

Not Disordered. Just Disciplined:

A Multimodal Analysis of the Construction of Skinniness as an Identity on the Instagram

Page of @theskinnisociete

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Master's Thesis

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This thesis is a study of the most frequent linguistic and visual features found on the Instagram page of The Skinni Société. The focus of analysis is on how these features are used to construct a lifestyle identity around skinniness, and what the discourse implications of such construction are. The research material consisted of 36 posts made by The Skinni Société that included 1390 clauses used for linguistic analysis and 325 images used for visual analysis.

The theoretical framework was built upon Functional Grammar (Halliday and Matthiessen) and Visual Grammar (Kress and van Leeuwen). Linguistic analysis focused on the six Ideational clause types, Relational, Material, Mental, Behavioural, Verbal, and Existential, as well as their Processes and Participants. Visual analysis was done from the angles of Contact, Social Distance, and Power. Additionally, Critical Discourse Analysis was used to discuss the wider implications of the identity construction.

During linguistic analysis it was found that the most frequent Ideational clause types were Relational, Material, and Mental clauses. The most common primary Participants in all these clause types were either personal pronouns, including *you*, “implicit you”, and *I*, or skinniness-related actors, such as *The Skinni Société*, *Skinni girls*, and *living a Skinni lifestyle*. The Processes and other Participants revolved around aspects of a skinny lifestyle, such as eating, exercise, discipline, structure, and transformation. They were used to characterise how a skinny lifestyle can be achieved and maintained through the guidance given by *The Skinni Société*.

Visual analysis revealed that the images were nearly as frequently Offers as Demands from the perspective of Contact. The most common Social Distance used was Personal, followed by Social, Impersonal, and Highly Personal. Power was most frequently Equal, with Participant Power being the next most common and Viewer Power being the most uncommon.

Using the linguistic and visual features, The Skinni Société constructed a skinny lifestyle identity by creating a sense of community, establishing authority, and defining what a skinny lifestyle is. The identity constructed presented skinniness as a healthy, moral, and meaningful way to live. This supported pre-established societal ideas about skinniness as an ideal body-type and quality. It was found that supporting such ideas can potentially lead to people internalising them and trying to achieve a skinny body in extreme ways. This can lead to disordered eating, which adolescents are particularly vulnerable to. It was also discussed how the skinny ideal is expected more of women, leading to inequality in the time and resources required for societal acceptance.

Key words: Critical Discourse Analysis, Functional Grammar, Ideational Metafunction, Identity, Instagram, Multimodality, Skinniness, Visual Grammar

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List of Abbreviations

| | |
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| CDA | Critical Discourse Analysis |
| FCDA | Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis |
| MCDA | Multi-modal Critical Discourse Analysis |
| SFL | Systemic Functional Linguistics |

1 Introduction

In the past few years, skinniness as a trend has seen a resurgence in media and culture at large (Behounek 2026). Skinniness is a cyclical trend, going in and out of style around every twenty to thirty years (ibid.). For example, the last century has seen the 1920s flapper-era, the 60s Twiggy-inspired look, and the so called “heroin chic” of the 90s as the highpoints of a skinny body image (ibid.). On the other hand, the 2010s saw a growth in the body positivity movement, which championed an inclusive conceptualisation of body image, and rejected the narrow and inaccessible body ideals centred on skinniness (Cohen et al. 2019, 48). However, due to contemporary shifts in culture, the influence of celebrities, and the increased use of weight loss medication it seems that “thin is in” once again (Behounek 2026). This return to skinniness as the ideal raises questions about how such a quality is characterised and how people might identify with it.

One place where people can encounter the changing trends around body image is social media. Within our digital age, social media platforms have become important tools in self-presentation, communication, and identity construction (Yılmaz 2021, 2). Through social media, people can share their lives, ideas, and opinions to billions of people in a global network of connections. Due to this, the dominance of social media as a determining factor in social norms and appearance standards has become increasingly pronounced (Bair et al. 2012, 400). One central figure in this communication development is Instagram. Having reached over three billion active monthly users (Tafradzhiyski 2025), Instagram is one of the most influential social media platforms. With the communicative variety and social aspect of Instagram that have made it so popular, the platform has also become a home for many online communities (Ataman 2022). These communities are sometimes built around achieving, maintaining, and living the trending skinny lifestyle.

A prominent Instagram community that is focused on skinniness is *The Skinni Société*. By their own description, the Skinni Société is a space meant for women pursuing weight loss and a skinny lifestyle (see Appendix 1, Figure 10). On their Instagram page, the Skinni Société share guidance, support, and general content relating to losing weight and living a skinny lifestyle. Their posts typically include images of skinny women with accompanying written text that focused on some aspect of being skinny (see Appendix 1 for examples). With over seventy thousand followers at the time of writing (Instagram n.d.), the Skinni Société has become an influential contributor to the current skinniness trend. Due to the recent resurgence

of the skinny body ideal, studying the individuals, groups, and organisations who spread ideas about it is important to see what the messaging about skinniness includes and how it might affect people. In this thesis, that is done by examining the Skinni Société's Instagram posts.

To understand the way in which an identity around skinniness is built on the Skinni Société's page the nature of communication on Instagram must be considered. Communication on Instagram has a strong focus on visuality (Leaver, Highfield and Abidin 2020, 13). As an image and video sharing platform, Instagram places strong emphasis on visual elements as a companion to linguistic communication. Increasingly, linguistic communication overall is losing its status as the sole mode of communication in public media and is becoming a mode among others to form multimodal ways of communicating (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 38). This means that communication utilises a combination of different modes for relaying messages, ideology, and opinions. Thus, a multimodal approach to research is warranted when considering primary material from Instagram, such as the Skinni Société's posts.

The multimodal theoretical framework of this thesis is formed upon a two-fold foundation. For linguistic analysis, Functional Grammar will be used. More specifically, focus is placed on the ideational metafunction, which is realised through six clause types: Material, Mental, Relational, Verbal, Behavioural, and Existential (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 214-215). The clause types and the elements that constitute their structure are introduced and explored in detail in Section 3.1. The visual analysis will be based on Visual Grammar, focusing on visual resources that are used to build and maintain interaction between the viewer and people depicted in images (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 101). In particular, the analysis will be conducted from the perspectives of Contact, Social Distance, and Power, all of which are outlined in Section 3.2. Lastly, Critical Discourse Analysis will function as an additional layer for deeper discussion of the results of analysis and what they can reveal about the construction of a skinny identity.

