Leeuwen's Socio-semantic Approach

There are several strategies of (de)legitimation in CDA, however, Van Leeuwen's (2008) socio semantic approach has been observed as the chosen approach to analyse the recontextualization of social practices and the discourse of Halal as represented in media. Four major categories make up the framework for analysing how discourses legitimise social activities in both ordinary contact and public communication. They are authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization and mythopoesis. These four categories of legitimation can take place in many ways, such as individually or collectively (Abdi & Basarati, 2018). These might be employed to support or undermine criticism. Additionally, each of these can take up the majority of particular texts and conversations, which may hardly refer to the things that are being legitimised, or, they can be scattered throughout in-depth, descriptive, or prescriptive accounts of the behaviours and

organisations they legitimise. All of these are realised through highly specific language arrangements and linguistic resources. Each of these categories has sub-categories, which are briefly covered in the section that follows.

2.3.2.1 Authorization

The first category of legitimation is authorization, which is defined as a system of authority by person whom institutional authority of some kind is vested, and by non-person, by referring to tradition, custom and law (van Leeuwen, 2008). A person, a law, a custom, and a tradition may have an authority to command. The power of tradition, legislation, conventions, ideology, and the individual in whose hands institutional power is lodged to exercise certain types of authority are all used to describe the permission in the first category (Trinidad Galván & Guevara Beltrán, 2016) A program or agency can be started, changed, or continued with the use of authorization. The subsequent allocations for some specific agencies and programs are also authorised by the authorization acts, and this frequently occurs when expenditure caps are established for them. Budgets for activities, programs, and organisations that have been approved by a member of the authorization committees, however, may be allocated with the aid of suitable budget allocation and approved actions. According to van Leeuwen, there are six subcategories of legitimation authority: the authority of personal, the authority of expertise, the authority of role models, the authority of impersonality, the authority of conformity, and the authority of tradition.

(a) Personal authority

Personal authority is defined as the legitimation that derives its effectiveness from the speaker exercising it. In this first subcategory, the authority is vested in person because of their status or role in a particular institution. Personal authority has the legitimacy to give expert authority with competence rather than status, as well as various types of duty

modality in a person's discourse. Numerous professionals and staff have direct control over pupils or children outside the home in addition to guardians or carers who live there. Similarly, a CEO or management of a certain firm may have personal authority over the workers and employees that work for them.

(b) Expert authority

In the second sub-category, legitimacy can occur with an authorisation from experts that can be stated explicitly or by mentioning credentials (van Leeuwen, 2008). Experts play an important role in recommending, in critiquing or in asserting a topic of his expertise in a discourse. In the media, the experts' names are shown explicitly, or it can also be implicit by replacing the name with nouns such as 'experts' and 'specialist'.

(c) Role model authority

In the case of the role model authority, the legitimate authority for an action is provided by reference to the examples of the role models or opinion leaders in a group or in the body of society. It is an important truth that most role models exhibit specific characteristics that enable them to validate particular types of followers' behaviour. Any political figure, distinguished organisation leader, famous people, social media influencers, et cetera can serve as these individuals' role models. They acquire or develop particular habits, which they then use to persuade their followers to follow likewise. The great majority of people in this technologically sophisticated period, especially the younger generation, utilise social media, which has given them a platform to impact a variety of facets of life, including fashion, eating habits, lifestyle, skills, and growth. This type of authority may be demonstrated by several instances where role models are doing activities that should be justified. This subcategory of authority can be conveyed simply by showing the role model being engaged in the actions that are to be legitimized.

(d) Impersonal authority

Impersonal authority describes commands given by a non-person such as laws, rules, and regulations. This indicates that a non-person has the authority to give the command. The power to legitimate or delegitimate depends on the rules and the policies stated by one organisation or one country, such as policies at school and workplace.

(e) The authority of conformity

Conformity authorisation rationalizes the authority of “what most people do” (van Leeuwen 2008, 109). People like to follow what the majority do, so this is how the authorization legitimation occurs in a discourse. Taking an example from covid-19 situation in Malaysia, the number of people dining out increases as everyone feels fine dining out, unlike during the first outbreak of Covid-19.

(f) The authority of tradition

The authority of tradition is provided by the rules of tradition, of customs and of habits, and the legitimation is enforced by everyone. The arguments or reasons were rarely asked, and not in need of being made explicit or justified ‘because this is what we always do’ or ‘because this is what we have always done’ (Van Leeuwen, 2007).

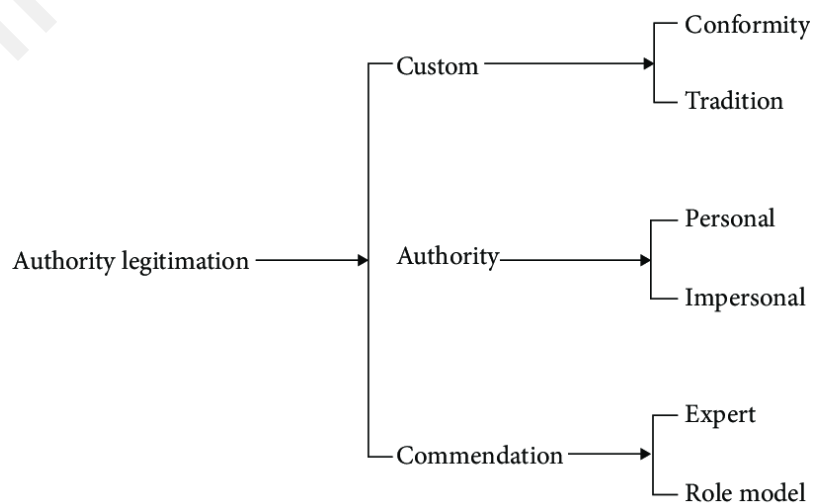


Figure 2.1: Types of Authority legitimation (Van Leeuwen, 2008)

2.3.2.2 Moral Evaluation

Moral evaluation in legitimation is used when there exists common sense cultural knowledge in a society. It is a type of legitimation which is practiced by taking a specific society's value orders into account. The discourses of moral values will bring “normal” and “natural order” of things, in order to shield it from debate and arguments. There are three types of moral evaluation legitimation, namely evaluation, abstraction and comparison.

(a) Evaluation

Evaluation legitimation uses attributive and designative adjectives to express the actions of morals. The discourse of moral values is explained through these adjectives that evaluate morals.

(b) Abstraction

For the second type, the strategy of expressing moral evaluations in abstract ways “moralizes” the reader without their consent. In other meaning, legitimation by abstraction happens when the discourse of moral values is explained/shown explicitly in abstract ways with the help of common sense and cultural knowledge.

(c) Comparison

Comparison can be defined as comparing an activity that belongs to one social practice to another activity associated with another social practice. This activity is often implicit and has positive or negative values that are attached to the other activity, and then transferred to the original activity, in the given socio-cultural context.

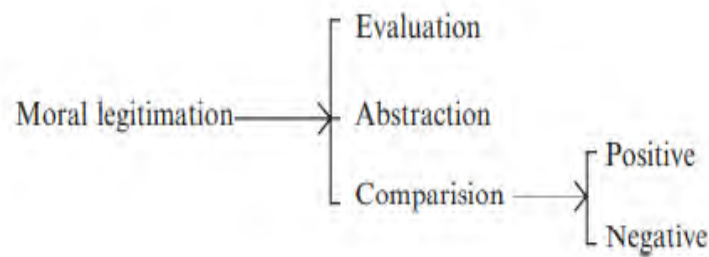


Figure 2.2: Types of Moral Evaluation legitimation (Van Leeuwen, 2008)

2.3.2.3 Rationalization

Rationalization is another category of legitimation and has a different function than authorization. Rationalization is linked to moral values. There are two types of rationalization, namely instrumental rationalization and theoretical rationalization. The former legitimizes social practices by purpose or purposeful action, and an element of moralization is essential. The latter is more natural, in the sense that it legitimizes social practices or social actions by stating them “natural” (van Leeuwen, 2008). In other words, it is an explicit representation of how things should be.

(a) *Instrumental Rationalization*

Moralization is essential in a purpose clause or purposeful actions in order to serve as legitimations. A purpose can be a generalized action or a moralized action. Generalized action is more straightforward, whereby the latter is linked to a discourse of values. Instrumental rationalization can be divided into *goals orientation* (aims), *means orientation* and *effect orientation* (outcome). For goal-orientation, the aims can be rationalized explicitly using purpose clause with ‘in order to’, ‘to’ ‘so as to’ and remain implicit. In the case of means orientation, the legitimation is achieved ‘in the action’, using circumstances of means with ‘by’, ‘by means of’ ‘through’. The final orientation emphasizes the outcomes of actions. The purpose is constructed at the other end and is typically expressed by result clauses with ‘so that’, ‘that way’.

(b) Theoretical Rationalization

In this subcategory, legitimation happens on some kind of truth, on ‘the way things are’ (van Leeuwen, 2007). Theoretical rationalization takes three forms namely definition, explanation, predictions. The first is when one activity is defined in terms of another moralized activity. Both activities must be objectivated and generalized, and the link between them must either be attributive or significative. In the case of the explanation, it is not the practice, which is defined or characterized, but one or more of the actors involved in the practice. Here, the answer to the ‘why’ question is, ‘because doing things this way is appropriate to the nature of these actors’. Generality is again essential. Explanation describes general attributes or habitual activities of the categories of actors in question. Although predictions have a ring of authority about them, they are meant to be based, not on authority, but on expertise, and they can therefore be denied by contrary experience, at least in principle.

In theoretical rationalization, there are also scientific rationalization and experiential rationalization in which the first legitimate institutional practices such as religions, and the latter legitimate the common-sense knowledge related to concrete actions.

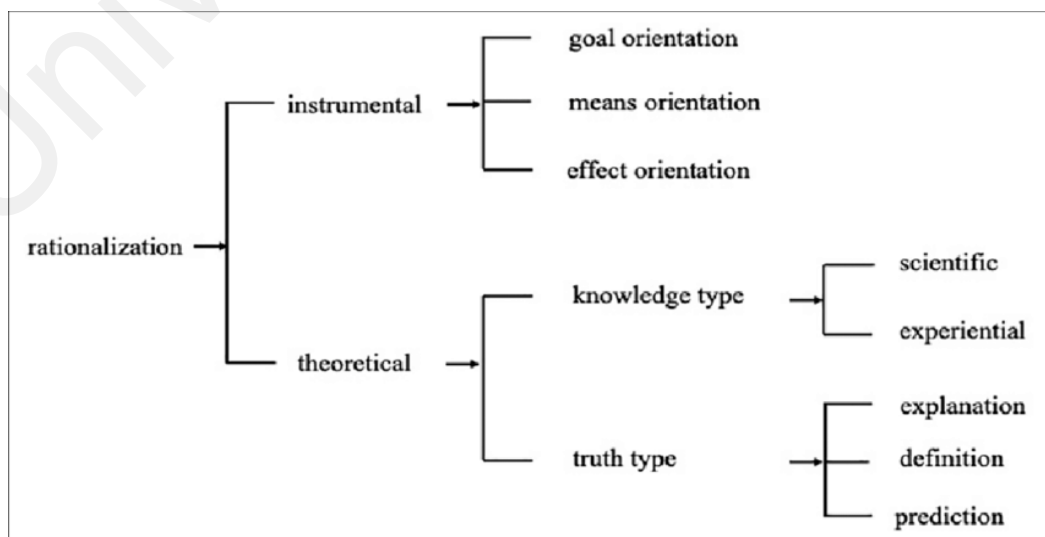


Figure 2.3: Types of Rationalization legitimation (Van Leeuwen, 2008)

2.3.2.4 Mythopoesis

Legitimation by mythopoesis is shown through storytelling. There is discourse of moral tales in which the protagonists are rewarded for engaging in legitimate social practices or restoring the legitimate order and cautionary tales in which the story ends with unhappy endings from the actions taken by the protagonist. This strategy may also involve symbolic actions in which the actions represent a ‘mythical model of social action’.

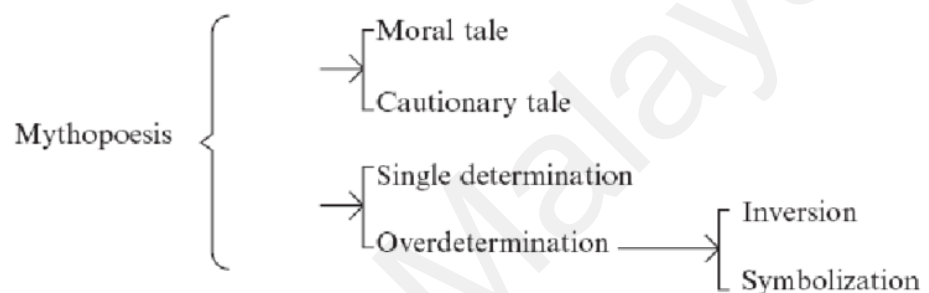


Figure 2.4: Types of Mythopoesis legitimation (Van Leeuwen, 2008)

2.3.3 CDA and Media Studies

The media has become the largest source of mass communication, from newspapers to magazines, radios to televisions and social media. Mass media plays a significant role in producing effective news for consumers. Media facilitates the sharing of information and ideas as well as building networks and communities. What is more, it has the power to advertise, manipulate or project ideologies to targeted audiences through written and non-written materials.

CDA emphasizes how language as a cultural tool mediates relationships of power and privilege in social interactions, institutions, and bodies of knowledge (Bordieu, 1997). CDA seeks to exhibit how the discourses of newspapers, magazines, journal publications and so on that are – informative, professional, and might appear as neutral – may convey

different ideologies and power. Media may manipulate their audiences into what they desire to hear and to see, using manipulative discursive strategies like legitimation and de-legitimation of events (Sadeghi & Jalali, 2013). Propaganda is an important factor in the CDA process, and journalists propagate their own biases and opinions to affect the attitudes and actions on buying any products or anything through their languages (Gauthier et al., 2021). The realities are being represented differently to equip the audiences.

Fairclough (1992, 1995) and Chouliariki and Fairclough (1999) explained the advances in CDA, showing not only how the analytical framework for investigating language in relation to power and ideology has developed, but also how CDA is useful in disclosing the discursive nature of much contemporary social and cultural change. Media language has been an interesting discourse in the field of linguistics, especially in Critical Discourse Analysis as it *“provides an easily accessible source of language data for research and teaching purposes, and [...] are important linguistic institutions [...] Media usage reflects and shapes both language use and attitudes in a speech community”* (Bell, 1995, p. 23). In particular, the language of the mass media is scrutinised as a site of power and struggle. Media institutions are often purported to be neutral in that they provide space for public discourse, that they reflect states of affairs disinterestedly, and that they give the perceptions and arguments of the newsmakers.

Language use in the media is interesting linguistically because of the variety of aspects being studied. It spans between studies on a variety of dialects in advertisements, to how language is used by radio personalities to construct their image and forge a relationship with invisible audience i.e., the listeners. Media institutions are also the presenters of culture, politics, and social life that shape and reflect how these are formed and expressed. Therefore, discourses in media are important and it contributes to the characters of a

society and the society itself. Habermas (1973) theory states that in order to help analysts understand social problems that are mediated by mainstream ideology and power relationships, CDA is the preferable method. As explained earlier, CDA is the study of linguistic manipulation of power that may influence beliefs and ideologies, hence, the intended ideologies are injected to the minds of the targeted public through verbal and non-verbal materials we encounter in our daily and professional lives such as newspapers, materials published on the internet, televisions, advertisements, radios, and the most powerful media sources, social media. In other words, CDA focuses on how language as a cultural tool mediates relationships of power and privilege in social interactions, institutions, and bodies of knowledge (Bourdieu, 1977). As technology advances, the media give an undeniable effect on the way realities are being represented, and audiences have high expectations of it. Therefore, this study tries to explore the way in which newspapers and magazines use the specific discursive strategy of legitimation to represent the discourse of Halal cosmetics.

Texts, language, and communications are vital in social contexts, and they are shaped and informed by wider processes within the society. Apart from this, the media and the perspective of the media are based on the factors of the pervasive visual resources alongside verbal texts. Also, the media resonate with the process of sociocultural changes. In discussing the role of media and CDA, it is important to focus on the central notion that understanding power play is one of the critical works. According to Van Dijk (2015), different sorts of power may be separated according to the numerous resources used to exert such authority. The media discourse is one of the main concerns of critical linguistics in the media where text producers has control over the messages that the audience receives.