Identity construction around skinniness and body image on various social media sites have been studied from many perspectives. For example, research focus has been placed on the body positivity movement on Instagram (Cohen et al. 2019; Aubrey et al. 2024), the effect social media has on body image (Kvardova et al. 2025; Abdoli et al. 2024), and the way social media can encourage disordered eating (Lavis 2014; Bair et al. 2012). These are just a few examples of how skinniness can be viewed through multiple frames and how varied the conception and connotations of skinniness are online. The aim of this thesis is to analyse

skinniness and identity construction with a focus on a specific community, the Skinni Société. The Skinni Société has not been studied from the perspective of skinny identity construction or using a multimodal framework before, leaving a gap in the research field. This study will fill this gap and additionally be a launching point for other research focused on weight loss communities. It provides a theoretical foundation that can be applied to future studies and adapted across platforms.

There are several questions that can be raised in connection with the skinny identity construction on the Instagram page of the Skinni Société. The following questions are used to guide the research interests of this thesis:

- 1) What are the most frequent clause types and elements within the material?
- 2) What are the most frequent visual resources within the material?
- 3) How are the most frequent linguistic features, with the support of the visual ones, used to construct a skinny identity on the Instagram page of the Skinni Société?
- 4) What are the wider implications of spreading and supporting a skinny lifestyle in discourse?

Based on previous research and the questions posed, a hypothesis can be formed. I hypothesise that the most frequent clause types and elements will refer to and revolve around actions, qualities, sensations, and ideas connected to skinniness or living a skinny lifestyle. I also think the most frequent visual resources used will be used to support the linguistic choices in the representation of skinniness. They will focus on depictions of skinniness as positive and aspirational. Both the linguistic and visual features will be used to construct an identity around skinniness through the reinforcement of culturally established connotations of skinniness. However, the Skinni Société's conception of skinniness and a skinny lifestyle will likely also include elements that are unique to them and serve to separate their definition of skinniness from some of the typical societal notions.

The structure of this thesis follows the subsequent configuration. In Section 2, an introduction into the various aspects of identity and the connotations of skinniness in the West is provided. This section also expands upon the Skinni Société's background. Section 3 outlines the theoretical framework used for analysis in this thesis; Functional and Visual Grammar are explained in-depth, and Critical Discourse Analysis is introduced, and its role in discussion is explained. In Section 4, the primary material collection process is shown, and the

methodological approach of analysis is explained. In addition, considerations about the technical and ethical limitations of research are provided. Section 5 presents the results of linguistic and visual analysis. In Section 6, the results of the analysis are discussed with reference to background knowledge and larger discourse perspectives surrounding skinniness as an identity. Finally, Section 7 provides concluding remarks and ideas for further research.

2 Background

Before moving onto a more in-depth introduction of the Skinni Société, certain concepts need to be explored. First, identity is defined, after which skinniness and the connotations it has in Western discourse are discussed. This is followed by consideration of the ways skinniness can be construed as an identity itself. Lastly, The Skinni Société's operation is examined in greater detail to see how skinniness as an identity is presented by them.

2.1 Identity Construction

Identity is a complex concept that includes both the self-definitions of individuals and communities, as well as how they act in interpersonally (Vignoles, Schwartz, and Luyckx 2011, 2). In simple terms, identity is the answer to the question “who do you think you are” (ibid.). On an individual level, identity involves a feeling of continuity across time and different contexts (Luyckx et al. 2011, 78). Thus, identity is the bedrock upon which individuals build their sense of self. However, identity is also always in a state of flux; it continues to transform throughout an individual's life due to both internal and external factors (ibid.). For example, age, nationality, profession, religion, or being able-bodied are all central concepts to an individual's identity that are variable. Some of these aspects will inevitably change, and others may or may not change depending on a myriad of reasons ranging from an individual's evolving beliefs to social, cultural, or political influences. Evidently, individual identity is concerned with the way individuals think of themselves, act like themselves, and present themselves to the world.

Although identity is individual, there are also always social aspects to it. Some identities only exist because of an individual's role in regard to others (Vignoles, Schwartz, and Luyckx 2011, 3). Put differently, identity is defined through people's relations to one another (van Leeuwen 2021, 6). Child, parent, spouse, customer, and supervisor are just some examples of these kinds of socially born identities (Vignoles, Schwartz, and Luyckx 2011, 3). For instance, one cannot have an identity as someone's spouse without a spouse, which highlights the importance relationships have in the composition of identity. Connected to this is also the fact that identities often require the acceptance of other people to be considered to exist. Identity is socially ratified; when the social recognition of an identity is lost, the identity itself either vanishes or is transformed into another one (van Leeuwen 2021, 19). For example, an individual cannot just claim to be a neurosurgeon even if they could perform the duties of one

on a technical level. They need to also be accepted as a neurosurgeon by other people and the proper organizations to be allowed into an operating room.

Interpersonal relationships are not only important in defining individual identities, but they are also key in forming the identities shared by communities. Communities share *group identities*, which are derived from a sense of belonging based on the comparison of positive in-group associations against other groups (Spears 2011, 203). For example, a group identity of a nation state rests on the shared traditions, as well as the characteristic traits, dispositions, and behaviours that are a part its “national character” (van Leeuwen 2021, 16). These national qualities can be compared with other nations to differentiate and define the group identity of a nation. The juxtaposition between groups that individuals are a part of and the ones that they do not belong to also motivates the maintenance of positive group distinctiveness shared by specific communities (Spears 2011, 203). As the in-group is seen positively against other groups, seeking belonging and the upkeep of a unique group character become important duties of the in-group members.

A specific kind of group identity are lifestyle identities. *Lifestyle identities* are focused on leisure time activities and commodities, and they are freely chosen by individuals and subject to being transformed by changing societal trends (van Leeuwen 2021, 20). For example, being vegan or goth are lifestyle identities. With lifestyle identities, community is based on a shared understanding of the world, common values, specific aesthetic qualities in appearance, and common interests (ibid.). Lifestyle communities are also common on social media as many users construct their content in a thematically consistent way to maintain a specific appearance (Leaver, Highfield and Abidin 2020, 107). In essence, identity online has become a kind of brand that is used to seek recognition through engagement (van Leeuwen 2021, 21). Because lifestyle identities are freely chosen, actors on social media can create a curated lifestyle identity around their account to attract followers who find it appealing. An account with a strong sense of identity accumulates a more loyal base of followers, who are driven to maintain group identity. This makes lifestyle identity a useful tool for all kinds of individual users, organizations, and communities, who strive for a devoted and ever-growing following.

To summarise, identity is a combination of an individual’s sense of self, their relationships, the recognition of others, and a sense of community with specific groups. Identity can both be acquired due to unchangeable aspects of an individual’s existence or it can be chosen freely. All the aspects of identity coexist, interact, and intersect with one another (Vignoles,

Schwartz, and Luyckx 2011, 4). No one is characterised by a single identity, but an individual can, for example, simultaneously have an identity as a woman, a teacher, a mom, a Christian, and a European to name some possibilities. All these identities overlap, but their relevance depends on social context (ibid.). For instance, the example individual outlined above is more likely to express their identity as a mom at home and as a teacher at the school they teach at. Additionally, identity is also about lifestyle. How individuals choose to spend their free time, express themselves aesthetically, and manifest their values can crystallize into their own group identities, which are sometimes found online.

2.2 Skinniness as Identity

Having defined identity, attention can be turned to a lifestyle identity built around being skinny. In the West, skinniness has long been a part of the ideal body image, and it is propagated by various media outlets, leading to the internalisation of this ideal through its continued emphasis (Thompson et al. 1999). For example, advertisements featuring skinny models, discussion of various dieting trends, and media reporting of weight loss medications are all avenues through which skinniness makes its way into people's lives. In media, skinniness has been seen as a permanent prerequisite for beauty at least since the 1980s (Donghi and Wennerholm 2014, 51). Today, the main outlet behind spreading ideas about what an ideal body looks like is social media (Kvardova et al. 2025, 2001). On social media, an association between attractiveness and skinniness can be seen in the prevalence of users with idealised skinny bodies (Kvardova et al. 2025, 2000). Users, especially influencers, post their bodies, share "what I eat in a day videos", and curate an aesthetic presence on various platforms. By presenting their bodies and lifestyles as ideal, these influencers reinforce and normalise ideas about the body and skinniness.

There are also moral connotations connected to the so-called ideal body. Fatness often symbolises moral failure through over-indulgence in the West (Fahs 2017, 185). Attaining a skinny bodily state is thus an act against this immorality. Furthermore, many societal authorities, such as religious, political, or scientific institutions, reinforce one another in the belief that a skinny body is the ideal (Lelwica 2006). From a moral standpoint, this is emphasized to its full extent in religious and medical ideology. For instance, in a Western context where Christianity still informs notions of morality, obesity is demonized, and gluttony is a cardinal sin (Seid 1989, 85). Medically, fat has become denounced as dangerous, and a fear of stigmatisation due to fatness leads people to conform to the prevailing medical

governance around what is deemed to be an appropriate weight (Wray and Deery 2008, 232). Of course, there are truths to be found in these moral propositions: too much of anything can be hazardous, and the health effects of a bigger body should not be ignored or underplayed. But placing strict moral judgements on people based solely on their size is reductive and only works to reinforce pre-existing ideas about what an acceptable body is.

Typically, women have also been more likely to be encouraged to become and remain skinny when compared to men. In Western countries, the ideal body type for women is characterised by skinniness, which often leads to body dissatisfaction among women (Abdoli et al. 2024, 13). Women also face more stigma due to fatness and are more likely to view skinniness as a necessity for being accepted (Fahs 2017, 185–186). This does not mean that men do not feel dissatisfied with their bodies or face stigmatisation due to being fat, but they are on average less affected by not conforming to the ideal, skinny body. There is also a greater pressure placed on women to meet cultural beauty standards, including skinniness (Riley, Evans, and Robson 2022, 50). This is realised through the proliferation of products and services designed for achieving an ideal appearance, most of which are explicitly aimed at women (ibid.). Wearing makeup, having an extensive skin care routine, removing body-hair, and even seeking beauty treatments, such as Botox injections or liposuction, are procedures typically mostly required of women. Of course, men are expected to take care of their appearance as well, but the level of scrutiny is lower, and the necessary amount of effort needed for upkeep is lesser.

Dieting is one way through which people have been encouraged to achieve the ideal body. Dieting is an aspect of *appearance-work*, a process by which people understand their bodily identity and worth (Riley, Evans, and Robson 2022, 2–3). For example, dieting as appearance-work can be realised as identifying the need to lose weight and then following a diet until a satisfactory bodily state is achieved (ibid.). Dieting then serves as a way to seek meaning and fulfilment (Lelwica 2006). Through dieting, attaining the ideal body becomes the avenue for feeling a greater sense of self-worth through the achievement of weight loss. Evidently, dieting is heavily linked with self-development, mastery, and change; a successful transformation through dieting represents an upgrade (Riley, Evans, and Robson 2022, 49). Additionally, for specifically women dieting is a way to negotiate conventional gender norms and seek the kind of power traditionally reserved for men (Lelwica 2006). It is a method of feeling a sense of control and authority by transforming the body, thus creating a connection to the traditionally masculine associations of power.

Along with dieting, social media has given rise to trends related to clean eating, fitness, and exercise habits that supposedly emphasize health as the imperative (Riley, Evans, and Robson 2022, 63). So called *fitspo* (a portmanteau of fitness and inspiration) content claims to foreground health over appearance, yet such content often simultaneously includes skinny bodies presented as the ideal (Riley, Evans, and Robson 2022, 6–7). The centring of skinny bodies in the context of health creates an association between these concepts, further reinforcing the idea of skinniness as the ideal, moral way of being. Additionally, within fitspo content the focus on representations of the idealised body adopts the language of health to make itself seem more palatable (ibid.). Body image content is more likely to be criticised when framed from the perspective of appearance concerns, but using a framing of health and fitness, fitspo content can subvert criticism while still legitimising ideas about skinniness as the ideal at the same time (ibid.). Therefore, health and fitness have become new ways for the media, especially social media actors, to spread and perpetuate ideas about the idealised skinny body.

Dieting and fitness related habits can also easily become excessive, which leads us to one well-known negative connotation of skinniness, eating disorders. Particularly *anorexia nervosa*, commonly just anorexia, is associated with skinniness. This disorder causes individuals to try to control their weight by not eating enough food, exercising excessively, or doing both (NHS 2024). These behaviours are linked to and caused in part by an internalisation of skinny ideals (Abdoli et al. 2024, 14). This illustrates the impact that culture has on body image (Abdoli et al. 2024, 14–15). As has been outlined, in a Western cultural context skinniness is seen as an ideal and moral quality, which leads to individuals seeking after it. Unfortunately, these internalised ideas about skinniness propagated by culture and media sometimes lead to disordered behaviour as individuals try to achieve the ideal body in extreme ways.

Social media also plays a role in eating disorder discourse. *Pro-ana* (pro-anorexia) accounts are spaces created and engaged in by people who have eating disorders (Lavis 2014, 11). They uphold skinniness as the ultimate goal that is worth being reached in any way possible. Sometimes the lines between pro-ana and fitspo content are not clear, as fitspo content uses similar strategies to pro-ana content (Riley, Evans, and Robson 2022, 71–72). For example, fitspo content has been found to include guilt-inducing messages about body weight, stigmatisation of fat, and dieting messages (Cohen et al. 2019, 47). Thus, both pro-ana and

fitspo content reinforce ideas about skinniness being a requirement for the ideal body, although they frame it differently. The confusion about what the message behind content truly is can lead to social media users internalising harmful ideas, as content can appear to be fitspo but fall more in line with pro-ana ideology. This is especially damaging to adolescents, as they are heavily influenced by the content they see and in a vulnerable position due to still being in their developmental years (Abdoli et al. 2024, 15). As adolescents are more likely to internalise the ideas about the skinny ideal body, they are at danger to try and achieve it via unhealthy means, which can lead to eating disorders.