Commonly associated with the process of foods and beauty cosmetic products, Halal is one of the broader concepts in Malaysia. The current study tries to explore the way in which newspapers and magazines employ specific discursive strategy of legitimation to represent the Halal cosmetics discourses. In the Malaysian markets, the discussion and studies on Halal items including foods and cosmetics focus on the process of Halal trustworthiness and Muslim people's belief towards the range of products in the Malaysian market. The media has also portrayed Halal as the process of manufacturing any items on the various aspects of life for practitioners of Islam including personal care, pharmaceuticals, leather products as well as entertainment.

Furthermore, the media aims to manipulate the audiences through the publication of materials on Halal items and focus on the influencing factors of advertisement. As the process involves promoting and selling beauty products to the consumers of Malaysia, the producers are likely to employ some strategies to produce appealing contents through the printed media or electronic media that people are interested to revisit (Muhammad et al., 2022) which in turn increases the chance of them buying the advertised products. Apart from this, social media advertising on Halal cosmetics items for the consumers of Malaysia can be beneficial through media-based activities. Linguistics analysis of the media then involves the semantics, vocabulary, grammar and writing systems and also the process of generic structure and cohesion in the process of Halal marketing. On this note, the descriptive, narrative, expository and argumentative approaches are important when discussing Halal cosmetics in the Malaysia region.

Janis and Zawawi (2017) have examined the impact of media coverage on Halal food towards the promotion of Muslim friendly tourism and have proven how media is often seen as aiming to exploit and commercialize Halal in order to be more profitable. Another study by Jalil et al., (2021) investigated the role of marketing in social media on Halal

cosmetics repurchase intention from consumers in Malaysia using brand recognition and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM). The findings reveal that social media marketing (SSM) influences the intention to repurchase Halal cosmetics among consumers. What is more, Alameer et al. (2022) explored mobile marketing which has become dominant over traditional channels due to its interactivity nature as consumers are accessible to it anywhere and anytime, hence, affecting consumers' purchase intention of a product.

2.3.4 Halal Food and Cosmetics Studies

Nevertheless, there are studies on Halal cosmetics and foods within linguistic perspective. Ismail, et al., (2018) explored the equity of Halal Malaysia Brand (HMB) and ambiguous semiotic cue to identify whether the presence of Halal cue convinces customers' purchase decision. A semi-structured interview was conducted with 23 Malay consumers in Malaysia who possess sufficient knowledge related to JAKIM, Halal logo and basic understandings of Halal concept. The result of this study indicates that certain participants have strong trust and confidence towards HMB while others still have doubts when products with Halal logos have ambiguous cues.

Thomas and Selimovic (2015) investigated two opposing Norwegian national online newspapers, *Dagbladet* and *Aftenposten*, regarding Halal, in the past 6 years (2008-2014), a period conflating with a rise in Muslim demographics in Norway. A mixed-methods approach is used, one from Hallidayan transitivity analysis and other approach from critical discourse analysis (CDA) using Fairclough's model. A total of 56 articles were analysed in which 39 in *Dagbladet* and 17 in *Aftenposten*. The findings reveal that *Dagbladet* refracts Halal food more negatively in contrast with *Aftenposten* that has more "Halal-friendly" gaze which attributed to greater access for Muslim contributors.

Johnson et al. (2017) examined the debate over the inclusion of Halal meat at Quick, a popular burger chain in France through online readers' comments, by using Foucauldian

approach to privilege and netnographic method. Since France is a political secularism country, this study reveals how power and legitimation discursively operates through discourses, to constitute, defend and challenge a certain type of privilege within the marketplace where the exclusion or inclusion of social practices and bodies is legitimated. Elsewhere, Mostafa (2020) studied the structure, dynamics and sentiments related to Halal food from Twitter. With a sample of 11,700 world-wide random tweets, both the NRC Emotion lexicon and the AFINN lexicon were used, and the findings reveal a generally positive sentiment towards Halal food. However, there is a general concern about animal welfare which could potentially be explored in future studies.

Blough (2020) investigated the other representation of Muslims in France and UK in the Halal meat discourse in two main national newspapers in the countries, *Le Figaro* and *Le Monde* in France and *The Telegraph* and the *Guardian* in the United Kingdom. This study used van Dijk (2006) representation of *Us vs Them* to examine the representation of Muslims in the Halal meat discourse. As both *The Telegraph* and *Le Figaro* dominantly cited right-wing politicians, the construction of a 'Muslim threat' was prominent in their coverage of Halal meat 'controversies', whereby the other two left-wing papers dominantly presented Muslims as the 'other' with a wider variety of opinions and perspectives. The study exemplifies how political position could also impact the discourse in newspapers.

In the Halal cosmetics sector, Kaur and Mutty (2016) examined linguistic and non-linguistic semiotic features of five Halal cosmetics marketing websites in Malaysia in investigating underlying ideology as constructed by the Halal cosmetics producers through discourse. A textual analysis was conducted for the linguistic features using Fairclough (1995) 3-dimensional model, and visual analysis for the non-linguistics features using Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) data coding. Their analysis reveals that

making use of tools such as positive adjectives, positive verbs, and declarative sentences in the discourses of marketing websites contributes to exploiting religious ideologies for economic gains. It was further observed that Halal cosmetic producers highlight positive attributes, properties and qualities of the products and use Arabic and Islamic terminologies in the websites in the effort to convincing Muslim consumers on their products' advantages. What is more, the visual marketing analysis portrayed images of young models with perfect skin, and an ideal Muslim woman is portrayed as a perfect balance between spirituality and modernity. Both analyses reveal the hidden ideologies of commodifying Halal using text and images.

Similar to the study by Kaur and Mutty (2016), Siregar and Butar-Butar (2017) conducted a CDA research on *Wardah* beauty advertisements in Indonesia. Using the same theory for textual analysis, the results indicate that the brand is the social determiner of a good Muslim woman, with the help of the positive adjectives, the personnel pronouns, the declarative clauses, cohesion, and parallelism in the advertisements, which at the end aims to commodify Halal as economic interest.

A study by Rohmah and Suhardi (2020) employed CDA to perform analysis on television advertisements for beauty products in Indonesia and found that advertisers employed various linguistic tools including headlines, positive vocabularies, catchy slogans, technical words, scientific information, syntax, pronouns (we) for inclusion purpose, intertextuality, as well as positive self-representation to attract buyers, especially women consumers. The visual analysis also includes images of beautiful famous models to portray the effectiveness of the promoted beauty products. All these studies have highlighted the importance of media in informing, persuading, manipulating and can potentially change society's opinion and attitude.

While limited in number, these qualitative studies have mostly analysed the linguistic representations of Halal cosmetics and foods using various approaches such as Corpus linguistics (Mostafa, 2020), Critical Discourse Analysis (Blough, 2020; Johnson et al., 2017; Kaur & Mutty, 2016; Siregar & Butar-Butar, 2017) along with Fairclough and Hallidayan transitivity analysis (Thomas & Selimovic, 2015). Some studies have explored discourses in mainstream media (Blough, 2020; Johnson et al., 2017; Thomas & Selimovic, 2015) such as online newspapers, televisions and radio stations, and some used advertisement in marketing websites as genre of analysis (Kaur & Mutty, 2016; Siregar & Butar-Butar, 2017) and TV advertisement (Rohmah & Suhardi, 2020). One study has also explored Halal food discourse in social media using Twitter (Mostafa, 2020).

In respect of what these studies have examined, the majority, relying on Fairclough's (1995) approach to CDA, investigated various lexical choices, positive adjectives, positive verbs, declarative sentences, linguistic tools such as nominalization, positive and negative collocations, and semantic structures, verb transformation in text and several processes in transitivity analysis. One aspect of turning a critical lens on Halal discourse in the media would be to explore the legitimation strategies through the lens of Theo van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic approach, focusing on Halal cosmetics discourse. Rather than linguistic categories, this approach focuses on sociological categories and provides elements of social practices including legitimation and de-legitimation strategies, that were not taken into account of by the previous researchers. What is more, the majority of the linguistic studies on Halal studies were conducted in Western countries, indicating a scarcity in Asia, especially in Malaysia. Therefore, the current study contributes to this niche area, using Theo van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic approach, to investigate legitimation strategies used in the discourse of Halal cosmetics,

focusing on selected Malaysian media. The details of the theory used for the present research will be explained in the following section.

2.3.5 Studies on Legitimation

Legitimation provides answers to what van Leeuwen (2008, p. 105) had once questioned, “Why should we do this in this way?”. It is one of the discursive strategies used for manipulating targeted audiences with the usage of language that interests them, and it is an addition to the recontextualization of social practices. The construction of legitimation or de-legitimation in discourse elucidates how power and ideology are reflected (Bogain 2017), by representing it explicitly or implicitly. Van Dijk (1998) defines legitimation as a social (and political) act, and it is typically accomplished by text or talk. *“It is related to the speech act of defending oneself, in that one of its appropriateness conditions is often that the speaker is providing good reasons, grounds or acceptable motivations for past or present action that has been or could be criticized by others”* (p. 255).

Many studies have used van Leeuwen’s strategies of legitimation in analysing discourses, but up to the date of this study, studies on Halal cosmetics discourse using his approach of legitimation have yet to benefit from it. Sadeghi and Jalali (2013) explored discursive strategies applied in *Fars News* newspaper in representing the event of Egyptian revolution; Ali et al. (2016) examined the discursive structures employed in legitimizing the political event of U.S. forces’ withdrawal from Iraq; Abdi and Basarati (2018) investigated the discursive practices of Barack Obama's speech at Baltimore Islamic centre with which he attempted to settle down the fervent atmosphere against the status of Muslim community in the US; Breeze (2012) evaluated the discourses of legitimation used in annual reports of oil corporations; and KhosraviNik (2015) attempted to shed light on the nature and quality of discursive strategies used in Iranian discourse

on the nuclear programme as represented in *Kayhan*, within an Iranian socio-political context, to mention just a few.

The cited works in this section disclose the usage of legitimation and de-legitimation strategies in newspapers (Ali et al., 2016; KhosraviNik, 2015; Sadeghi & Jalali, 2013), speech (Abdi & Basarati, 2018) and report (Breeze, 2012), with a majority focusing on political discourses. However, neither of the works cited had attempted to extend the research in non-political discourse as such Halal cosmetics. This confirms another gap of research; hence, the current study aims at accounting for the existing gap by examining (de)legitimation strategies used in the discourse of Halal cosmetics in Malaysian English newspapers and magazines articles, along with consumers' perception of the discourse.

2.3.5.1 Delegitimation

A discourse can be legitimized and delegitimized at the same time because texts do not only recontextualize social practices or social actions. A text needs to be legitimated and critiqued. Similar to legitimation, delegitimation is used for manipulating an event in an implicit way, as well as explicitly presented, in capturing the audience. This discursive strategy can be categorised according to subcategories, like legitimation strategy. The present study looked at both legitimation and delegitimation discursive strategy to examine the discourse of Halal cosmetics in Malaysian newspapers and magazines articles. The perception of selected Malaysian cosmetic consumers on the discourse of Halal portrayed in the news media is also based on the strategies found in the analysis. From the above explanation of van Leeuwen's socio-semantic approach, it is evident that the approach is the most suitable for the current research, and it fills in the gap of research on CDA of Halal cosmetics.

2.4 Summary

All in all, analysis of discourse relying on CDA provides an insight of the text, its interpretation as well as its relation to the social and cultural practices. As CDA focuses on explicating the dynamics of communication and society through language and what is perceived by the society, it also focuses on the strategies of manipulation and legitimation to influence the minds (indirect actions) of people in the interest of power. Media as a tool has the power to advertise, manipulate, or project ideologies to targeted audiences through both written and non-written materials. Through media, targeted audiences may be manipulated into what they desire to hear and to see, using manipulative discursive strategies like legitimation and delegitimation of events (Sadeghi & Jalali, 2013). Through CDA, a researcher may depict how language is used as a cultural tool to mediate the relationships of power and privilege in social interactions, institutions, and bodies of knowledge. What is more, the analysis using CDA seeks to exhibit how the discourses of newspapers, magazines, journal publications and other informative publications, which might seem professional and seemingly neutral, may actually convey different ideologies and power in a society.

Due to the objective of this research in investigating the (de)legitimation strategies employed in representation of Halal cosmetics in the selected Malaysian English online newspapers and magazines articles, this research has selected van Leeuwen's socio-semantic approach in comparison with the other CDA scholars including Fairclough's socio-cultural approach, van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach and Wodak's DHA approach as it is the most suitable approach. Several studies have been conducted using van Leeuwen's socio-semantic approach (Abdi & Basarati, 2018; Ali et al., 2016; Breeze, 2012; KhosraviNik, 2015; Sadeghi & Jalali, 2013) and have shown a scarcity in research in Halal discourse, especially Halal cosmetics discourse. Although many studies have been conducted related to Halal cosmetics (Aisyah, 2017; Basri & Kurniawati, 2019;

Haque et al., 2018; K. Kaur et al., 2014; Majid et al., 2015; Mohezar et al., 2016; Muhamad & Latiff, 2019; Rahman et al., 2015), only a handful of studies have used CDA (Kaur & Mutty, 2016; Rohmah & Suhardi, 2020; Siregar & Butar-Butar, 2017), and no study has been conducted using van Leeuwen's approach on strategies of legitimation. The following chapter presents the methodology used in the present research, the sample size and participants, as well as the analytical tools used in analysing the textual analysis and the interview analysis.

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CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the research methodology designed to achieve the following objectives: 1) to examine the legitimation strategies employed in the discourse of Halal cosmetics in Malaysian English online newspapers and magazine articles; and, 2) to examine the perception of Malaysian consumers of the Halal cosmetic products towards the Halal cosmetics discourse in the said online newspapers and magazine articles. The research design, data source and sampling, study participants, analytical procedures, data analysis method and ethical concerns are also the primary components of this chapter. The methodological limitations are discussed at the end.

3.1 Research Design

The present study aims to examine the legitimation strategies used in newspapers and magazines that had discussed the topic of Halal cosmetics. As the first objective of this study is to examine the discourse of Halal cosmetics from selected online Malaysian English newspapers and magazines, a qualitative method is applied by analysing the discourse of Halal cosmetics as presented in the data. The (de)legitimation strategies provided by Van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic approach is chosen to analyse the data, while taking the overall framework of discursive construction to relate the strategies to the social practices. Among the different approaches to CDA, van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic approach of legitimation was chosen as the most suitable theory for this research. This theory is widely used in political and socio-political discourses, and in the discourse of cosmetics, it can potentially be explored deeper. This approach assists in analysing the discursive strategies employed to (de)legitimize Halal cosmetics discourse so as to address the research objective. Van Leeuwen's framework consists of four major categories of legitimation namely authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization, and mythopoesis. The detailed explanation of each category was provided in section 2.3.5.

The second objective of the study is to examine Halal cosmetic consumers perception towards the discourse of Halal cosmetics in newspapers and magazines articles. Conducting interviews is necessary to answer the second research question, as qualitative methods can be used to gather in-depth insights, obtain data through open-ended and conversational communication, as well as focus on gaining insights and understanding about an individual's perception of an event (Austin & Sutton, 2014).

3.2 Data Source and Sampling

3.2.1 Malaysian Newspapers and Magazines

The textual data was collected from two online media sources in Malaysia which are newspapers and magazines. As for the newspapers, the data were obtained from four Malaysian online newspapers namely – *The Malay Mail*, *The Sun Daily*, *The Star* and *The News Straits Times*. As the newspapers data on the topic of Halal cosmetics, in particular, was found to be insufficient, a convenient sampling method was adopted to collect data from Malaysian magazines that have covered the topic of Halal cosmetics. The magazines include – *Asia Tatler*, *Beauty Insider*, *Female Magazine*, *Marie Claire*, *Clozette*, and *Cleo*. The selected newspapers are the topmost frequently read major nationwide English-language newspapers in Malaysia (Mediapod, 2022), and the selected magazines are found to be the only English fashion and beauty magazines which have covered Halal cosmetics. A total of fifteen newspapers articles (Table 3.1) and eleven magazine articles (Table 3.2) were found to have covered the topic of Halal cosmetics. The duration of data publication spans from the year 2016 to 2021. What is more, having analysed the collected data, the analysis shows no new information with regards to the patterns of languages as well as the legitimization strategies. Therefore, it was concluded that the necessary level of saturation was achieved. From both online newspapers and magazines, the keywords used to find the related discourses are “Halal cosmetic”, “lipsticks”, “makeup”, “nail polish”, and “skincare”. From the newspapers search, it was

observed that the topic of Halal cosmetics was mentioned and discussed in the lifestyle section. The search results in both media produced quite a number of articles, however a selection of articles through manual checking was made to avoid unrelated or non-pertinent articles to be included in the data. Figure 3.1 shows the example of search repository from one of the online newspapers, *The Star*, and the search result shows the number of articles related to Halal cosmetics that can be sorted out by newest, oldest, or relevant articles.