Considering all the aspects discussed above, skinniness can be seen to be multifaceted in its connotations, which means that identities constructed around it are just as complex. Skinniness is seen as the ideal not only from an aesthetic angle but also from a moral perspective as well. The focus-group of skinny body ideals is also more often women, who are pressured to undertake appearance-work to gain and maintain the ideal body. Representations of these ideal bodies online are connected to health and fitness, which reinforces underlying cultural ideas about skinniness as a virtue. Despite these favourable connotations, skinniness is also inherently linked with eating disorders and pro-ana content. All these ideas are the foundation of a lifestyle identity constructed around skinniness. Important aspects of this identity are appearance-work, idealisation of a skinny body image, a health and fitness focused framing, and the interpretation of skinniness as a morally good or aspirational quality. Additionally, this identity also overlaps mostly with women and the expectations of femininity in the West.

2.3 @theskinnisociete

As was mentioned in the Introduction, the Skinni Société (henceforth the Société) is an Instagram community focused on weight loss. The profile description found on the Société's home page paints a specific picture of their ideology and aims. The Société's mission statement is crystalised succinctly by the slogan "Skinni [sic] is a mindset" (The Skinni Société n.d.), which evokes ideas of skinniness as a state of being that is achievable through mental adaptability and fortitude. They go on further to state how their intentions are about being structured, disciplined, and tasteful, contrasting with restriction, disordered eating, and starvation, which they do not claim to stand for (ibid.). Based on this information, it can be inferred that the Société's target audience are individuals, who want to lose weight, but do so without excessive restriction or disorder eating. Furthermore, as was described in the

Introduction, the Société is also exclusively for women only, which defines the target audience even more.

A typical post by the Société includes both linguistic and visual elements. An image posted by them is composed of a photograph or multiple photographs, accompanied by written text constructed of short paragraphs or lists. Figure 1 illustrates the style of an average post by the Société (for further examples, see Appendix 1):

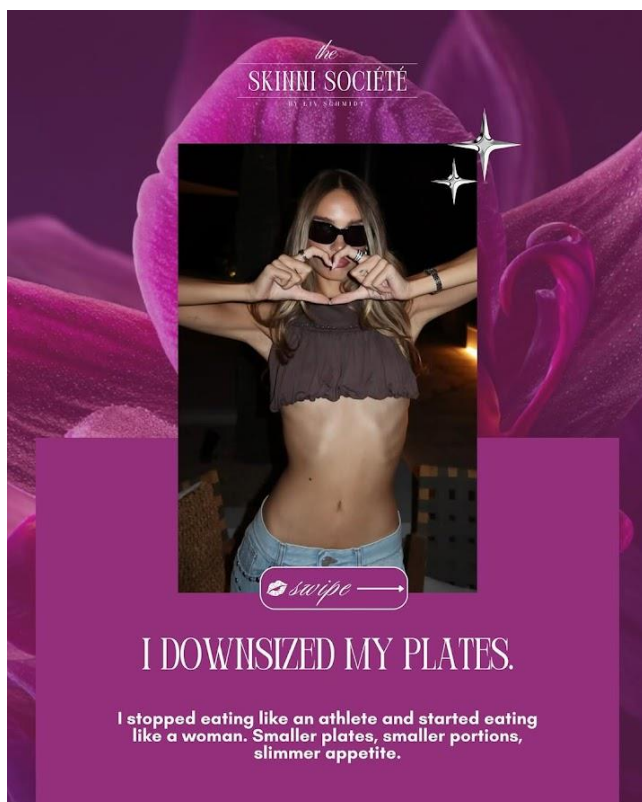


Figure 1 A Typical Post by the Skinni Société (The Skinni Société 2025a)

Figure 1 shows that the images posted by the Société typically include photographs of women in a focal position, with a larger title text followed by the main body of the written material. The title introduces the topic in an image, here being the downsizing of plates. The main written text then expands upon it and usually defines what the title means. For example, in Figure 1 the paragraph below the title explains why the downsizing of plates was done. Most of the images on the Société's page follow this formula (outliers are discussed in Section 4.1.2), which gives their messaging a uniform style.

Moving onto the operation of the Société. As mentioned previously, the Société functions as a weight loss guidance and support community. Women can apply to become members of the Société by filling out an application form linked on the Société's page (The Skinni Société

n.d.). If they are accepted, they are placed in a private group made up of 250 members that is assigned five moderators, who help them with their weight loss journey. This private group has their own chat forum, where they can share experiences, as well as ask for guidance from the moderators. Additionally, only one of these private groups is formed each month, which creates a sense of competition in the application process, and a feeling of exclusivity for those accepted. The sense of limited access is further heightened by the application acceptance being affected by speed; applicants who fill the form faster are more likely to be accepted first. This shows how the Société wants to create a feeling of urgency in their potential applicants, as well as an air of premier group inclusion in those accepted as members.

It is also important to note that the Société has a commercial aspect to it. For example, being accepted to a private group entails completing a payment, which unfortunately is only known for those whose applications are accepted, leaving the price unknown in this study.

Nevertheless, requiring payment for full group access shows that the Société does not attempt to support all women who want to lose weight, just the ones who are willing to pay the price they set. Additionally, on the Instagram page of the Société are links to various products available for purchase (The Skinni Société n.d.). These include material paraphernalia, such as portion control plates, survival guides for holiday seasons, and the official habit tracker of the Société. “The 30-Day New Me Tracker” is designed to help with planning a suitable way for forming habits that help with weight loss (Schmidt n.d.). The payment needed for group access and the products sold by the Société show how its mission is not only to support weight loss but also to make monetary gains by doing so.

It is also important to note the person behind the Société’s communication and actions. The Société was founded by Liv Schmidt, a content creator that has built her multiplatform social media presence on dieting tips and wanting to be skinny (Quittner, 2024). Schmidt’s actions on social media have not gone without critique, as she has been claimed to promote disordered eating and pro-ana ideology (ibid.). For example, her controversial ideas have led to her TikTok account being banned and removed from the platform due to violating its community guidelines (ibid.). The same fate also fell unto the first Instagram account of the Société, with the current account being the second attempt at a presence on the platform (Schmidt 2025a). This rebirth of the Société shows how Schmidt as the voice behind it is adamant about maintaining her status as one of the actors influencing the skinniness trend on social media.