Table 3.1 : Halal cosmetics discourse in Malaysian newspapers

Newspapers	Title	Abbreviation
<p>Malay Mail</p> <p>April 17, 2016</p> <p>https://www.malaymail.com/news/life/2016/04/17/Halal-makeup-muslim-beauty-without-the-beast/1101765</p>	<p>Halal makeup: Muslim beauty without the best</p>	MM 1
<p>Malay Mail</p> <p>September 2, 2016</p> <p>https://www.malaymail.com/news/money/2016/09/02/consumer-giants-court-muslims-with-Halal-face-creams-shampoos/1197135</p>	<p>Consumer giants court Muslim with Halal products.</p>	MM 2
<p>Malay Mail</p> <p>April 9, 2017</p> <p>https://www.malaymail.com/news/life/2017/04/09/let-your-light-shine-with-prettypsuci-a-Halal-beauty-portal/1351717</p>	<p>Let your light shine with Pretty Suci, a Halal beauty portal</p>	MM 3
<p>Malay Mail</p> <p>April 23, 2017</p> <p>https://www.malaymail.com/news/life/2017/04/23/looking-good-with-so.lek/1361955</p>	<p>Looking good with SO.LEK</p>	MM 4

Table 3.1: continued

Newspapers	Title	Abbreviation
<p>Malay Mail</p> <p>September 1, 2019</p> <p>https://www.malaymail.com/news/money/2019/09/01/hdc-malaysias-Halal-cosmetics-personal-care-products-in-high-demand-in-indi/1786283</p>	<p>HDC: Malaysia's Halal cosmetics, personal care products in high demand in India</p>	MM 5
<p>The Star</p> <p>October 13, 2017</p> <p>https://www.thestar.com.my/lifestyle/style/2017/10/13/rising-demand-Halal-cosmetics</p>	<p>The rising demand for Halal cosmetic</p>	TS 1
<p>The Star</p> <p>July 15, 2019</p> <p>https://www.thestar.com.my/lifestyle/life-inspired/2019/07/15/natasha-ozeir-tengku-kaiyisah-pretty-suci</p>	<p>Pretty Suci founders prove best friends can work together</p>	TS 2
<p>The Star</p> <p>August 12, 2021</p> <p>https://www.thestar.com.my/lifestyle/style/2021/08/12/the-universal-appeal-of-muslim-beauty</p>	<p>The universal appeal of Muslim beauty</p>	TS 3
<p>The New Straits Times</p> <p>October 14, 2016</p> <p>https://www.nst.com.my/news/2016/10/180318/matrade-targets-beauty-products-contribute-5-cent</p>	<p>Matrade targets beauty products to contribute 5 per cent</p>	NST 1
<p>The New Straits Times</p> <p>April 17, 2017</p> <p>https://www.nst.com.my/lifestyle/bots/2017/04/231355/millennial-lady</p>	<p>The millennial lady</p>	NST 2
<p>The News Straits Times</p> <p>January 17, 2018</p>	<p>Rise of local cosmetic brands</p>	NST 3

https://www.nst.com.my/lifestyle/flair/2018/01/325908/rise-local-cosmetic-brands		
The New Straits Times May 2, 2018 https://www.nst.com.my/business/2018/05/364664/beauarti-expansion-drive	Beauarti on expansion drive	NST 4
The New Straits Times May 29, 2019 https://www.nst.com.my/lifestyle/flair/2019/05/492252/Halal-beauty-next-big-thing	Halal beauty: the next big thing	NST 5
The Sun Daily June 17, 2018 https://www.thesundaily.my/archive/orkid-cosmetics-talks-angel-investors-eyes-foreign-markets-IUARCH556393	Orkid cosmetics in talks with angel investors, eyes foreign markets	TSD 1
The Sun Daily June 26, 2018 https://www.thesundaily.my/archive/faith-beauty-DUARCH559018	Faith in beauty	TSD 2

Table 3.2: Halal cosmetics discourse in Malaysian magazines

Magazines	Title	Abbreviation
Beauty Insider, dated April 1, 2019 https://beautyinsider.my/Halal-skincare/	The 13 best Halal skincare brands in Malaysia for you to try!	BI
Asia Tatler dated August 8, 2016 https://my.asiatatler.com/style/Halal-makeup-zahara-amira-geneid	Breaking down Halal makeup with Zahara by Amia Geneid	AT 1
Asia Tatler dated June 29, 2017 https://my.asiatatler.com/style/inside-the-grand-launch-of-royalty-endorsed-Halal-beauty-portal-pretysuci	Inside the grand launch of Royalty-Endorsed Halal beauty portal	AT 2
Asia Tatler dated June 6, 2018 https://my.asiatatler.com/style/10-beauty-brands-founded-by-malaysia-cool-girls-that-are-Halal-too	10 Halal beauty brands founded by cool Malaysian girls	AT 3

Female magazine dated April 5, 2017 https://femalemag.com.my/beauty/7-malaysian-beauty-products-check/3/	7 Malaysia beauty brands to check out.	FM 1
Female magazine dated April 6, 2017 https://femalemag.com.my/beauty/malaysias-first-Halal-beauty-online-store/	Malaysia's first Halal beauty online store is here.	FM 2
Female magazine dated October 1, 2019 https://femalemag.com.my/mysuperfemale/nor-raesa/	#MYSUPERFEMALE: Nor Raesa syahirah – founder of Orkid cosmetics	FM 3
Marie Claire dated March 30, 2017 https://marieclaire.com.my/beauty/pretty-suci-launches-first-Halal-beauty-online-store/	Pretty Suci launches first Halal beauty online store	MC
Clozette dated August 15, 2018 https://www.clozette.co/article/homegrown-malaysian-beauty-brands-4307	Home grown Malaysian beauty brands you should know about	CLO 1
Clozette dated July 31, 2019 https://www.clozette.co/article/malaysian-beauty-brands-founders-interview-5641	Meet the ladies behind up-and-coming beauty brands in Malaysia	CLO 2
Cleo dated March 23, 2017 https://cleo.com.my/beauty/get-Halal-cosmetics-one-place-prettypsuci/	Get all of your Halal cosmetics all in one place at Pretty Suci	CL

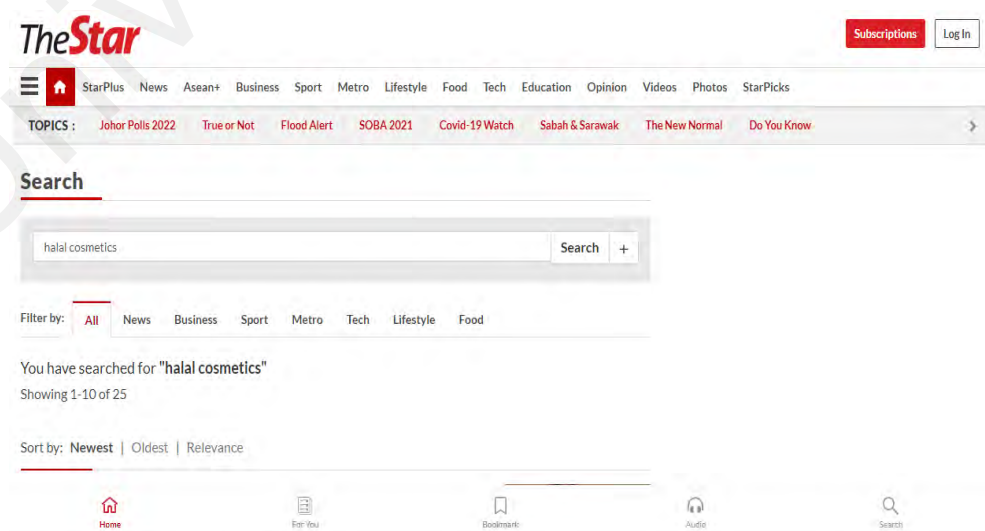


Figure 3.1: The Star Online Search Repository

3.2.2 Interview

This study uses an in-depth unstructured interview to examine how the language of Halal in newspapers and magazines is perceived by the Halal cosmetics consumers. Unstructured interview was chosen for the flexibility factor compared to structured interview, as it needs to reflect the findings from the textual analysis. An unstructured interview also relies on spontaneous and natural flow of interaction (Patton, 2022), which is in line with the second objective of this study. A purposive sampling was used for this study as the participants were selected based on specific requirements such as having a good understanding of English, being able to speak English fluently, and are able to express opinions in a reflective manner. More importantly, they need to be Malaysian Muslim women who consume Halal cosmetic products. For this study, thirteen Halal cosmetic consumers, aged from 28 to 39 years old were interviewed individually in the period of two weeks, from 10th to 20th June 2021.

3.3 Analytical Procedures

3.3.1 Analytical Procedures of Textual Analysis

The process of analysis starts with reading of articles. A thorough reading has been carried out to choose the right articles for the present study. Once the articles were selected from both newspapers and magazines, all the relevant sentences and paragraphs on Halal cosmetics were segmented to facilitate the process of analysis, and the gathered excerpts from selected articles are stored in Google Docs. Reading of the articles and excerpts were carried repeatedly to avoid misanalysis, and to ensure the correct analysis based on the theory used. The analysis of different legitimation and (de)legitimation strategies were conducted manually. Annotation of the data was conducted at semantic level based on the socio-semantic approach. The length of each annotation varies from words to phrases and, to sentences, depending on the starting and ending positions of each message. Due to the hermeneutic nature of the meaning-forming process, there is no fixed

list of linguistic units (lexical, grammatical, rhetorical devices, etc.) for each social semantic category. Important units in excerpts were highlighted in different colours according to different strategies found, and were rearranged in the table, according to the strategies. The title of the articles, the date of publication, and the number of paragraphs were also saved. For ease of analysis, the name of the newspapers and magazines were abbreviated i.e. *The Star* (TS), *Female Magazine* (FM), and for different articles from the same newspapers and magazines, the articles were numbered according to date of publication i.e., TS1, TS2, FM1, FM2 (see Table 3.1 and Table 3.2). The selected excerpts from the table are then analysed according to Van Leeuwen's (2008) overall framework of socio-semantic approach of legitimation to analyse the legitimation strategies employed by the authors on how Halal is represented in the news media.

3.3.2 Research Procedures of Interview

Pilot interviews were conducted before the actual interview to ensure the effectiveness of the interview questions. The result of the pilot interview showed that the interview participants need to be chosen carefully. In other words, not every Malaysian Halal cosmetic consumers can participate in the interview, but only consumers that possess good English language skills in both comprehension and spoken. Participants who did not have the requirements were observed to have had difficulties in understanding not only the questions, but also the excerpts from the newspapers and magazines. The pilot experience also helped in improving the structure of the interview questions and the organization of the excerpts.

The selected participants were briefed on the flow of the interview, starting with an introduction of the research objectives and the research consent. A slide was shared on the screen which included the interview questions, along with excerpts of articles according to the different strategies of legitimation. The interview questions were

developed and divided into six different parts, according to six different legitimization strategies, namely impersonal authority, expert authority, authority of conformity, moral evaluation, instrumental rationalization as well as (de)legitimation. For each strategy of (de)legitimation, participants were given two to three excerpts from the selected discourses that had been analysed according to the strategies, and they were asked three same questions repeatedly throughout the interview: firstly, what do they think about the texts, secondly, their perception towards the excerpts, and thirdly, the effects that the excerpts have on them. The interviews took between thirty minutes to forty-five minutes and each interview was recorded using Google Meet or Microsoft Teams. These two mediums of recording were selected based on the preference of the researcher and the interview participants. The participants were aware of the recording and their consent had been taken before conducting the interview. Once the interviews ended, all the recorded interviews were stored in Google Drive for the following step, which is the transcription.

3.3.2.1 Transcription

For this study, the transcription of the interviews was completed manually using Google Docs. In comparison to other online word processor such as Microsoft Words, the usage of Google Docs can ease the tracking of work as it can automatically save the transcribed interviews and can be stored together with the recording in Google Drive. Repeating, rewatching, and relistening to the recorded interview videos are necessary in achieving a perfect transcription of interviews. A thematic analysis was carried out once all the transcription steps of the interviews were fulfilled.

3.3.2.2 Demographic Profile

A total of thirteen Halal cosmetics consumers were involved in the interview process. Below are the demographic profile of each participant including their age, profession, education level, religion, and sex. Each participant is labelled as Consumer 1 to Consumer

13 in the data analysis and the date of the conduction of the interview is listed in the table below.

Table 3.3: Participants' Demographic Profile

Consumer	Age	Profession	Education Level	Religion	Sex	Date of Interview
Consumer 1 (C1)	29	Writer	Bachelor's Degree	Islam	Female	16 th June 2021
Consumer 2 (C2)	36	Tourism Lecturer	Master's Degree	Islam	Female	16 th June 2021
Consumer 3 (C3)	29	Marketing Lecturer	Bachelor's Degree	Islam	Female	18 th June 2021
Consumer 4 (C4)	29	Postgraduate Student	Master's Degree	Islam	Female	11 th June 2021
Consumer 5 (C5)	39	Event Lecturer	Master's Degree	Islam	Female	20 th June 2021
Consumer 6 (C6)	29	Marketing Executive	Master's Degree	Islam	Female	10 th June 2021
Consumer 7 (C7)	29	Quantity Surveyor	Bachelor's Degree	Islam	Female	19 th June 2021
Consumer 8 (C8)	30	French Language Teacher	Bachelor's Degree	Islam	Female	11 th June 2021
Consumer 9 (C9)	29	Business Development Executive	Bachelor's Degree	Islam	Female	10 th June 2021
Consumer 10 (C10)	29	Payroll Analyst	Bachelor's Degree	Islam	Female	19 th June 2021
Consumer 11 (C11)	29	Doctor	Bachelor's Degree	Islam	Female	19 th June 2021
Consumer 12 (C12)	29	Screening Analyst	Bachelor's Degree	Islam	Female	19 th June 2021

Consumer 13 (C13)	28	Marketing Executive	Bachelor's Degree	Islam	Female	19 th June 2021
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3.4 Data Analysis

3.4.1 Textual Analysis using Van Leeuwen Legitimation Strategies

The micro analysis at the textual analysis begins with the various grammatical resources that involve lexicalisation, modality and nominalization. These linguistic aspects help in analysing the different (de)legitimation strategies employed by the authors of the news media. The (de)legitimation strategies provided by Van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic approach is chosen to analyse the data, while taking the overall framework of discursive construction to relate the strategies to the social practices. This approach assists in analysing the discursive strategies employed to (de)legitimize Halal cosmetics discourse so as to address the research objective. Legitimation provides answers to what van Leeuwen (2008, p. 105) questioned, "Why should we do this in this way?" Van Leeuwen's framework consists of four major categories of legitimation: authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization, and mythopoesis. Figure 3.2 summarizes the four major categories of (de)legitimation strategies and its subtypes adapted from van Leeuwen (2008) socio-semantic approach.

Authorization: legitimation by making reference to tradition, custom, and law, and of persons in whom the institutional authority of some kind is vested. It consists of six different subtypes namely *personal*, *expert*, *role model*, *impersonal*, *tradition*, and *conformity*.

Moral evaluation: legitimation by taking a specific society's value orders into account, explicitly or implicitly by referring to society's value systems, using *evaluation* (express the actions of morals), *comparison* (compares an activity that belongs to one social practice to another social practice in the given socio-cultural context), or *abstraction* (express moral evaluations in abstract ways).

Rationalization: legitimation that is linked to the discourse of moral values, by referring to *goals, means, and effects* of institutionalized social action of how things should be. Instrumental rationalization legitimizes social practices by purpose or purposeful action and theoretical rationalization legitimizes social practices or social actions by stating them as “natural”.

Mythopoesis: legitimation conveyed through narratives whose outcomes reward legitimate actions and punish non-legitimate actions, such as ethical or cautionary tales.

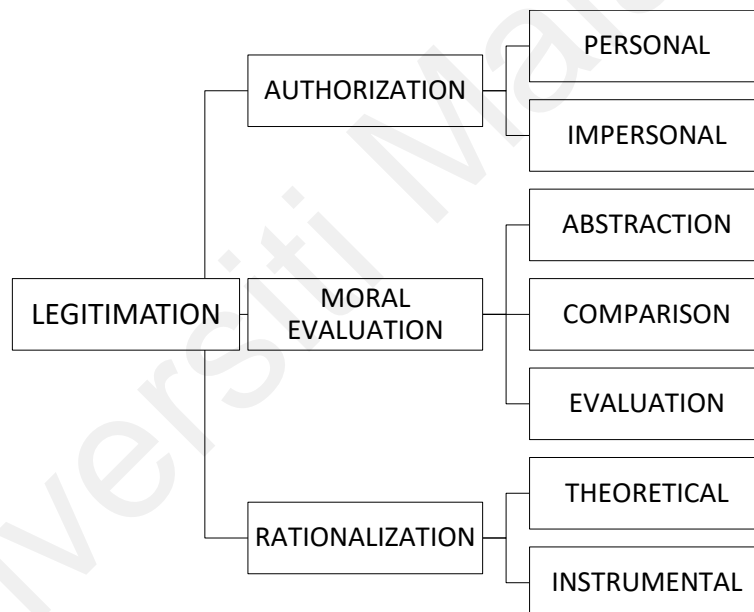


Figure 3.2: The socio-semantic approach to (de)legitimation strategies (adapted from van Leeuwen 2008, p. 109–119)

As presented in Chapter 2, mythopoesis strategy was not relevant to the current study sample and therefore was excluded from the data analysis. For authorization strategy, the analysis includes in finding excerpts that have mentioned different names of laws and authoritative bodies, names of experts or professionals, customs and traditions that

involve Halal cosmetics. As for the strategy of moral evaluation, the analysis has been conducted by referring to excerpts with moral values related to Halal cosmetics such as the usage of evaluative adjectives used to portray Halal cosmetics. Concerning rationalization strategy, the analysis includes the definition of Halal cosmetics in the excerpts, as well as analysing the *goals*, *means*, and *effects* contributed to Halal cosmetics.

3.4.2 Analysis of the Emerging Themes

The analysis of Halal cosmetics in newspapers and magazines does not stop at the strategies of (de)legitimation used in picturing Halal cosmetics. The textual analysis also includes the analysis of themes from the collected data. As the data was collected and analysed, the researcher found two themes emerging from the newspapers and magazines articles. The emerging themes are the two major discourses observed to be surrounding the topic of Halal cosmetics in both media, namely the discourse of *globalisation*, in which Halal cosmetics were constructed as having a high popularity in global Halal industry, and the discourse of *credibility*, in which Halal cosmetics are deemed to be trustworthy for consumers, especially with the Halal certification attached to it. The analysis and findings are presented according to the emerging themes. The strategies of (de)legitimation are presented and discussed in each of the two major discourses found from the textual analysis as different strategies are found from the emerging discourses.

3.4.2.1 Thematic Analysis of the Interview

There are several important components in the process of identification of the themes. Before it was thematised into final themes, reading the transcription repeatedly must be accomplished as well as filtering process to avoid missing details. For that to happen, reading, annotating, conceptualizing, and segmenting the written transcripts are the essential steps before conducting the analysis of themes. In each transcription of the interview, the important quotes from interviewees relevant to the study's objective were highlighted and were grouped into sub-themes. For this study, five sub-themes were found, and in forming the finalised themes of the findings, a thorough repetition of the same steps were conducted. The five sub-themes were then regrouped and finalised into four final themes and were named accordingly based on the major themes found. The detail analysis of the interview is presented in Chapter 4.

3.5 Ethical considerations

The selected data for the textual analysis were taken from public websites that are accessible to all web users. Therefore, informed consent is not required for the textual analysis. As for the interview, informed consent is necessary for all participants and a signature is required. The anonymity and confidentiality of the individual participants are guaranteed to belong only to the researcher and the research and will not be disclosed to anyone outside of the research team.

3.6 Summary

From this chapter, it can be summarised that the present study adopts a qualitative approach in the form of interpretative textual analysis guided by van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic approach to CDA as a theoretical framework. The discourse of Halal cosmetics from selected online Malaysian English newspapers and magazines were chosen as the data sample for the textual analysis, in examining the (de)legitimation strategies employed on how Halal cosmetics are presented in the news media. Two emerging themes were found from the news media data and were used as part of the textual analysis. This study also used an in-depth unstructured interview of thirteen Halal cosmetics consumers to examine how the language of Halal in Malaysian English online newspapers and magazines is perceived. The participants were chosen using purposive sampling, and the analysis of the interviews was conducted using thematic analysis. The detail elaboration of both findings will be explained in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter reports the results and the findings of the study after the collection of the data and research analysis. The data of this study was collected from two different sources: first, the online newspapers and magazines; and second, the unstructured interviews with consumers of Halal cosmetics. In this chapter, results from the textual analysis of online media discourse using van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic approach, followed by the thematic analysis of the interview will be discussed.

The results are primarily based on the textual analysis of the selected Malaysian English online newspapers and magazines articles, which answers the first research question, followed by the findings from the interview analysis of participants which answers the second research. In this chapter, the results of the textual analysis are revealed first, followed by the results of the interview. This chapter also provides a deeper view of the analyses, while relating them to the previous studies. More importantly, this chapter discusses the relationship between both analyses in understanding the theory used and provides a novel finding in the field of linguistics, specifically in Critical Discourse Analysis.

4.1 Emerging themes

From the textual analysis, it was found that the discourse of globalisation and the discourse of credibility were observed to be the two main discourses constructed in the news and magazine articles (de)legitimizing Halal cosmetic products. A discourse that can be produced in supporting an ideology or claiming against one is 'globalisation' (being global). The discourse is formed by mentioning public ideas, developed by social agents in order to accomplish social objectives founded on belief and social fantasy, by invoking economic and political reasoning (Fairclough and Thomas, 2004). As for credibility discourse, credibility in Halal involves every single aspect of ingredients,

materials, process, nutrition, safety, sanitation, and the whole production process, following the concept of wholesomeness (Zuhudi & Dolah, 2017). According to Suau-Jimenez (2020), credibility is a powerful marketing concept as a means towards persuasion. The manner in which Halal is defined and portrayed in the news media is essential in marketizing Halal cosmetic products by showing that the products are trustworthy.

The two discourses were identified in the Halal cosmetics discourse through identification of lexicalisation and nominalization employed in the news media. For globalisation discourse, the use of lexical expressions such as *“increasing awareness”*, *“demand in on the rise”*, *“Halal certification is a requirement”*, and *“fast gaining popularity”* as shown in Examples 1, 2, 3, and 4 construct the idea of halal being global and popular, not just in the Muslim-majority countries, but globally.

Example 1: *“...due to the increasing awareness towards using clean, organic, healthy, and safe products, especially among the young generation.”* (MM 5, p. 2)

Example 2: *“...demand from non-Muslim consumers is also on the rise.”* (MM 5, p. 14)

Example 3: *“Halal certification is a requirement that might be put in place by other countries in the future.”* (MM 2, p. 20)

Example 4: *“...Halal beauty and cosmetics products are fast gaining popularity among the Muslims around the world.”* (NST 1, p. 5)

What is more, the use of Number Game (van Dijk, 1998) has helped the researcher to better characterize the popularity of Halal in the Halal cosmetics discourse. The addition of number when discussing the prevalence of Halal market has contributed to the

argument in the media. The sales of Halal cosmetics has shown a significant increase in number which will continuously rise in the following year (Example 5), and the increase in Muslim population globally has raised a huge demand for Halal products worldwide (Example 6), contributing to the export of Halal in country such as India (Example 7).

Example 5: *“It states that Muslims’ spending on cosmetics was estimated at US\$61 billion (RM255 billion) in 2017, which will increase to US\$90 billion by 2023.”* (NST 5, p. 4)

Example 6: *“...the global Muslim population is expected to increase by 80 per cent in 2050, from 1.5 billion in 2010, indicating an increased demand for Halal products across the globe.”* (NST 5, p. 3)

Example 7: *“Statistics from the HDC Halal Datawarehouse System showed Halal exports to India jumped 12 per cent to RM1.59 billion in 2018 from RM1.43 billion in the previous year.”* (MM 5, p. 4)

Discourse of credibility can be observed when the usage of positive adjectives in the news media enhances the credibility of Halal discourse. The positively loaded lexical items such as *“safe, clean and ethical”* in Example 8, as well as *“100% natural extracts and organic ingredients”* in Example 9 portray a sense of trustworthiness on the Halal cosmetic products to the consumers.

Example 8: *“The compliance assures consumers that the product is safe, clean and ethical and can be used without any doubt.”* (NST 5, p. 19)

Example 9: *“All of their products are infused with 100% natural extracts and organic ingredients. Plus, they’re also formulated without any harmful ingredients.”* (BI, p. 12)

Additionally, modality is also employed to enhance the credibility discourse found in the news media, with lexical expressions such as “*it must not*” and “*must be made*” in Example 10 showing what is necessary and what is forbidden in a Halal product. In Example 11, negatively loaded lexical expressions including “*harmful to health*” and “contaminated with impurities” help portray Halal cosmetics positively, thus, creating a sense of trust and credibility towards readers and cosmetic consumers.

Example 10: “*This means it must not contain traces of pork, alcohol or blood, and must be made on factory lines free of contamination risk, including from cleaning.*” (MM 2, p. 7)

Example 11: “*Halal skincare or cosmetic products mean they are free from animal-derived ingredients (e.g animal fats, placenta, etc) as well as contents which are harmful to health and have not been processed using instruments contaminated with impurities such as blood, urine and faeces.*” (NST 5, p. 12)

With the elaboration of the emerging themes and how the researcher found the two main discourses constructed in the news and magazine articles (de)legitimizing Halal cosmetic products, the following section will elaborate in detail on the analysis of (de)legitimation according to van Leeuwen’s strategies in depicting the Halal cosmetics discourse in Malaysian English newspapers and magazines. The globalisation discourse will be covered first, followed by the credibility discourse.

4.2 Textual Analysis

The data gathered from various articles taken from newspapers and magazines were analysed using van Leeuwen’s (2008) socio-semantic approach. The analysis reveals that three out of four van Leeuwen’s (2008) main categories of (de)legitimation have been employed in the discourse of Halal cosmetics. They are authorization, moral evaluation,

and rationalization, whereas no instances of mythopoesis were found as this strategy is achieved through a discourse of cautionary tales (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 105), of which were not expected to be found in the data analysed. Table 4.1 reveals the main categories and the sub-categorization of (de)legitimation strategies found in the said data.

Table 4.1: Strategies of (de)legitimation and the result analysed in the study

Main Categories of (de)legitimation	Sub-categorization of (de)legitimation	Present in the articles	Absent in the articles
Authorization	Personal Authority	/	
	Expert Authority	/	
	Role Model Authority	/	
	Impersonal Authority	/	
	Authority of Conformity	/	
	Authority of Tradition		/
Moral Evaluation	Evaluation	/	
	Abstraction		/
	Comparison		/
Rationalization	Instrumental Rationalization	/	
	Theoretical Rationalization	/	

4.2.1 Globalisation Discourse: (De) legitimizing Halal Cosmetics

4.2.1.1 Authorization

Discourse of globalisation was observed to be one of the main discourses constructed in the news and magazine articles published on Halal cosmetic products. The demand for Halal cosmetics, in the articles, is constructed as being extended beyond the Muslim population to the non-Muslims globally. To legitimize the globalisation discourse, a number of legitimations by authorization strategies have been achieved through both

personal (people with a high position, an expert or people with a role) and impersonal authorities (laws, customs, and tradition). As seen in Example 12, the demand for Halal cosmetics is portrayed as being on the rise by non-Muslims. Although the production of Halal cosmetics was initially made to cater to Muslim consumers, it has also been catering to the rise in demand from non-Muslim consumers. What is more, it has been associated with some positive attributes constructed through positively loaded lexical items including “*clean, safe, and organic*”, as seen in Example 13. The global popularity of Halal cosmetics is associated with “*the increasing awareness*” towards healthier products among both communities. In both examples, the international footprint manager, Mohammad Shukur Sugumaran, (a personal authority) - has been cited, as an authority, to legitimize the positive portrayal of Halal cosmetics.

Example 12: “*Halal-certified cosmetics were initially made to cater specifically to the Muslim community, but the demand from non-Muslim consumers is also on the rise, he added*” (MM 5, p. 14)

Example 13: “*Its international footprint manager Mohammad Shukur Sugumaran said Indian importers had expressed strong interest in sourcing such product from Malaysia due to the increasing awareness towards using clean, organic, healthy and safe products, especially among the young generation.*” (MM 5, p. 2)

The increase in demand from Muslim and non-Muslim consumers therefore has created an increase in demand from producers and manufacturers of cosmetic brand globally, as seen in Example 14. The director of the Halal Hub Division of JAKIM, Datuk Dr Sirajuddin Suhaimee, has been cited as an expert authority to legitimize the positive portrayal of Halal cosmetics, with the augmentation of application of Halal certification by local and foreign cosmetic brands. In the Halal sector, JAKIM is known worldwide as an organisation that has one of the best Halal managements, and its name appeared

persistently in three out of four selected newspapers. This explains the high position held by the expert mentioned in the news media in legitimizing Halal cosmetics in the discourse of globalisation. Similarly in Example 15, Natasha (role model authority), the founder of one of the local Halal cosmetic brands employed the lexical expressions such as “*more and more*” and “*mass produced*” to legitimize the global popularity of Halal cosmetics and convince both consumers and producers to start consuming and producing Halal cosmetics, as the price can become competitively increasing in the future.

Example 14: “*Datuk Dr Sirajuddin Suhaimie, director of the Halal Hub Division of JAKIM, confirms that JAKIM (Malaysian Islamic Development Department) has seen an increase in applications by local and foreign cosmetic brands seeking Halal certification.*” (TS 1, p. 4)

Example 15: “*More and more Halal products are becoming competitively priced because they are becoming mass produced already,*” said Natasha.” (MM 3, p. 8)

In so far the impersonal authority is concerned, Halal cosmetics is legitimized based on laws and customs. Impersonal authority describes commands given by a non-person such as laws, rules and regulations. The power to legitimate or delegitimate depends on the rules and the policies stated by one organisation or one country. The high demand for Halal products, coming from both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers globally, is also legitimized further by the authority of conformity (impersonal authority), where the majority follows what the majority does. Consuming Halal cosmetics has been pictured as a global lifestyle choice as the consumers believe that the products are “*safer and cleaner*” as seen in Example 16. The discourse of globalisation is legitimized by customs, and it is realized through the expression “*many women*”. Example 17 concurs with Example 16 when the usage of lexical expression “*a lot of people*” (conformity authority) is employed, indicating a majority of consumers who are in favour of Halal concept, and

cosmetics that are certified as Halal are portrayed positively with the usage of loaded lexical items such as “*organic and vegan*”. As van Leeuwen (2008, p. 97) points out “*if most people are doing it, it cannot be wrong*”. This can then be attributed to the construction of the credibility of cosmetics products that have fulfilled the Sharia law-based requirements (authority of law) set by the Malaysian JAKIM in Example 18; the processes, the ingredients, and the packaging used in producing the products have to go through stringent procedures to be certified as Halal before they were distributed to the market. As Shariah law has its roots in the religion of Islam, cosmetic products have been described as permissible only if they fulfil the conditions set by the law as well as JAKIM as the authoritative institution, enhanced by making use of the modality “*must*”.