The precarious history between Schmidt and social media sites can be seen as an influence on the unusual name she chose for the Société. Appearing in the name is the word *Skinni*, a purposefully misspelt and continuously capitalised version of *skinny*. Schmidt has described how the word *skinny* had become associated with shameful and stereotyped implications, such as starvation (Schmidt 2025b). Thus, *Skinni* is a reclamation of what skinniness is. This reclamation focuses on the positive aspects of living a skinny lifestyle, at least from Schmidt's perspective. In her opinion, *Skinni* is the idea of discipline, elegance, and fun without the connotation of punishment, obsession, or guilt (ibid.). In other words, it is not about a number on a scale, but about the mindset required for living in a *Skinni* way (ibid.). Skinniness in the Société's view then, should not be considered negatively, but instead it should be viewed as a more neutral value that one can adopt to live a certain way.

Despite wanting to distance themselves from the negative connotations of skinniness, the ideology put forth by the Société nonetheless echoes long standing ideas about skinniness in the West. Being a community for weight loss, the Société inherently presents occupying a smaller body and striving towards skinniness as an achievement worthy of pursuit. This connects to the moral connotations of skinniness and the expectation of conforming to a skinny body ideal placed on women outlined in Section 2.2. Separating skinniness from the pre-established, underlying cultural associations is perhaps not possible, which will be investigated in-depth later. The propagation of normalised ideas about a *Skinni* lifestyle found in the Société's messaging will become clear in the Analysis and Discussion sections of this thesis when the identity construction of a *Skinni* lifestyle is explored. However, before that, the theoretical tools and methodological approach used to conduct this exploration need to be outlined in the following sections.

3 Theoretical Framework

As outlined above, the analytical framework of this thesis is built upon both linguistic and visual theory. For the linguistic analysis, Halliday's *Functional Grammar* is used, whereas the analysis of the visual elements is done using Kress and van Leeuwen's *Visual Grammar*. In addition, *Critical Discourse Analysis* is used for discussion of identity construction drawn from the results of analysis of the two respective grammars. Below, these analytical approaches are explained in depth.

3.1 Functional Grammar

Functional Grammar is a part of *Systemic Functional Linguistics* (henceforth SFL), a semiotic theory that is focused on language as systems of meaning (Bowcher 2019, 1). According to Halliday, the founder of SFL theory, language is a resource for making meanings, which are realised through texts (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 3). A text is any example of language in whatever medium, which can be understood by someone who is familiar with the language it is in (*ibid.*). For example, newspaper articles, speeches, to-do lists, or photographs are all texts to be shared and interpreted. Texts also help to place language in context (*ibid.*). Texts create the concrete, functional examples of language in use, from which meaning can be derived. Thus, language is the linchpin of making sense of lived experiences and acting out relationships in the social environment we live in (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 30). Functional Grammar seeks to understand how different grammatical structures are used for this meaning making in specific contexts.

In SFL, language serves three main *metafunctions*: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. Metafunctions are the basic functions of language in a social context (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 30). They describe what we use language for when we need its functionality for some purpose. The *ideational* metafunction provides a framework for understanding the world we live in (*ibid.*). Through language we create and interpret the meanings we assign to the objects, environments, and abstract ideas we encounter, which is what the ideational metafunction facilitates. On the other hand, the *interpersonal* metafunction is used for enacting social relationships through different actions, such as offers requests or expressions of opinions (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 30). Lastly, the *textual* metafunction enables the two other metafunctions. It allows us to construct discursive sequences, organise the flow of information, and create the necessary cohesion for language

to make sense (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 30–31). Without continuity and logic all other purposes of language would fall apart, which is why the textual metafunction is needed to support the other ones. The focus of this thesis is on the ideational metafunction, which is why the other two metafunctions shall not be considered further despite their overall importance in language.

The ideational metafunction is realised through different clause types. In lexicogrammar, the *clause* is the central processing unit of language (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 10). This is why it is an appropriate unit for the level of analysis in this thesis. Within the clause, meanings are mapped onto an integrated grammatical structure (ibid.), which enables analysis based on the different ways this structure can be realised. There are six clause types that each represent a different kind ideation: Material, Behavioural, Mental, Verbal, Relational, and Existential. All these clause types describe different aspects of ideation, from narrating external events to expressing internal sensations and opinions.

Each ideational clause consists of a configuration, which is formed by a Process and Participants (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 213). The *Process* describes an action, and the *Participants* are the parties taking part in the Process (ibid.). The Process is the mandatory element of a configuration, while the Participants are less central, but nevertheless of key importance (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 221). Typically, the Participants fall into two roles: one of them brings about the occurrence of the Process and the other is in some way affected by it (ibid.). Additionally, depending on the clause type, the number of Participants varies. For example, some clauses necessitate two Participants, others only allow for one, and sometimes the second Participant can be optional. Different clause types also give their own titles to Participants, whereas the Process is always referred to by the same title. Table 1 shows the configurations of the clause types and briefly describes the kind of ideation they are used for:

Table 1 Configurations and Descriptions of Ideational Clause Types

| Clause type | Configuration | Description |
|--------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Material | Actor + Process + (Goal) | Processes of doing and happening; changes in the external flow of events via some input of energy (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 224). |
| Behavioural | Behaver + Process | Physiological and psychological processes of (typically human) behaviour (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 301). |

| Clause type | Configuration | Description |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Mental | Senser + Process + Phenomenon | Clauses of sensing and experience; changes in the flow of experience in the consciousness (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 245). |
| Verbal | Sayer + Process + (Receiver) | Clauses of saying; someone saying something in discursive narrative (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 302). |
| Relational | Be-er 1 + Process + Be-er 2 | Characterise and identify; say something about what an item is (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 259). |
| Existential | Existent + Process | Describes something existing or happening (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 307). |

From Table 1, it can be observed that there are similarities in the configurations between clause types. For example, in Material and Verbal clauses, the second Participant is optional. This is understandable when considering that not all Processes are transitive and thus do not require a Goal. The same goes for Verbal Processes; there is not always someone to receive what is said. In contrast, Mental and Relational clauses require two Participants. This makes sense, as sensing something cannot happen if there is no Phenomena to sense. Similarly, a Be-er 1 Participant cannot be characterised without having a Be-er 2 Participant that holds the attribute being given. Behavioural and Existential clauses only have one Participant. This is due to repeated behaviour not really being something that could be described as happening once to some receiving party. In the same vein, existence can only be described through making a statement about some entity existing, discarding the need for a second Participant.

To further illustrate the differences between the clause types, Table 2 includes examples of each one (all linguistic examples are taken from the research material collected):

Table 2 Examples of Ideational Clause Types (Participants Italicized and Processes in Bold)

| Clause type | Example |
|--------------------|--|
| Material | <i>We don't restrict, The scale went up, Investigate the craving</i> |
| Behavioural | <i>No one's watching, I sleep like a baby, Snacks calling your name</i> |
| Mental | <i>You can enjoy the holidays, You will see discipline, You can't hear your body's signals</i> |
| Verbal | <i>Don't ask others for their weight, I'm not saying ignore calories, Repeat quietly</i> |
| Relational | <i>You need to raise your standards, The Skinni Société is my insurance plan, Most cravings are just mismanaged emotions</i> |
| Existential | <i>There is always an answer, There is a difference between restriction and refinement</i> |

Examining examples of the kinds of Processes and Participants included in ideational clauses can reveal the way these clauses are used for representing different aspects of our existence. One of these aspects is identity, in the case of this thesis a lifestyle identity constructed around skinniness on the Société's Instagram page. Observing the way that the Société used different clause types uncovers how they construe the skinny identity and skinniness. For example, through Relational clauses they can characterise skinniness or a skinny lifestyle, through Material clauses they can show and tell what kinds of actions people living a skinny lifestyle undertake, or through Mental clauses they can describe how skinniness feels. This ability to define and differentiate a skinny lifestyle granted by the ideational metafunction is why it was chosen as the focal point of the linguistic analysis in this thesis.

Lastly, it is important to note that the boundaries between the clause types are not perfectly set in stone. There are configurations that are more prototypical for certain clause types, but simultaneously the different Process types realised in ideational clauses sometimes overlap, which shows the fuzzy limits between categories (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 216). This is due to the principle of *systemic indeterminacy*. As our human experience of the world is distinctly indeterminate, so is the way that grammar construes that experience through the system of ideational process types (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 217). This means that some clauses, especially less prototypical ones, might be interpreted differently depending on the person doing the interpreting and the context of interpretation. Nevertheless, the clause types outlined in this section can still be used to formally analyse language that constitutes ideation.

3.2 Visual Grammar

For the purposes of visual analysis, Visual Grammar coordinates well with Functional Grammar, as its creators were directly inspired by Halliday's work (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 2). Both grammars have a focus on the study of specific grammatical signifiers that can be used as resources for interpreting experiences and as tools for social interaction (ibid.). Thus, both grammars are also semiotically oriented, as they try to uncover how meanings can be made within different media. More specifically, the theory of Visual Grammar describes a system of "the explicit and implicit knowledge of the elements and rules underlying a culture-specific form of visual communication" (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 4). In other words, it is a system for analysing how different visual resources effect the way an image is interpreted in specific contexts. Hence, Visual Grammar is an attempt at formalising certain features used

in visual design and communication in a similar way in which specific lexicogrammatical features are formalised in linguistic theory, such as Functional Grammar.

There are various resources that can be used by communicators in the visual mode just as in written language. These resources function similarly to the different clause types introduced in Section 3.1, as both can be used to construct, convey, and interpret meanings. The specific visual resources that are analysed in this thesis are Contact, Social Distance, and Power. All of them exist under the umbrella of interactive meaning. *Interactive meaning* is the embodied, or subconsciously internalised, knowledge of everyday visual communication shared by a community (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 103). For example, this knowledge can tell us when to look someone in the eye and when to avoid eye contact, or what kind of distance to keep from others when interacting with them. Contact, Social Distance, and Power rely on the knowledge provided by interactive meaning and can thus be used to evoke different aspects of it to guide how an image is meant to be interpreted. This process will become clearer when examining each visual resource, which is done below starting with Contact.

Contact is a visual resource that is based on *gaze*. When viewing an image with a depiction of a person, called the *Represented Participant* (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 101), they can either look straight at the Viewer or look away from them. The kind of image where the Represented Participant's (henceforth *Participant*) and Viewer's gazes meet is called a *Demand* (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 104). When eye-contact is established, the Participant is inviting the Viewer into a relationship with them (*ibid.*). A Demand wants something from the Viewer (*ibid.*); it creates a sense of direct address. On the other hand, an image where the Participant's gaze does not meet the Viewer's is called an *Offer* (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 105). With an Offer, the Viewer's role is of an onlooker as no connection is created with the Participant (*ibid.*). An Offer does not want anything from the Viewer; it simply presents the Participants as objects of impersonal contemplation (*ibid.*). Figure 2 illustrates the difference between a Demand and an Offer (all visual examples are taken from the research material collected):



Figure 2 Example of a Demand and an Offer (The Skinni Société 2025b)

In Figure 2, the photograph of the person on the left is an Offer and the photograph of the person on the right is a Demand. As can be seen, Demands and Offers create different ways for the Viewer to approach them. Demands want connection and to directly influence the Viewer, whereas Offers focus on more objective representation.

Social Distance is a dimension connected to the choice between representing a Participant in close, medium, or long shot (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 108). The close shot includes the Participant from the shoulders up, the medium shot shows the Participant roughly above the knees, and the long shot depicts the full body of the Participant (ibid.). It is important to note that the boundaries between the shot types are somewhat up to interpretation, but they generally offer a way to categorise the way Participants appear within frames. The level of Social Distance between the Viewer and Participant corresponds with how much of the Participant is shown: close shots are *Personal*, medium shots *Social*, and long shots *Impersonal* (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 109). Figure 3 shows how Social Distance can be portrayed:



Figure 3 Example of Personal, Social, and Impersonal Distance (The Skinni Société 2025c: The Skinni Société 2025d: The Skinni Société 2025e)

Within Figure 3, the leftmost photograph illustrates Personal Distance, the middle one shows Social Distance, and the rightmost displays Impersonal Distance. Clearly, the levels of Social Distance create varying senses of how close the Viewer and Participant are supposed to be, which affects the meaning of the images.

Lastly, *Power* is a visual resource that is connected to the angle from which the Participant is depicted (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 120). When the Participant is seen from a high angle, the Power is with the Viewer (*ibid.*), which is called Viewer Power. Vice versa, when the depiction of the Participant is from a low angle, they have the Power, creating Participant Power (*ibid.*). If the Viewer and Participant are at eye level with one another, the Power is equal (*ibid.*), which creates Equal Power. Figure 3 demonstrates the way Power can be conveyed. The person in the lefthand photograph is shot from below, so the Power is with the Participant. In contrast, the person in the middle is shot from above, meaning the Viewer has the Power. The righthand photograph has a neutral angle of depiction, which creates Equal Power. Clearly, the angle of depiction contributes to the meaning of an image.

All these resources of interactive meaning also co-occur with one another in images to layer meanings into more complex networks. For example, an image can depict a Participant in an Offer, from an Impersonal distance, and as the holder of Power in the image. The varied ways in which Contact, Social Distance, and Power can be combined create a wide range of meaning making potential. This potential is useful for identity construction, which is why these specific resources were chosen as the analytical tools in this thesis. Identity is inherently

social in nature and born from the relationships between people. The visual resources discussed above reflect these social aspects. For instance, Contact can be used to create a direct relationship between the Viewer and Participant for a sense of belonging, or Power can be used to convey equal social standing in a group. Examining how the Société employs these resources in their visual communication is a way to see how they construct a group identity around a Skinni lifestyle.