Example 16: “*Not just Muslim women but globally many women are swapping their holy grail skincare products for more Shariah-compliant ones mainly because Halal products are safer and cleaner.*” (BI, p. 1)

Example 17: “*I like the concept of Halal, because a lot of people are looking for organic, vegan products.*” (TSD 1, p. 8)

Example 18: “*Halal cosmetics and personal care products including the accessories, are products permitted under Shariah law and must fulfil certain condition,*” (TS 1, p. 5)

While impersonal and personal authorization strategies have been used in legitimizing the discourse of globalisation, only impersonal authority has been used to delegitimize the same discourse in the news on Halal cosmetics. Non-Halal cosmetic products are presented as unpopular by stating that many Muslim consumers (authority of conformity) tend to avoid consuming prohibited products. Non-Halal cosmetic products have been associated with some negative attributes constructed through negatively loaded lexical items including “*prohibited*” and negation of intention in “*not going to buy*” as seen in

Example 19. In Example 20, cosmetic products that are not certified as Halal are constructed to be meeting a “backlash” although the products had followed the labelling law stated by the authoritative institutions.

Example 19: *“The average Muslim consumer in Indonesia is not going to buy something that effectively says prohibited on it.”* (MM 2, p. 27)

Example 20: *“Non-Halal products will remain available in Indonesia following the labeling law but may meet a backlash.”* (MM 2, p. 26)

4.2.1.2 Rationalization

Rationalization strategy, which is either theoretical or instrumental, is also used to legitimize Halal cosmetics in the discourse of globalisation. The instrumental rationalization is associated with “utilitarianism and pragmatism” (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 102). The strategy can be divided into goals orientation, means orientation, and effect orientation. Goal orientation stresses “the outcome of an action”; the means orientation stresses the construction of purpose “in the action”; and effect orientation presents purposefulness as something that ‘turns out to exist’ (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 102-103). In Example 21, Halal has been portrayed as an important attribute in ensuring the consumers of the quality of products through means orientation where Halal is the means of consumers’ decision to purchase. The (majority of the) consumers have been described as gaining assurance towards the quality of the products through Halal (means).

Example 21: *“The majority of the consumers do not know if the product comes from animal-based ingredients or not. So when they see the Halal product, they buy it,”* (MM 1, p. 8)

Besides consumers, the global popularity of Halal legitimizes cosmetics producer and manufacturers in marketizing Halal cosmetics. The manufacturers must ensure that their

products comply with the requirements, and in order to do that, manufacturing facilities are set up in Muslim countries to keep up with the market growth of Halal (means). An example of goal orientation can be seen where the purpose clause with “to” is used in the phrase “*an effort to*” and “*to supply*” (Example 22). The aims of international and local skincare brands are first, to ensure Halal and cruelty-free products, and second, to supply Halal ingredients by setting up manufacturing facilities in Muslim countries. It is a generalized action; legitimizing the importance and demand of Halal globally. What is more, the popularity of Halal has created an opportunity for global producers and manufactures in doing the “*research and development on Halal cosmetics*” as seen in Example 23. The Halal cosmetics industry is becoming a major economic engine in the country and internationally, and a catalyst for local players to enter the global Halal market and turn it into a viable venture serving both Muslims and non-Muslims.

Example 22: “*Many international and local skincare brands have and are making an effort to ensure their products are Halal and cruelty-free. Some have set up manufacturing facilities in Muslim countries like Indonesia and Bangladesh to supply or use ingredients that are in compliant with the requirements.*” (BI, p. 7)

Example 23: “*Several global industry players have upped their game to cater to Muslims and the growing market by [...] establishing a hub in Johor for research and development on Halal cosmetics, especially for consumers in the Asia.*” (NST 5, p. 7)

4.2.2 Credibility Discourse: (De) legitimizing Halal Cosmetics

4.2.2.1 Rationalization

Another discourse observed in the data in legitimizing Halal cosmetics was credibility. Legitimizing the discourse of credibility is mainly achieved through the strategy of theoretical rationalization. Theoretical rationalization involves explicit representations of “some kind of truth or on the way things are” (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 103). According to

van Leeuwen (2008), *definition*, *explanation*, and *predictions* are the three forms of theoretical rationalization. An example of *definition* can be seen in Example 24, where Halal cosmetics are defined as quality products in which only selected healthy ingredients are used. With a significative link “*mean*”, the constitution of Halal cosmetic products is portrayed positively by claiming it to be free from the negative features in a non-Halal product constructed through the negatively loaded lexical items including “*harmful*”, “*contaminated*”, “*impurities*”, “*blood, urine, and faeces*”. Not only that the ingredients must be free from any harmful substances, but a product that are certified Halal must also be free of “*ingredients derived from animals that are prohibited for Muslims by Islamic law or from animals that are not slaughtered the Halal way*” according to the Islamic practice. Religious expressions such as “*prohibited for Muslims*”, “*Islamic law*”, and “*Islamic practice*” were employed to define Halal as related to Islam as seen in Example 25, and positively portrayed Halal cosmetics as safe from materials that are declared as unclean. Example 26 concurs with the evidence from Examples 24 and 25 where the processes involved in obtaining a Halal-certified product are defined positively as being free from any contact with “*non-Halal materials*” which can be harmful to health, constructed through the negative form of the modality “*must*”.

Example 24: “*Halal skincare or cosmetic products mean they are free from animal-derived ingredients [...] as well as contents which are harmful to health and have not been processed using instruments contaminated with impurities such as blood, urine and faeces.*” (NST 5, p. 12)

Example 25: “*not containing any human parts or materials derived from it; being free of ingredients derived from animals that are prohibited for Muslims by Islamic law or from animals that are not slaughtered the Halal way; being free of any genetically*

modified organisms (GMO) materials that have been declared as unclean (najis) according to Islamic practice.” (TS 1, p. 6)

Example 26: *“He added, during the preparation, processing or manufacturing, there must be no contact (with non-Halal material).”* (TS 1, p. 8)

The same strategy of theoretical rationalization (definition) is found to be employed in delegitimizing the credibility of non-Halal cosmetics. They are defined negatively through the use of the negatively loaded lexical items including *“impure”* and *“forbidden”* as well as the negative form of modality *“cannot”*, as seen in Example 27. Non-Halal cosmetic products are delegitimized as products that contain impure substances and forbidden for Muslim consumers to use.

Example 27: *“When an animal-based product isn’t Halal [...], it’s not only forbidden to consume it but it’s also considered as impure: you cannot use it on your face, or your skin”* (MM 1, p. 3)

4.2.2.2 Moral Evaluation

Another strategy that has been employed in legitimizing the credibility of Halal cosmetics is *moral evaluation*. The strategy of moral evaluation can be divided into three sub-strategy including *evaluation*, *abstraction*, and *comparison*, and only evaluation substrategy is analysed. In evaluation, the high usage of positive adjectives helps in legitimizing a discourse. In the analysis, Halal cosmetic products are portrayed as being trustworthy through the inclusion of positively loaded lexical items such as *“vegan, organic, and cruelty-free”* as seen in Example 28. These evaluative adjectives play an important role in the legitimacy of moral evaluations as they are 'designative' and 'attributive', which not only endorse them in relation to a certain range of values but also convey a concrete quality of the product (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 98). Although *“vegan”*

may not necessarily being connotated as positive word, in the context of Halal, it is viewed as something positive to add value to Halal products. This positive representation of Halal cosmetics contributes to its construction as conforming to aspects of health by inclusion of ingredients that are beneficial beyond the aspects of beauty. Furthermore, Halal cosmetics are positively portrayed through the religious/Islamic discourse as *wuduk*-friendly, constructed through positively loaded expressions including “*easily removed*” and “*ritual purification*” as seen in Example 29. *Wuduk*-friendly makeup are makeup that can be easily removed and non-waterproof. This positive element of a Halal cosmetic product represents one of the essential elements for Muslim consumers, especially women, who are attracted to products that can be removed easily so that they can perform the ablution before performing the prayers. It is important for Muslim women to ensure a clean bare face before ablution as water needs to pass through the skin to be regarded as a proper ablution. What is more, consumers are convinced that Halal cosmetics can provide them with the feeling of looking beautiful without feeling guilty due to not compromising to Islamic practice, as Halal cosmetics guarantee a product that conforms to the overall aspects of a Muslim woman’s “*faith, health, and skin*” as seen in Example 30, which concurs with both evidence from Examples 28 and 29.

Example 28: “...*some Halal-certified beauty products also carry vegan, organic, cruelty-free or ethical tags and certifications, according to industry standards.*” (NST 5, p. 13)

Example 29: “...*their products are wuduk-friendly or easily removed for the ritual purification process before praying.*” (MM 4, p. 8)

Example 30: “*Their Halal and wuduk-friendly products (approved by JAKIM) will let their consumers feel and look beautiful without compromising their faith, health, and skin.*” (FM 1, p. 1)

4.2.2.3 Authorization

The strategy of authorization was also discovered in legitimizing the discourse of credibility of Halal cosmetics which is achieved through both personal and impersonal authorization. Halal certification is essential in claiming that a product is Halal. Without certification, producers and manufacturers may claim that their products are Halal solely based on the ingredients used, which are free from harmful substances as described previously in rationalization strategy. Therefore, it is equally important to look at how Halal certification is pictured in the news media, to better understand the credibility of Halal cosmetics products. In Example 31, the strategy of impersonal authority can be seen with different name of laws stated in the example, such as the law of “*Consumer Good – Section 1: Cosmetic and Personal Care*”, along with the decision made by the “*National Fatwa Council for Islamic Affairs*”. Along with Example 32, Halal certification is constructed to be adhering to the policy by the presence of authorities “*JAKIM*” and “*National Pharmaceutical Control Bureau (NPCB)*” in the news media in legitimizing Halal certification. The credibility discourse is further supported by the choice of positively loaded lexical items used by the author in both examples such as “*comply*”, “*must*”, “*need*”, and “*ensure*”. With different laws, guidelines or policies (authority of law) constructed positively in the news media, Halal certification is legitimized to be a trusted certification, which adds a “*layer of assurance for consumers*” having passed through many stringent standards and procedures, as seen in Example 33.

Example 31: “*Halal certification complies with the MS2200: 2008 Consumer Good – Section 1: Cosmetic and Personal Care – General Guidelines, the decision of the National Fatwa Council for Islamic Affairs and other related guidelines and regulations.*” (TS 1, p. 9)

Example 32: *“To apply for JAKIM’s Halal certification, the applicant needs to ensure that their product has been registered and has the approval letter from the National Pharmaceutical Control Bureau (NPCB).”* (TS 1, p. 8)

Example 33: *“The certification should add another layer of assurance for consumers and help us gain their confidence and trust.”* (TS 1, p. 30)

Personal authorization legitimizes the discourse of credibility of Halal cosmetics, with the help from expert authority. An expert may critique or give suggestions related to his field of expertise. In discourse of credibility, people with high position were mentioned along with their title to establish credibility, so that their discourse is acknowledged by the readers. In Example 34, Dr Sirajuddin (expert authority) was cited, with him giving recommendations to consumers on things to consider and to look at before choosing or purchasing Halal cosmetic products. Not only the expert touched on local cosmetic products, but he also included international cosmetic products, which are monopolizing the cosmetic market in Malaysia.

Example 34: *“When buying Halal cosmetic products, Dr Sirajuddin says that consumers should look for the Malaysia Halal Logo with the Malaysia Standard (MS) number and the file reference number (the last 10 digits). For international cosmetic products, they should look for the foreign Halal logo recognised by JAKIM on the product packaging.”* (TS 1, p. 12)

To summarise the textual analysis, three out of four of van Leeuwen’s (2008) socio-semantic approach was found to be employed by authors from the newspapers and magazines in legitimizing and delegitimizing Halal cosmetics discourse, and there are two main discourses observed from the analysis of the news media, including globalisation discourse and credibility discourse. Halal cosmetics were pictured to be

globally popular and credible with the help of (de)legitimation strategies employed by the authors of the news media. The analysis of the interview in the following section will help to better understand how the portrayal of Halal cosmetics in the news media is perceived by selected Halal cosmetics consumers in this country.

4.3 Consumers' Perceptions of Halal Cosmetics Discourse

Interviews with 13 participants were conducted to identify the perception of Halal cosmetic consumers towards the discourse of Halal cosmetics as portrayed in different Malaysian English online newspapers and magazine articles. The analysis of the consumers' perceptions was conducted using thematic analysis. The analysis of themes was explored by grouping various themes and subthemes into four final themes. Based on the interviews, the assembled four final themes are: 1) the benefits of Halal cosmetics; 2) the importance and credibility of Halal certification and logos; 3) the universality of Halal cosmetics; and, 4) the marketability of Halal products. Two of the final themes are similar to the two major discourses found from the textual analysis which are the popularity and the credibility of Halal.

4.3.1 Benefits of Halal Cosmetics

The first theme from the interview analysis is the *Benefits of Halal Cosmetics*. Halal is perceived to be a priority for many consumers in choosing a product as it is regarded to be more convenient and more beneficial in several ways, especially in terms of health and religion. From the news media excerpts, most participants believed that they should put Halal as the first element of a product purchase. They perceived the element of Halal as providing a healthier alternative for their skins and health, and some even perceived Halal cosmetics as a way to protect their skin from any harmful products that are widely used in the market such as mercury that has corrosive effects on the skin, although proven to have the fastest beauty effect after consuming them. The strategies of *authorization*,

moral evaluation, and *rationalization* employed by the news media authors have successfully created a perception on the interviewees to perceive Halal as beneficial for them in many aspects, especially on health, beauty, and safety of their skins. From all the benefits stated, consumers believed and are convinced that Halal cosmetic products are safer and cleaner to use in comparison with other products in the market and that they are simply the best for the skin and health. Consumers 8, 11, and 1 perceived Halal cosmetics as “*good for health and skin*”, “*the best product*” and “*good product*” to consume, with the usage of positive adjectives “*good*” and “*best*”. Consumers 8, 11, 2 and 4 highlighted the aspect of safety in using Halal cosmetics by providing some positively loaded lexical expressions and adjectives including “*it’s safe*”, “*complete, clean and safe*”, “*protect yourself from intoxicated products*”, “*Halal products should be way safer*”, and “*there are no harm or dirty things*”. It is clear that the news media has successfully portrayed Halal positively by presenting abundant advantages of Halal for consumers’ skin health and safety.

“*Halal product is good for health and skin*”. “*it convinces me that Halal is more than just the ingredients, it also means that it’s safe, and is a good product*”. (Consumer 8)

“*complete, clean and safe*”, “*it’s the best product you can choose*” (Consumer 11)

“*it helps to protect yourself from intoxicated products*”. (Consumer 4)

“*Halal products should be way safer especially when there are no ingredients on animal parts.*” (Consumer 2)

“*Halal cosmetic products are a good product and provide me a sense of belief, knowing that there are no harm or dirty things around the places, or anything that will give me a sense of shubhah (doubt) that it is Halal.*” (Consumer 1).

On top Halal cosmetics being a good, safe, and healthy product for consumers and is beneficial for skin, Halal cosmetics are also perceived to be satisfying consumers' needs in term of performing their religious duties, such as prayers. When the element of *wuduk*-friendly cosmetic products is portrayed positively in the news media by moral evaluation strategy of legitimation, many consumers believed that Halal cosmetics provide convenience to them, especially when majority of the consumers are modern working Muslim women – who wanted to look good in the society – and at the same time, wanting to do best in practicing and committing their religious obligations. Before praying, Muslims need to perform ablution to clean their face and certain body parts. They need to ensure that water passes through their skin, without having any residues on the skin such as makeup or cream. Since many Muslim women use cosmetics daily, they need a product that can be easily removed and easily reapplied. In the excerpts taken from the news media articles, Halal *wuduk*-friendly cosmetics were portrayed to make consumers' life easier and believing that choosing the right cosmetics is a part of adhering to their faith as a Muslim. Consumer 9 described the perception of Halal cosmetic products on the excerpt as “*very engaging and very attractive*” and Consumer 6 underlined that choosing Halal cosmetic products “*is a part of the faith*”.

“I love the statement of a wuduk-friendly product which is very engaging and very attractive.” (Consumer 9)

“One way to choose the product is when the consumer finds it easy to apply and easy for them to use whenever they want to perform wuduk (ablution). That is a part of the faith” (Consumer 6).