3.3 Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) is a field of study that is focused on the relationship between language and power. CDA sees language as a form of highly contextually dependent social action (Fairclough and Wodak 1997, 258). This means that to understand the underlying intentions of language use, the context of the use must be considered as well. Furthermore, discourse is shaped by the social context it appears in, but it also shapes the social context back in turn. Through language, certain social norms are upheld as the status quo, but through linguistic choices these normalised elements can also be transformed (ibid.). For example, a simple linguistic choice, such as whether members of a police force are referred to as *policemen* or *police-officers*, can illustrate underlying attitudes or expectations. As police-work has traditionally been viewed as masculine, using the word *policemen* might reflect a more conservative viewpoint, whereas using *police-officers* can signal a more progressive angle. CDA allows for a better understanding of the kinds of assumptions and logic these linguistic choices rely upon (Machin and Mayr 2023). Thus, observation of the language use of individuals, groups, or institutions can reveal their deeper ideological intentions.

CDA also has many subfields focused on specific power imbalances, methodological approaches, and analytical foci. For the purposes of this thesis, two subfields are especially beneficial: *Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis* (henceforth MCDA) and *Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis* (henceforth FCDA). As the research material used in this thesis is multimodal in nature, MCDA is a great fit. MCDA strives to move away from the notion that language is the only site for meaning making (Ledin and Machin 2018, 62). Instead, it uses the established traditions of linguistic analysis and applies them to other semiotic resources, such as images (ibid.). This should seem familiar, as it is very similar to the way Kress and van Leeuwen adapted Halliday's notions of semiosis in their *Visual Grammar*. From an MCDA perspective then, individual elements found in images can signify the underlying

discourses within them (Machin and Mayer 2023), just as specific linguistic choices can reveal discourses found in language.

Another important tenet in MCDA is that different kinds of semiotic resources should not be conceived as independent modes because they always operate in relationship with one another (Ledin and Machin 2018, 61). For example, when reading a map, it is the amalgamation of both linguistic and visual features that allows for it to be interpreted correctly. Without the visual elements, such as layout, icons, or colours, one would be left with an assorted list of random names for places or geographical features. Vice versa, without linguistic features, all that would be left is an ambiguous image of a location, which can surely be helpful for some purposes, but falls short when trying to navigate a place where words are used to identify elements, such as a city for instance. This shows the inherent interdependency between semiotic resources, and why regarding them as an interwoven network is important (Ledin and Machin 2018, 64). For the purposes of this thesis, this holistic view of different semiotic resources is fitting, as the aim is to understand how a combination of both linguistic and visual features is used to build a specific identity.

On the other hand, FCDA focuses specifically on how gender-based inequalities, and the power imbalances created by them, become “common sense” (Lazar 2018, 372). An example of this normalisation is the *policeman* or *police-officer* choice mentioned above. Only using the word *policemen* makes the idea that only men can be a part of the police force sound like common sense, normalising the idea of policework as a strictly masculine sphere. On the other hand, using *police-officer* challenges this perspective and offers a more neutral stand towards who policework is for. This is in line with FCDA’s ideas of social and cultural transformation through discursive practices; within FCDA, the assumption is not that gender categories and norms are unchangeable, but that people perform their gendered identities within certain social constraints (Lazar 2018, 374). Thusly, the way gender is approached in discourse can shape and change the way people think about, act out, or evaluate gender.

Like CDA overall, FCDA tries to observe, understand, and challenge the underlying messaging found in semiotic communication, but it does so from a feminist viewpoint. As discussed in Section 2, the expectations and norms regarding skinniness are mostly woman focused. In the case of this study, this is further heightened by the Société’s own assertion of being a woman-only space. Although skinniness and the Société are connected to women and feminine ideals in society, the discourse surrounding them is more complex. A feminist

viewpoint does not necessarily only constitute consideration of gender and the imbalances in power brought on by it but strives for a more nuanced understanding of its intersectionality (Lazar 2018, 372-373). The ideas behind skinniness are multiplex, so discussion of them should also take it into account, instead of simply stating that the discourse is only upheld by sexist ideology. FCDA, then, is an apt perspective for analysing the discourse associated with skinniness.

One aspect of discourse that the different CDA approaches are fitting for researching is identity. As with other aspects of semiosis, people have a wide range of semiotic resources they can use for representing individuals and groups of people (Machin and Mayer 2023). The representative semiotic signs can be as overt as a sports team's logo printed on a shirt or the signs can be more covert or even subconscious, such as associating and perpetuating beliefs about the way a certain group of people are supposed to be. These choices enable the construction of identities through highlighting, concealing, or even omitting certain aspects of an individual's or group's character (ibid.). Additionally, the choices regarding signification contribute not only to the reproduction and maintenance of identities, but also to the way identities can be transformed (Lazar 2018, 374). The connotations and expectations placed upon specific identities can change and be challenged. This can be seen in the police-related example discussed previously. Police identity does not have to be associated with masculinity only: through semiotic decisions, it can be transformed to be more inclusive.

With this perspective on identity CDA helps to fill the gaps in the theoretical framework of this thesis. While the Functional and Visual Grammars provide a systematic approach for analysing the specific semiotic resources used, CDA permits the analysis of why they were used and what that can reveal about the Société's messaging. Identity, skinniness, and the relationship between the two are all entangled in many layers of gender norms, societal expectations, and ideological rhetoric. A critical look at the discourses in the linguistic and visual material of the Société can reveal the kinds of presumptions, ideas, and absences buried within (Machin and Mayr 2023). Hence, the critical angle provided by CDA is a useful tool for an in-depth discussion of the discourse surrounding skinniness and identity built upon it.

4 Material and Methods

This section outlines the collection process of the primary material, as well as the methodology used for its analysis. First, a short introduction to the affordances of Instagram is outlined. After that, the collection process of the material is described, including the criteria for why some material was omitted. Then, the methodological approach is expanded upon, and the steps taken are explained in detail. Lastly, consideration of the limitations and ethical questions of the analysis is undertaken.

4.1 Material

The material used consists of posts made by The Société on their Instagram page @theskinnisociete (see Appendix 1 for examples). Instagram as a platform allows for multiple affordances in communication. An *affordance* is the range of possible activities on a given platform (Norman 1999, 41). Affordances let the users choose from many communicative tools to share or find information, and to build community with other users. The affordances under consideration include image-based posts, Stories, Reels, hashtags, and captions. The most prevalent visual affordance on Instagram are image-based posts, which can include either a single image or a carousel. A *carousel* is a post formed of multiple images or videos where users can swipe through them one by one (Instagram n.d.). In addition to image-based posts, users can create Stories and Reels. *Stories* are posts that disappear after twenty-four hours (Instagram 2025). On the other hand, *Reels* are videos posted on the separate Reels-tab, which forms an unending flow of content to scroll through (ibid.). Linguistically, users can use the affordances of captions and hashtags. *Captions* are texts that can be attached to posts to accompany their visual material. They can also include *hashtags*, labels assigned to specific content to tie it to similar content that shares the same labels (Ataman 2022). For example, a post about a user's holiday might be accompanied with hashtags such as #holiday or #vacation to relate it to other similar posts.