Another important benefit of Halal cosmetics perceived by the consumers is the lifestyle of a Muslim, catering to their needs in the daily life. For majority of the Halal cosmetic consumers, the excerpts from the news media have given them a perception on

the Halal cosmetic products in which the products not only cater to their basic needs, but also caters to their faith towards the religion. As Consumer 9 mentioned in her interview, the excerpts from the news media make her realize the importance of Halal cosmetics that satisfies her faith in the expression “*satisfies my requirement... and my faith*”. The usage of verb “*satisfies*” provides a positive reflection of Halal cosmetics portrayed in the news media. Since all the consumers interviewed are Muslim women, they perceived Halal cosmetics to be one of the ways to live their daily life by being more faithful to the religion, more conscious in consuming a product, and being a more responsible Muslim consumer. To them, Halal certification made it easier for Muslims in choosing a product. Halal cosmetics were portrayed in the news media as completing their lifestyle needs, especially for working women like all the participants involved. The phrases such as “*religious responsibilities as Muslims*”, “*the process of being Muslim*”, and “*how we live our daily life*” from Consumers 4, 11, and 13 illustrate the effects of legitimation strategies employed by the news media authors in legitimizing Halal cosmetics on the consumers.

“this actually satisfies my requirement when buying Halal products and my faith in buying Halal products is higher” (Consumer 9)

“Halal is actually a way of how Muslims are trying to follow their religious responsibilities as Muslims” (Consumer 4);

“not only the product itself but how the product can help consumer to ease the process of being Muslim itself.” (Consumer 11, doctor).

“How we live our daily life, how we actually take our faith is what influence us to choose the products that we use.” (Consumer 13).

Additionally, the presentation of Halal cosmetics in the news media has created a larger awareness to the consumers, where the information of Halal cosmetics is constructed positively, the benefits are highlighted, and the definition of Halal are pictured to be beneficial in so many ways using all three legitimation strategies. Consumer 10 felt that it is necessary to “*study more and be more conscious*” on the products that we consume. The strategies used by the news media authors have created more awareness for consumers in becoming more curious about Halal cosmetic products.

“*it affects me to also study more and be more conscious about my products, how it’s made, and the manufacturing.*” (Consumer 10)

4.3.2 Importance and Credibility of Halal Certification and Logo

The second theme extracted from the interview analysis is the credibility of Halal certification and logo. Most of the interviewees perceived that Halal products are trustworthy after reading the example of excerpts taken from various news media articles. Mentioning different laws and regulations on getting Halal certification is legitimized through the strategies of authorization, moral evaluation, and rationalization. The majority regarded the process of getting the Halal certification as strict, with many guidelines, laws, and regulations to follow, making Halal products much more trustworthy. Consumer 7 claimed that she perceived the process of acquiring a Halal certification as difficult, involving many processes in acquiring the certification before the products can be marketed. Consumer 7 employed the adjectives “*confident*” and “*trustworthy*” that reflect the credibility of Halal certification. For Consumer 1, reading the news media excerpts has provided her a “*sense of belief*” that having a Halal certification on a product assures the consumers that the process of producing the product is clean and clear from any doubt. She highlighted the phrase “*sense of belief*” twice in

the interview, expressing her trustworthiness of Halal certification after reading the excerpts.

“To get the Halal certification is not easy and we know the guidelines are very strict. Somehow as a consumer you feel confident that the product is trustworthy”. (Consumer 7)

“it provides me a sense of belief, knowing that Halal cosmetic products, assure that the organizations in the text have provided the best Halal products, and also provide me a sense of belief, knowing that there are no harm or dirty things around the places, or anything that will give me a sense of shubhah (doubt) that it is Halal” (Consumer 1)

What is more, having a Halal certification means that the products were labeled with a Halal logo as well. Products labelled with a Halal logo translates to products that have gone through all the processes required in obtaining Halal certification. Consumers 12 and 1 agreed that it is essential to show the Halal logo on the products as it is considered one important element for Muslim consumers. They perceived that with the Halal logo shown on the product, it is evident that the product has gone through many stringent processes in getting the certification. For several consumers, the authors of the texts were trying to not only promote the importance of the Halal logo, but also highlight the credibility of Halal certification. Especially in Malaysia where JAKIM (impersonal authority) is the main authoritative body for Halal certification, any products that have logos certified or recognized by JAKIM are much more trustworthy. That is one of the reasons why Consumer 1 used the phrase *“recognized by JAKIM”* in describing the credibility of JAKIM’ Halal logo, while Consumer 12 employed the phrase *“Halal logo is very important”* in showcasing the necessity of Halal logo on a product.

“Even though there are a lot of process, a lot of products in the store are having the logo, showing that the Halal logo is very important especially for Muslims.” (Consumer 12)

“any product that have Halal logo, or is recognised by JAKIM, it is the best product to purchase because it has undergone a very thorough process to get certified” (Consumer 1).

Besides the stringent process of Halal certification, the majority of the interviewees perceived that the ingredients used in producing Halal cosmetics are equivalently important. As seen in the textual analysis from the news media, the definition of Halal cosmetics are products that are free from any non-Halal materials such as animals that are not slaughtered according to Islamic practice, and any products that are declared as unclean. The interviewees believe that it is essential to choose Halal cosmetic products as they do not contain any animal-derived ingredients and are safer, cleaner, and indubitable than non-Halal-certified cosmetic products.

The way Halal cosmetics are being defined and portrayed in the news media, with the application of positively loaded lexical items, highlights the importance of having thorough processes of Halal certification. This begins from selecting the ingredients to manufacturing and packaging of the products, therefore, increasing the credibility of Halal certification and logo, as what Consumers 1 and 3 had cited during the interview: *“every step of the product being made [...] is Halal”* and *“no harmful ingredients”*.

“Knowing that in every step of the product being made from choosing the ingredients, manufacturing, storing, and selling the product is Halal and away from unethical practices. It brings no harm to others or myself, and it is created using the finest ingredients” (Consumer 1)

“I believe that having a Halal logo actually makes me more comfortable to use the product. So, I will feel like it has no harmful ingredients”. (Consumer 3)

From this thematic analysis, it is proven that the majority of Halal cosmetic consumers perceived that Halal certification and logos provide a sense of trustworthiness on Halal cosmetic products as it was constructed positively in the news media, with the presence of positively loaded lexical items and expressions, as well as the presence of different laws and guidelines. The consumers had also provided some positively loaded lexical expressions on credibility when they explained their perceptions towards the discourse of Halal cosmetics shown from the excerpts such as *“you feel confident”*, *“the product is trustworthy”*, *“it convinced me”*, and *“provide me a sense of belief”*.

4.3.3 Universality of Halal Cosmetics

As shown in the textual analysis with the emergence of the globalisation discourse, there is a rise in demand for Halal cosmetics globally. Similarly, while analyzing the perception of cosmetic consumers on the issue of Halal cosmetics, it was also found that the majority of the interviewed consumers viewed Halal cosmetic products as globally popular, not necessarily targeted just for Muslim-majority countries or Muslim consumers but also non-Muslim consumers globally. The participants agreed that Halal used to be stereotyped in the food and beverages sectors only, probably due to its nature as the most essential sector. What we eat or drink is more important than what we wear or put on our skin, as many people had perceived in previous decades before. Consumers 8 and 7 highlighted in their citations that *“Halal could also be for everything”* and *“it is implicating everything”*. The lexical item *“everything”* is repeated here showing that Halal is not just about what we consume, but also about our appearance, relationship, and lifestyle. As Consumer 9 cited, *“Halal covers all the categories of our daily life”*, the expression is similar to the adjective *“everything”* pictured by the other two consumers.

Additionally, Consumer 5 highlighted that Halal includes “*a wide range of services and products*”, like Halal cosmetics and skincare.

“*people tend to think that Halal is only for food, but Halal could also be for everything: cosmetics, skincare or any products that we used*”. (Consumer 8),

“*Halal itself means permissible. So, it is implicating everything, our lifestyle, our friendship...Halal is generic*”. (Consumer 7).

“*Halal covers all the categories of our daily life.*” (Consumer 9).

“*It means that Halal isn't limited to food but also to a wide range of services and products*”. (Consumer 5)

In the selected Malaysian English online newspapers and magazine articles, Halal cosmetics were positively constructed as universal, catering to both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers, especially women. Many of the participants perceived that Halal should not just be related to Islam or Muslims as it provides many benefits for daily life to other people as well. Although initially Halal cosmetics were made to cater to the needs of Muslims, they are now made to cater to everyone's needs as portrayed by the news media authors. Halal cosmetics are pictured to be not different from other cosmetics, except that they are a healthier and better option. The adjective “*approachable*” is employed by Consumer 6 in exhibiting her perception of Halal's universality, on top of another adjective “*accepted*” to indicate that Halal should be for all. Consumer 8 on the other hand focused on negative sentences in the phrases “*it is not only for Muslims*” and “*it's not something religious*” as her perception towards Halal products is not necessarily related to the religion of Islam, but rather, a different perspective of makeup. For Consumer 5, she perceived that the texts on Halal cosmetics expose a new image of Halal especially for the non-Muslims.

“Halal beauty is practically approachable. It's not something that is different from anything. It should be accepted by all communities” (Consumer 6)

“Sometimes people tend to relate Halal as something related to Muslims. Of course, it is related to us, but it is not only for Muslims. It's not something religious. It opens a different perspective” (Consumer 8)

“the author is trying to elaborate and explain the Halal term not only to Muslims, but also to non-Muslims out there” (Consumer 5)

Different legitimation strategies used by the authors have successfully created a different positive perception of Halal as universal. The other aspect of Halal cosmetics presented by the online news media is *organic* and *vegan*. Since Halal cosmetics avoid any animal-based ingredients and are free from any animal cruelty, in other words, animals are not used as an experiment, the majority of the consumers believed that Halal cosmetics are not religious, but rather a lifestyle choice, akin to veganism. Organic and vegan cosmetic products are widely marketized in the market, providing benefit for the environment and health. By employing the strategy of moral evaluation, many evaluative adjectives related to veganism have been concentrated in the online news media, as a way of attracting potential consumers. Therefore, Halal cosmetics are perceived by many consumers as beneficial for those who are looking for vegan products that provide a safer overall process and production. What is more, the discourse of Halal cosmetics is perceived to be a big trend, as many cosmetic brands are following the mainstream demand for Halal cosmetic products in the market. The phrase *“on par with the mainstream cosmetic products”* by Consumer 11 elucidates that Halal is on trend with other non-Halal cosmetic products that are also emphasizing organic ingredients and avoid animal cruelty. She also emphasized *“vegan people”* in her citation to highlight that Halal cosmetics are more popular with those searching for products without animal

ingredients. Consumer 2 added that Halal cosmetics *“has been accepted globally”* due to their safe and clean aspects.

“Developing all these Halal cosmetics products on par with the mainstream cosmetic products.” (Consumer 11).

“For vegan people, they cannot consume any meat, or any animal-based. So, these Halal products are also cruelty-free which is something that many consumers take very seriously” (Consumer 11)

“Not only Muslim people searching for Halal cosmetics. Nowadays, it has been accepted globally not only because it’s Halal, but also because it’s safer and cleaner” (Consumer 2).

4.3.4 Marketability of Halal products

Concerning the last theme, some of the interview participants’ answers indicate that they have a different perception on Halal cosmetics. Halal cosmetics being popular, with highlighting its abundant of advantages is a good way of promoting awareness on Halal. However, the efforts in promoting Halal worldwide, on the other hand, were perceived to be one of the marketing strategies and not done in favour of Halal appreciation. Cosmetic products being advertised as Halal is simply a marketing attempt to attract more Muslims and non-Muslim consumers to buy Halal products. The participants’ perceptions of Halal cosmetics’ portrayal in the news media is regarded as being negative in comparison with all the positive perceptions of Halal makeup. In this neo-liberal society where consumerism is core, everything can be marketized positively to benefit the producer and marketers. Consumer 10 argued that Halal cosmetics are portrayed to be universal for promotional purposes.

The positive portrayal of Halal cosmetics being in demand by non-Muslim consumers is believed to be one of the marketing strategies to legitimize Halal as universal, catering to all the good aspects of health, in creating a new perception for non-Muslim consumers of Halal. The usage of impersonal authority strategies by mentioning different names of laws and bodies has created a marketing illusion for (potential) consumers who read the texts, and presumably believing the credentials highlighted in the online media. Both Consumers 10 and 5 cited that in a way the authors are responsible for the news media statement in promoting Halal with the phrases “*the authors are trying to promote*” and “*the author is trying to make*”. Additionally, many interview participants also perceived that making Halal makeup global is “*part of marketing*” as stated by Consumer 5.

“The authors are trying to promote Halal certificates and logos to make them more global”; “to make people not scared of the word Halal and to convince the consumer that Halal is nothing serious” (Consumer 10)

“the author is trying to make this statement more global and to not focus on Muslim user only”; “this is part of marketing. Instead of the product was created for Muslim women, this is also catering other non-Muslim consumers”. (Consumer 5)

Besides portraying Halal as a global market, the added value of *wuduk*-friendly cosmetics is also perceived by the interview participants to be a powerful marketing strategy by the cosmetic producers. Producing a Halal and *wuduk*-friendly makeup may boost its competitiveness in the market as many interview participants had perceived when reading the excerpts from the articles. In Malaysia, the majority of Muslim women are looking for cosmetics that respect not only their preference for beauty but also their religious practices. For most of the interview participants, by considering this element, many makeup producers and marketers were trying to sell or promote their products by

highlighting the elements of removable makeup to convince consumers, especially Muslims, that their products are different from others.

Their perceptions towards *wuduk*-friendly makeup have both positive and negative sides, in which the positive side is that the makeup is perceived to be beneficial for Muslim women before performing their ablution and prayers, and on the other hand, it acts as a marketing and promotional tool. The discourse of Halal cosmetics is believed to be a sort of advertisement for Muslim consumers, with the term *wuduk*-friendly being applied in the text. Consumer 3 cited that the *wuduk-friendly* criteria are making the product “*more competitive*” in the market and her statement is agreed by Consumer 7 with the phrase “*one of their marketing ways*”, stating that this easily-removed makeup acts as a promotional instrument. By doing so, consumers will be easily influenced into purchasing the product as stated by Consumer 10 in the phrase “*it helps them to choose the product of their choice*”. Here, the “*product of their choice*” demonstrates the effectiveness of the commercial tools of *wuduk*-friendly cosmetics in deceiving people reading the texts. Moreover, the strategy of moral evaluation employed in the text has created a perception that the benefit of *wuduk*-friendly cosmetics can “*make our life easier*” as stated by Consumer 10.

“This text wants to promote that their product will make our life easier. So having this feature with the product will make their product more competitive.” (Consumer 3)

“It's how they attract one of their marketing ways to get consumers to buy their product.” (Consumer 7).

“The power of marketing using the Halal logo is very strong for Muslims and it helps them to choose the product of their choice, especially when they use wuduk-friendly.” (Consumer 10).

The next thematic analysis from the participants' interview is the necessity of having a Halal certification for a product. Although it was shown in the second theme that Halal certification and logos are important, the majority of the participants mentioned that making Halal certification necessary for a cosmetic to be certified Halal translates to a business in the Halal market. The strategy of personal and impersonal authority, by mentioning experts, JAKIM or other important laws in obtaining Halal certification has created a marketability of Halal products, which means that the need of obtaining Halal certification is necessary for producers and marketers of cosmetic brands. Many countries are developing their own Halal certifications and they are becoming more competitive in this field, as they believe that having Halal certification will sell their products more, as it symbolizes credibility and the quality that the product offers.

Consumers 8 and 10 compared Halal certification to an *"Islamic business"* as marketers and producers compete against each other to become the best Halal cosmetics brand besides promoting Halal certification globally. Consumer 5 cited that JAKIM's name is used as *"to add value to the cosmetic"* and *"to create more confidence level"* so that consumers put their trust in the products certified by JAKIM. This is to ensure that many cosmetic brands will apply for Halal certification to gain and convince more consumers, especially Muslim consumers that seek a product suitable to their preferences, as well as to penetrate the global Halal market. The majority of the participants perceived that this is a marketing strategy by the authors or the cosmetic brands to market their products worldwide.

"Halal certification is like a business, they have to compete with one another to get the Halal certification. I perceive that Halal certification is like an Islamic business".

(Consumer 8)

“To promote Halal certificate”; “to make Halal logo and certificate more global,”
(Consumer 10).

“JAKIM is just to add on value to the cosmetic, to create more confidence level to the consumers” (Consumer 5).

Furthermore, the news media authors’ choice of words demonstrated to the participants that they are trying to promote Halal certification and make it global in the interest of the economy. By promoting Halal cosmetics using evaluative adjectives employed in the texts on news media such as *“organic”* and *“vegan”*, the strategy of moral evaluation has successfully created a perception that these adjectives are making Halal more popular globally and more marketable. The way the authors employed the words is important as they might give different perceptions to readers. Muslim countries’ cosmetic brands tend to employ the word *“Halal”*, whereby non-Muslim countries’ cosmetic brands tend to employ the words *“vegan”* and *“organic”*, as cited by Consumer 4, both to convince potential consumers to buy their products. As Consumer 4 had cited, non-Muslim consumers or consumers coming from non-Muslim-majority countries tend to be influenced by products that are labeled with positive lexical items including *“vegan, organic, and cruelty-free.”* The usage of the right words is believed to be a mind game for the consumers and to manipulate the market, especially with the usage of religious expressions or laws such as *“Shariah-compliant”* as cited by Consumer 7.

“Western consumers, they prefer products that are labelled as vegan, organic and cruelty-free.” (Consumer 4)

“Manipulating the consumers by saying whatever is shariah-compliant, they are basically Halal products.” (Consumer 7)

All in all, it can be summarized that there are a few different perceptions of consumers towards the discourse of Halal cosmetics as portrayed in the news media, and they are mainly optimistic. Halal cosmetics are believed to be trustworthy, with the help of personal and impersonal authority strategies employed by the authors by mentioning Halal certifications and logos, establishing more credibility for the products as they have undergone many stringent procedures before being marketed locally and globally. Furthermore, most of the participants perceived Halal cosmetics as beneficial for skin, health, and environment, due to its ingredients that contains only materials that are not contaminated and clean according to Shariah law.

Moreover, the processes, the manufacturing and the packaging are all aligned with the standards and requirements set by the responsible authorities like JAKIM. What is more, the element of *wuduk*-friendly as portrayed in the news media related to Halal cosmetics is believed to help Muslim consumers in performing their duties as a practitioner, but also does not limit them in feeling beautiful by using makeup that respects their lifestyle. These perceptions originate from the strategies of moral evaluation and rationalization used by the authors of the news media, in which these strategies has successfully produced perceptions of the consumers that Halal has more advantages than disadvantages.

However, Halal cosmetics being portrayed as globally popular does not only translate to the increase of awareness in consuming Halal cosmetics. Although Halal is presented positively with abundant benefits in the news media, these benefits can also be translated or perceived as a tool of globalized marketing strategy, mainly for bigger cosmetic brands that seek to be in trend with the current demand. All the legitimation strategies used by the authors have created consumers' perception that Halal is a commercial tool in monopolizing the Halal market and industry. Since many Halal cosmetic products are monopolized by non-Muslims producers and manufacturers, this perception concurs with

the evidence from the previous studies and must be further analysed in understanding the pattern of the marketization.

From the themes discussed above, the first three final themes lean on the positive side of Halal cosmetics as the discourse of Halal cosmetics has been constructed positively in the news media and has been perceived to provide more benefits than drawbacks for the interview participants. They believed that having a Halal certification and logos are important and essential in ensuring the quality and credibility of products. They also believed that Halal provides advantages to consumers' health and environment, which explains the universality of Halal cosmetic products. These perceptions may be biased as all of the interviewed consumers are Muslims, women, and Halal cosmetic users. Therefore, their perceptions of Halal cosmetics in the news media are optimistic. What is more, the participants believed from the text of the news media that Halal cosmetics complete their way of life as they conform to their faith as a Muslim. On the other hand, only one theme has been identified to have a negative perception of Halal cosmetics, where Halal was perceived to be a strategic marketing tool in promoting cosmetic products to consumers.

4.4 Discussion

4.4.1 Discussion of Textual Analysis

The present study aims at examining the (de)legitimation strategies employed to perpetuate the representation of Halal cosmetics used by online English newspapers and magazines in Malaysia through the lens of van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic approach. The discourse of globalisation and the discourse of credibility were observed to be the two main discourses constructed in the news and magazine articles (de)legitimizing Halal cosmetic products. The findings of the textual analysis have answered Research Question 1, where different strategies of (de)legitimation were found

to be employed in the news media to propagate the representation of Halal cosmetics in Malaysia. These strategies have been used to legitimize the global popularity and the credibility of Halal, as shown in the discourse of globalisation found in the news media texts.

Halal cosmetics are portrayed as being popular globally and beyond the Muslim population. However, the findings of the current study have looked at the popularity of Halal from the perspective of the analysis of news media text in which no prior studies have found Halal to be a popular online texts discourse. The strategies of personal authority, expert authority, role model authority, impersonal authority, conformity authority, and instrumental rationalization have been employed in (de)legitimizing Halal, particularly Halal cosmetic products. In other words, not only the authors of the articles have relied on quoting authoritative people and role models, but they have also attempted to legitimize the news media by convincing readers on trusting Halal as a basis for purchasing makeup products. The texts employed the discourse practice of following decisions from the majority and the inclusion of the laws and traditions to persuade the consumers that Halal products are on high demand globally.

Studies by Kaur and Mutty (2016) from the CDA perspective and Harun et al. (2019) from a media perspective have proven the use of models in legitimizing and commodifying Halal products. With the inclusion of Islamic values such as portraying images of an ideal Muslim in brand websites or advertisement billboards, this has contributed to the revealing of the underlying ideology of the visual discourse: Islamic commodification. Although the current study focuses on the textual view of role models, such as providing names of someone popular quoting the Halal cosmetic brand, it can be deduced that a person can be an authority in legitimizing the readers or the viewers. What

is novel in the findings of the current study is by looking at other authorization factors that also reveal the hidden ideology through legitimation strategies.

Additionally, the popularity of Halal cosmetics has been related to the increase in demand and the importance of Halal certification for a cosmetic product, therefore, creating more demand for acquiring a Halal certification among cosmetics producers and manufacturers. The impersonal authority strategy employed by the authors of the news media by mentioning laws and guidelines of Halal, and the processes involved in getting the Halal certification correlates with the results from past studies. The finding of this study concurs with the findings from past studies conducted on Halal, in which Halal certification and logo played an important role in influencing consumers' decision and intention to purchase Halal products, especially for Malaysian consumers who favour products recognized by JAKIM (i.e., Ismail et al., 2018; Aziz & Chok, 2013) and studies from Indonesia where Halal certification and logos are equally essential (i.e., Basri & Kurniawati, 2019; Haro, 2016). Even so, previous studies did not examine the linguistic features of texts, but rather, the consumers' behaviour towards Halal products.

In addition, the instrumental rationalization strategies of *goal*, *means*, and *effect* have been employed to legitimize the discourse of Halal cosmetics by making global cosmetic producers and manufacturers establish a Halal hub or manufacturing facilities in Muslim countries in ensuring that their products are Halal. Meanwhile, the authors of the articles have relied on the majority's perception of non-Halal cosmetic products to delegitimize non-Halal cosmetics by portraying them as unpopular, given that many consumers tend to avoid consuming products that are labeled with prohibited items or without Halal certifications or logos. This is aligned with the study by Mutmainah (2018) where ingredients in Halal products are one of the important factors in influencing consumers' purchase intention. The current study then has provided a different perspective on the

description of Halal ingredients where haram substances are accented instead of stressing the importance of Halal products.

Different strategies have also been used to legitimize the credibility of Halal, as shown in the discourse of credibility found in the news media texts. Halal cosmetic products are constructed positively by their positive portrayal of the quality that they offered to gain trustworthiness. The strategies of theoretical rationalization, moral evaluation, and authorization of personal and impersonal have been used in (de)legitimizing Halal cosmetic products. The authors of the articles drew on the definition of Halal cosmetics and the inclusion of positively loaded expressions such as evaluative adjectives to persuade consumers that Halal products are trusted and conform to all aspects of health, beauty, and faith. These strategies are essential to reduce consumers' mistrust and build credibility and desirability through reassurance.

Although few studies have explored the use of language (positive and negative lexical items, declarative attributes, language mixing, and religious terminologies) in influencing consumers (Kaur & Mutty, 2016; Umam, 2021), the current study emphasizes the strategies used by the news media authors in conveying their ideologies. What is more, the authorization of laws and different guidelines in ensuring Halal cosmetics production has added another layer of assurance for consumers and helped them gain their confidence and trust in the products. Meanwhile, the credibility of non-Halal cosmetics is delegitimized in the articles where non-Halal cosmetics are defined negatively through the use of negatively loaded expressions, using the strategy of theoretical rationalization. A study by Thomas and Selimovic (2015) has also analyzed the use of adjectives in newspapers on the topic of Halal and has found that the adjectives used on Halal serve a negative affection function which Halal is regarded negatively. In the current study,

negative lexical items are used to delegitimize non-Halal products, highlighting the goodness of Halal products.

Nevertheless, the current study has definitely shed the light on the portrayal of Halal discourse beyond the linguistic tools by using the legitimization strategies provided by van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic approach to CDA. It has created a linkage between the materials published on Malaysian media and the consumers' perception on the materials by finding the connection between the two types of data, which has never been done before in the realm of Halal cosmetic studies in Malaysia. As no prior studies have looked at van Leeuwen's legitimation strategies in legitimizing Halal cosmetics, these strategies, much more explicitly, can be linked to marketing means and draws our attention to the commodification of Halal and Islam as the news media strive to implement a globalized marketing strategy by promoting Halal as credible and popular.

4.4.2 Discussion of Interview Analysis

The present study also draws attention towards understanding the perceptions of Malaysian Halal cosmetics consumers on the discourse of Halal cosmetics as portrayed in the selected Malaysian English online newspapers and magazine articles. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) helps in comprehending the relation of the text to society, therefore, this interview analysis reflects the participants' perceptions in general. Discourse is a form of social identity, therefore, a reference to society cannot be omitted from the participants. The meaning of the text can only be complete by integrating the context and interpretation of the context, by referring to social and cultural knowledge, as the link between society and text is mediated. The findings of the thematic analysis have answered Research Question 2, where the perception of Halal cosmetics consumers on the discourse of Halal cosmetics as presented in the selected news media texts have been explored in detail.

Since the targeted participants are all Muslim women, Halal cosmetics are perceived positively to be credible, with the Halal certification constructed as having passed through stringent procedures and standards according to Islamic practice, which supports the past studies by Kaur et al. (2014), Haro (2016), Khan et al. (2016) as examples. Furthermore, Halal makeup is perceived to provide many benefits to the consumers as the ingredients used are more hygienic and safer, and the overall process (the manufacturing and the packaging) is deemed safe without any contact with harmful substances, therefore, Halal cosmetics are believed to be healthy for skin and environment. The result of this study is aligned with the past studies by Mohezar et al. (2016) where product characteristic is one of the important factors influencing Muslim consumers to adopt Halal cosmetics products.

Moreover, it was perceived that Halal cosmetics have become a global market interest of the high demand from both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers, seeking to have a better lifestyle by choosing to consume Halal makeup. However, the global popularity of Halal cosmetics is also believed to be a part of a marketing scheme that commodifies Halal for the interest of business, fitting the consumerist society. As the participants are Muslims, they also perceived that the initial interest of creating a Halal product for the needs of Muslims to perform their religious obligations has turned into a capitalist agenda of commodifying Halal and Islam, and not for the interest of the consumers, but mainly for the interest and benefit of the producers and manufacturers. (Kaur & Mutty, 2016; Harun et al. 2019; Umam, 2021).

4.4.3 Linkage between the textual analysis and the interview analysis

Both textual and interview analyses have shown the importance of legitimization strategies in influencing the perception of consumers when reading the text about Halal cosmetics as presented in the selected online newspapers and magazine articles. From the

above analyses, it was found that there is a significant relation between the legitimation strategies used in the news media texts and the perception of the consumers. Below are three tables of linkage between the three strategies used namely *authorization*, *moral evaluation*, and *rationalization*, and the textual and interview analysis.

Table 4.2: The linkage between legitimation strategies, textual analysis, and interview analysis of authorization strategies

Legitimation strategies	Textual analysis	Interview Analysis
Authorization Impersonal	“Halal certification complies with the MS2200: 2008 Consumer Good – Section 1: Cosmetic and Personal Care – General Guidelines, the decision of the National Fatwa Council for Islamic Affairs and other related guidelines and regulations.” (TS 1, p9)	<i>“To get the Halal certification is not easy and we know the guidelines are very strict. Somehow as a consumer you feel confident that the product is trustworthy”.</i> (Consumer 7)
Conformity	“Not just Muslim women but globally many women are swapping their holy grail skincare products for more Shariah-compliant ones mainly because Halal products are safer and cleaner.” (BI, p1)	<i>“Not only Muslim people searching for Halal cosmetics. Nowadays, it has been accepted globally not only because it’s Halal, but also because it’s safer and cleaner”</i> (Consumer 2).

Table 4.2 shows the link between the authorization strategy used by the authors in the news media and the perception of the consumers of the text. It was found that consumers perceived the texts as similar to how the texts are being presented by the authors, although they have no knowledge on the legitimation strategies used in the news media texts. For impersonal authority, the names of the guidelines and regulations had convinced consumers of the strictness of the regulation in making the product more trustworthy and credible. Additionally, the authority of conformity strategy used in the text of the news media corresponds with the interviews of consumers. Consumers tend to rephrase the

excerpts of the texts by mentioning that Halal has been accepted globally, which reflects the phrases in the texts. This demonstrates that their perceptions are unintentionally being legitimized by the texts.

Table 4.3: The linkage between legitimation strategies, textual analysis, and interview analysis of moral evaluation strategies

Legitimation strategies	Textual analysis	Interview Analysis
Moral Evaluation Evaluation	“[...] some Halal-certified beauty products also carry vegan, organic, cruelty-free or ethical tags and certifications, according to industry standards.” (NST 5, p13)	“ <i>Wuduk-friendly products are also as good as any other products and they are cruelty-free and vegan. When I read this, it’s trying to promote more Halal, that we should go for Halal. We go green, we go Halal</i> ”. (Consumer 10)
	“[...] their products are <i>wuduk</i> -friendly or easily removed for the ritual purification process before praying [...]to be easy to apply and easy to remove. Because it’s easy for us whenever we want to take <i>wuduk</i> before we pray, you just wipe it off with wet wipes or just tissue,” said Dahlia” (MM 4, p8)	“ <i>One way to choose the product is when the consumer finds it easy to apply and easy for them to use whenever they want to perform wuduk (ablution). That is a part of the faith</i> ” (Consumer 6).

The table 4.3 above shows the link between the moral evaluation strategy used by the authors in the news media and the perception of the consumers of the text. In both news media texts and consumers’ citations, the repetition of terms such as *wuduk-friendly*, *cruelty-free*, and *vegan* are apparent. This proves that the strategies used in the news to legitimize Halal cosmetics has effectively positively influence the perception of the consumers. When reading excerpts from newspapers or magazines, consumers rephrased the text by relating it to what they perceive, and nearly every consumer interviewed viewed *wuduk*-friendly Halal cosmetics as simplifying and facilitating their life as a

Muslim. The aspect of vegan and cruelty-free portrayed in the news media texts has caused consumers to perceive that the authors are promoting Halal. Hence, the strategies employed through language has influenced consumers to choose Halal products as they have many benefits.

Table 4.4: The linkage between legitimation strategies, textual analysis, and interview analysis of rationalization strategies

Legitimation strategies	Textual analysis	Interview Analysis
Rationalization	“Halal skincare or cosmetic products mean they are free from animal-derived ingredients [...] as well as contents which are harmful to health and have not been processed using instruments contaminated with impurities such as blood, urine and faeces.” (NST 5, p12)	<i>“Halal cosmetic products are a good product and provide me a sense of belief, knowing that there are no harm or dirty things around the places, or anything that will give me a sense of shubhah (doubt) that it is Halal.”</i> (Consumer 1).
Theoretical	“Halal means allowed or permissible in Arabic. Hence, Halal skincare products are basically products that are permissible under Islamic law. Contrary to popular belief, it does not just apply to the ingredients in the products but also to the production process. That means the storing, manufacturing, packaging and distribution must all be in accordance with Shariah law and fatwa.”	<i>“Knowing that in every step of the product being made from choosing the ingredients, manufacturing, storing, and selling the product is Halal and away from unethical practices. It brings no harm to others or myself, and it is created using the finest ingredients”</i> (Consumer 1)

The relation between the rationalization strategy used by the authors in the news media and the perception of the consumers of the text is shown in Table 4.4. The definition of Halal described in the texts by delegitimizing non-Halal ingredients of the news media influenced the perception of the consumers on Halal cosmetics, making them trust Halal

products more. The processes involved in ensuring the quality of Halal cosmetic products similarly legitimized the perception of the consumers that Halal cosmetics products are credible. When reading the texts, consumers believe that Halal brings no harm and provides a sense of belief to consumers.

It is inevitable that all these consumers have also perceived the news media texts based on their previous knowledge of Halal. As CDS include social identity as one of the important elements in understanding a discourse, it is then crucial to discuss the Malaysian social context to better understand the different strategies employed by the news media authors, and why consumers perceived the texts in this way.

4.4.4 Socio-semantic principles

The legitimation strategies used in the news article appear to serve Malaysia's Halal Industry Master Plan 2030 to promote Halal, which is in line with achieving the country's overall socio-economic development. Malaysia's Halal ecosystem comprises of creating a relationship towards sustainability by implementing some strategies notably enhancing legislation and creating new and bigger market spaces for Malaysia's Halal products and services (Halal Industry Master Plan Executive Summary [HIMP], 2020, p. 4).

The perception of Muslim Halal cosmetics consumers in Malaysia can be explained through the social context of this country. Knowing Malaysia as the world's leading Halal hub has proven how important the issue of Halal in this country is, therefore, how concerned Muslim consumers are with Halal products. Since the majority of the Malaysian population is Muslim, Halal is a vital element in the market. It was demonstrated how media plays an important role in influencing Malaysian consumers' perceptions, especially when religious issues are extremely sensitive for Malaysian society, and the way such issues are presented in the media can easily trigger the society. More importantly, Malaysian society is seen as depending too much on authorities such

as JAKIM and other Islamic councils on the Islamic matter in Malaysia, as can be proven in this and in the past studies. Any decisions coming from the Islamic council will be trusted and Malaysians will not question or argue on the matter. In this regard, Van Leeuwen's socio-semantic theory can be employed to identify and examine the ways in which the meaning of language belongs to society and culture, explained semantically through linguistic tools.

In the cosmetics sector, which is the focus of this study, the awareness of using cosmetics that are Halal has gained attention from Muslim consumers. Both local and international marketers acknowledge the importance of Halal concept due to the fact that Muslim Malaysian consumers are easily triggered by Islamic values such as the use of the word Halal, Halal certification, and Halal logo. On this account, the current study, along with a past study by Harun et al. (2019) have illustrated the perceptions of consumers in the context of Malaysia's consumerism. Subsequently, the language used in the media is indispensable in influencing consumers' perceptions, and the news media authors are required to understand the sociocultural background of the recipients in attracting them to the texts. Since Malaysia is a multiracial country with different cultural backgrounds, the interpretation of the texts in the news media may be distinct. However, considering that all the interviewed consumers of this study are Muslims, the perceptions of Halal are relatively similar due to the cultural background of the participants. It might perhaps be different if the targeted consumers are non-Muslim cosmetic consumers as they have different religious and ethnic cultural backgrounds. Some non-Muslims in Malaysia may be exposed more to Halal, and some may be exposed less to the concept of Halal. Therefore, the notion of Halal may be different for non-Muslim consumers and their perception of the issue of Halal cosmetics may have a big difference compared to the current research's participants.

4.5 Summary

In summary, the textual analysis of the newspapers and magazine articles helps the researcher to find the different (de)legitimation strategies employed by the authors in (de)legitimizing Halal cosmetics. It was found that the discourse of globalisation and the discourse of credibility are the two main discourses found prevalent in the topic of Halal cosmetics in the selected news media. The strategies of legitimation according to van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic approach used in the discourse have answered the Research Question 1, that shows how Halal cosmetics discourse are legitimized and delegitimized.

The choice of (de)legitimation strategies varied across both discourses in which only rationalization and authorization strategies were employed in the discourse of globalisation, whereby rationalization, authorization, and moral evaluation strategies were found to be employed in the discourse of credibility. Personal and impersonal authorization were identified in both discourses in (de)legitimizing Halal cosmetics as using an expert's name in the discourse increases the credibility of Halal cosmetics, along with the portrayal of several laws and guidelines to legitimizing Halal, especially when it comes to the definition of Halal. Also, the authority of conformity has also been applied to the discourse in highlighting the popularity of Halal cosmetics. Additionally, the strategy of moral evaluation is mainly employed to focus on portraying Halal positively, with the usage of positively loaded lexical items and expressions, acting as a small advertisement. With theoretical rationalization strategy that provides a crucial way in defining Halal cosmetics and certifications, instrumental rationalization strategy was employed to construct Halal cosmetics as becoming more demanding, and in describing the efforts that cosmetic producers take to cater the demand in the cosmetics industry.

Van Leeuwen's socio-semantic approach has been found to be useful in identifying different legitimation strategies used by the authors of online newspapers and magazines and analysing the interview with Malaysian cosmetic consumers which was conducted to understand their perceptions towards the discourse of Halal cosmetics as constructed in the selected news media. Both analyses above has answered Research Question 2. The emergence of four final themes of perceptions from the interview analysis has shown some similarity of themes from the textual analysis, where universality (popularity) and credibility were observed to be majorly perceived.

It was found that the discourse of Halal cosmetics as presented in the news media, while being perceived and believed to provide abundant benefits to the skin, health, environment, and to the Islamic practice for Muslim women seeking a product that conforms to their religious practice, it is also perceived to be a marketing strategy by the consumerist society. Despite being globally popular for both Muslim and non-Muslim cosmetic consumers, Halal cosmetics were being promoted positively as products that can be trusted and safe from contamination, in order to attract more consumers in consuming Halal and in choosing Halal as a lifestyle. In other words, Halal is being promoted to make the products more marketable in the society, especially in Malaysia where the majority of Muslims are always seeking products suitable to their religious beliefs and preferences.

The language of media is important in influencing consumers' perceptions of Halal cosmetics particularly with van Leeuwen's socio-semantic approach of (de)legitimation strategies employed in online newspapers and magazines. This approach while legitimizing Halal cosmetics in the news media has indirectly influenced the perceptions of the readers, especially if the targeted readers are Muslim women. The findings of different legitimation strategies used is related to the background of the targeted readers

or consumers, therefore, consumers' perception. The Muslim society in Malaysia is highly concerned with the issue of Halal as they were exposed to the concept of Halal by their religious culture and the Islamic authorities. Becoming the world's leading Halal hub has put Muslim society in Malaysia continuously seeking products that conform to the Shariah, their faith, and their beliefs. What is more, religious issues in Malaysia are sensitive issues, which may influence their perceptions of issues like Halal cosmetics. Van Leeuwen's approach is related to social identity and semantics, in which the background of the society is important for the success of the strategies used. CDA provides an explanation of the context of discourse through text, interpretation, and explanation. The following chapter will therefore conclude the study and provide implications of the study, as well as highlight the limitations and suggest recommendation for future research. The following chapter will also provide the contribution of the study, to end the research.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the key findings of the study, followed by discussion of the implications of the findings, and finally, limitations and recommendations for future research. Considering the findings of the established literature, the findings of this study are concluded and the importance of the findings to the field of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is presented.

As stated in the beginning of this study, the aims of the study are: 1) to investigate the (de)legitimation strategies employed in the representation of Halal cosmetics in the selected Malaysian English online newspapers and magazines articles; and, 2) to examine the perception of Malaysian cosmetics consumers towards Halal cosmetic discourse as presented in the selected Malaysian English online newspapers and magazines articles. The findings of the two research objectives are presented below.

5.1 Key Findings

Van Leeuwen (2008) posits that forms of legitimation can be used to critique, legitimize, and delegitimize specific instances of text and talk, which can be used for analysing the construction of legitimation in discourse critically and for reflection on the problems that face legitimation in the present. Different (de)legitimation strategies employed in the online newspapers and magazine articles in perpetuating Halal cosmetics were exemplified in the result of this study namely *authorization strategy*, *moral evaluation strategy*, and *rationalization strategy*. What is more, it was found that from both newspapers and magazine articles, the popularity of Halal and the credibility of Halal are the two major discourses that emerge from the topic of Halal cosmetics in Malaysia. While some business-oriented studies have pointed out the role of logos and certifications in ensuring consumers' trust as well as enhancing their intention to purchase (e.g., Ismail et al., 2018; Quoquab et al., 2019), the current study has shed lights on linguistic-based

strategies that are employed to convince readers to believe in the legitimacy of Halal cosmetics. The results from the textual analysis were then used to understand Halal cosmetics consumers' perception on the discourse of Halal cosmetics as presented in the selected newspapers and magazine articles. Past studies on consumers' perceptions have shown the importance of understanding the perception of consumers for business, particularly in Halal business (i.e., Ismail et al., 2018; Harun et al., 2019).

Malaysian Halal cosmetics consumers perceive the legitimation of Halal cosmetics as beneficial for their skin and health, and this conforms to their religious beliefs. The cosmetics are convenient in making them perform religious obligations easily such as praying, while maintaining the beauty aspects of Muslim women. More importantly, Halal cosmetics were perceived to be trusted products with the ingredients and processes listed in the news media texts which accentuated the values of Halal products to the consumers. Furthermore, important bodies like JAKIM were mentioned to increase their perceptions on the credibility of Halal cosmetics as JAKIM is a trusted body for Halal concerns in Malaysia as supported by Ismail et al. (2018) where the presence of JAKIM provides a strong influence on Halal products.

Interestingly, with the positive perceptions of Halal cosmetics, along comes negative perceptions of it, where some consumers perceived the misuse of Halal as a marketing strategy for product marketers. Consumers believed that Halal is being commodified as a business in attracting cosmetic consumers, especially Muslim women in Malaysia who tend to be easily influenced by the usage of Islamic terminologies such as *wuduk*-friendly, Halal, and *Shariah*-compliant. This is supported by studies from Kaur and Mutty (2016) and Harun et al. (2019) where religion is used for commodification purposes. It could be that Malaysian consumer society is unaware of the commodification agenda behind words

used in the media, as they put their trust in Islamic councils' decisions (conformity decisions) without seeking the answers themselves.

From both analyses, the socio-semantic approach of legitimation strategies used in the texts correlate with the interviews where consumers, while reading the texts, tend to rephrase the excerpts of the texts and repeat key terms such as *wuduk*-friendly, cruelty-free, and vegan that were present in the news media text. The relation between both analyses demonstrates the importance of social background in influencing the perceptions of consumers on a topic presented in a text. With 61% of the Malaysian population being Muslims, the concept of Halal is being considered seriously by Muslim consumers regardless of the sector. Halal is a sensitive issue that may trigger a society easily, especially when it comes to media influence. Hence, the language used in the media is therefore crucial in persuading consumers' perceptions. It is necessary for the news media authors to comprehend and analyze the sociocultural background of the text recipients to help in improving the Halal market.

5.2 Implications of the study

The contested Halal discourse concerning Halal cosmetics has implications for society. Fairclough (2002) argues that there is a dialectical relationship between discourse and society. Halal cosmetic products as found by the current study and concurred with a study by Kaur and Mutty (2016) are normativized, naturalized, and legitimized as part of Malaysian lifestyle and culture, through the media discourse. Also, consumers especially Muslims, are found to be drawn towards Halal products (Abdul et al., 2016; Aziz & Chok, 2013; Khalek & Mokhtar, 2017; Zakaria et al., 2017) and consistently seek products that conform to their faith. This study does not by any means intend to recommend any bans on such products, but believe that the consumers, while holding onto their religious beliefs, need to be aware of not overconsuming (Halal) cosmetic products and not to

render to the demands of the consumerist society. Purchasing goods and services that adhere to the *fatwa* (i.e., Islamic legal ruling) of a state-sanctioned Islamic authority asserts that Halal consumerism is the social response of Muslims to the neo-liberal reorganization of production and consumption, and consuming Halal products gradually establish a Halal habitus (lifestyle) (Rakhmani, 2019). This is to encourage and present consumerism as of value to society and to boost the market of Halal in the country's socio-economic growth.

Also, consumers are uninformed about certain Halal cosmetics products that do not conform to the concept of *tayyib* of Shariah, which is defined as the whole process of Halal production according to Alzeer et al. (2018), and Halal industries require both concepts of *Halalan Toyyiban* which demand a thorough assessment of product contents regarding Halal, safety, hygiene and toxicity. Some cosmetics might be exposed to high levels of lead and cadmium that potentially leads to health risks (Bobaker et al., 2019), and many consumers are not aware of the issue that may cause the intolerant condition to the skin, as well as the environment (Nordin et al., 2021).

More importantly, the media is contributing to the commodity of Halal where consumers are easily influenced and manipulated by the information presented in the media. To them, information received from the media, especially from newspapers, is the truth. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) strategies are being used in commodifying Halal in the media, regardless, the marketers view it as another way of promoting religious attributes to consumers.

5.3 Limitations and Recommendations

One of the main limitations of this study was the scale of the available data. The topic of Halal cosmetics was not found to be frequently covered by both Malaysian English newspapers and magazines, as they mainly focus on cosmetics in general. Future studies

can be conducted by analyzing the data from other resources such as marketing websites of the Halal cosmetics brands and their social media platform in marketizing Halal cosmetics. Furthermore, it is recommended to look at Malay language newspapers and magazines as the topic of Halal cosmetics may be found to be covered more in Malay language news media, due to the targeted audience (Malay Muslim women). Additionally, as the current study was limited to the analysis of verbal signs (text), multimodal studies can be conducted in the future to investigate the role of images in legitimizing and delegitimizing Halal discourse. Future studies can also be conducted outside of Malaysia and may include other non-Muslim majority countries to better comprehend how news media, advertisements, or social media legitimize and delegitimize the discourse of Halal cosmetics, and how people (consumers) perceive the discourse. Moreover, in regards to the interview participants, the criteria for selecting the participants was limited to Muslim Malaysian women who consume Halal cosmetics. Future research may include non-Muslim cosmetic consumers in Malaysia or from different nationalities to have a variation in the perception of Halal cosmetics discourse due to their different cultural backgrounds. It would be interesting to explore if and how the discourse of Halal affects the cultural norms, values, and beliefs of consumers in a non-Muslim context.

As there is a scarcity in the number of studies conducted on Halal discourse, it is equally important to look at Halal discourse through the lenses of other approaches to CDA in future research. The current study is limited to van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic approach. Previous studies have looked at Fairclough's approaches to CDA (Thomas & Selimovic, 2015; Kaur & Mutty, 2016), therefore, it would be interesting to analyze the legitimacy of Halal discourse using other CDA approaches.

5.4 Summary

It is suggested in this study that one of the ways to comprehend a discourse in newspapers and magazines is by using CDA, which unravels hidden ideologies of the discourse. This study thrives on the aspect of (de)legitimation strategies based on van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic approach which relates the social and semantic aspects of textual discourse. What is more important, this study provides a novel contribution to the socio-semantic approach with insights from the perception of the consumers on the discourse of Halal cosmetics in the news media.

In this study, it was found that the relation between the textual discourse and the interview is due to the social background of the news media, the targeted recipients, and the cosmetic consumers. Using a socio-semantic approach of (de)legitimation strategies in analyzing the Halal cosmetics discourse has given many insights into what really happened behind the discourse to perpetuate Halal into the mind of the readers and the hidden ideology of marketing Halal as Islamic business. More essentially, the question of whether consumers perceive Halal the same way as how the text is manipulated by the strategies of (de)legitimation has been partially addressed in this study.

This study only focuses on one approach of CDA, which is the socio-semantic approach of (de)legitimation. It should be noted that in order to fully understand the strategies used in a discourse, there are many other unexplored elements which could be studied in a different type of discourse such as images, using multimodal analysis, or other types of discourse which are found to be prevalent in the results from both textual and thematic interview analyses.

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