The collection of the material from the Société's Instagram page was done following the standards of digital ethnography. Ethnography is a field of study where researchers immerse themselves in specific cultures to produce detailed qualitative studies (Ataman 2022). In digital ethnographic studies, these cultures are ones found in digital or online spaces, such as Instagram. The guiding principles of digital ethnography used in this thesis manifested themselves in the immersive material collection and analysis processes, and the in-depth

familiarity that had to be developed to complete them. Choosing suitable research material required careful consideration, which could only be built upon detailed and immersive observation. The collection process is explained in detail within the rest of this subsection.

The posts that form the material were made by the Société between May and November of 2025, with the earliest post analysed having been made on the 22nd of May and the latest on the 12th of November. The material was collected from Instagram in early November of the same year within a three-day period. During the collection process, every post on the Société's page at the time of collection was considered, as the earliest post was the first ever post made on the page and the latest post was the newest one made within the research period. The collection of material was done through screen capture, where all the images in the posts were captured one at a time. After the material was captured, it was collected into a single folder and organised in chronological order based on the dates the posts were made.

It should be noted that the research was also done on the researcher's personal Instagram account. A separate research account is necessary in some studies, as it helps to curate specific and relevant content by affecting the algorithm that guides what content is shown to a user through, for example, following pertinent users and searching for certain hashtags (Ataman 2022). Since the study undertaken in this thesis uses only material collected from a single account, there was no need for the creation of a separate research account. When looking at a single account, the algorithm plays a relatively inconsequential role because the researcher is not looking for new content that might get affected algorithmically but is instead focusing on a limited set of already curated content.

The material chosen from the Instagram page did not include every post made by The Société. The collected posts only included image-based posts, all of which were carousels formed of a minimum of five still images. Any Reels and Stories posted on the page were omitted from the analysis. Reels were excluded because of the focus on analysis of still images in this study. As Reels are often video based, they were deemed unsuitable. Stories were omitted for partially similar reasons. Stories can also include video, creating the same reasons for exclusion as Reels. However, Stories were mainly considered outside the extent of this study due to their temporary nature, which makes them fickle objects of research. Crucially, the omission of Reels and Stories was also done due to the scope of the study underhand. Including them would have made the material too numerous for a proper level of depth to be achievable in analysis.

In addition to Reels and Stories, some image-based posts were also left outside the analysis. These posts fell into three categories: wallpaper collections, recipes, and direct advertisements. The wallpaper collections are posts that are meant to be screenshot by users for use as phone wallpapers. In the case of The Société, they are typically collage-style image collections. They were omitted due to a lack of linguistic elements. Recipes were excluded for being a different genre written text from the main body of material. Their typical linguistic content was formed of ingredient lists and instructions, which meant they lacked full clauses that could fit the theoretical framework established. The advertisements of the Société promote mostly their own products. These direct advertisements were left out because the analysis of specifically product-based advertisement is not the focus of this study. Although all three omitted categories of posts can be used in identity construction, their stylistic and content-related differences make them incongruous with the rest of the material.

Additionally, neither captions nor hashtags were included in the material collected. The captions featured alongside the images posted by the Société are very simple, mostly single words or short phrases. As the captions did not include full clauses, except in a few rare occasions, and mostly repeated text included in the images themselves posted, they were deemed obsolete for the research underway. In addition to the sparse caption texts, there is also a noticeable lack of hashtags on the Société's page, which left hashtags outside the scope of analysis due to their inexistence. This absence of hashtags is unusual for an Instagram community, as hashtags are a highly indicative marker of a group's identity, ideas, and opinions (Ataman 2022). Opting out of this affordance creates a further sense of exclusivity and distance from other accounts through not creating links between similar content that could be an avenue for new users to find the Société's page.

After completing the collection process and choosing what to include in the research material, the full body of primary material eventually consisted of 36 separate Instagram posts. All the posts were carousels which included more than one image, making the total amount of analysable images 297. Within these images, 1390 clauses and 325 separate photographs used in analysis were found. The methodology for identifying, categorising, and analysing these clauses and photographs is explained in the following subsection.

4.2 Methods

The analysis was done in two parts: the linguistic analysis done within the framework of Functional Grammar and the visual analysis done in accordance with Visual Grammar.

Starting with the methodology used in linguistic analysis before moving onto the visual part, the methodological process is described below.

4.2.1 Linguistic Methodology

After the collection process, the linguistic material in the images could be analysed through the framework of Functional Grammar. The first step in analysis was the identification of suitable clauses. To be used in analysis, a clause had to include a clearly identifiable Process, as it is the obligatory element of ideational clauses (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 213). In addition, the necessary number of Participants had to be identifiable as well. For example, in the case of a Relational clause, identifying the Process was not enough alone, but a suitable Be-er 1 and Be-er 2 had to be identifiable as well. In the case of imperative clauses, the Participant responsible for the unfolding of the Process was inferred to be *you* ergo the reader. This is due to the inclusion of the “implicit you” present in imperative clauses, such as instructions (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 224). Hence, although the “implicit you” was never visibly written in the material, it could be recognised as a Participant when a clause was imperative.

After the Instagram posts were examined for applicable clauses, the 1390 clauses found were extracted from the images and transcribed into a folder for analysis. Each clause was written down separately and given its own label. The labels inform which post and image within a carousel of a post a clause was taken from. A label also shows which clause within an image a clause is. For example, the label P6I4C2 describes a clause found in the sixth post and fourth image within that post in the material. It also shows that the clause is the second clause within an image. The numbering of posts was done chronologically from the oldest to the most recent, whereas the images were numbered based on the order they appear in a carousel when swiping through one. The numbering of the clauses was done following the order of reading; from left to right and top to bottom.

After identifying and labelling the clauses, they were categorised into the ideational clause types. Thus, each clause was placed into either the Material, Behavioural, Mental, Verbal, Relational, or Existential category. After this initial round of analysis, the Processes and Participants that formed the clauses were identified as well. They were marked into a separate file one category at a time to determine their frequency in the material. This was done to see which Processes were the most common within a given ideational clause type, and what kinds

of Actors, Goals, Behavers, Sensors, Phenomena, Sayers, Receivers, Be-er 1 Participants, Be-er 2 Participants, and Existents appeared in the material most frequently.

The different Processes and Participants were also dissected further when it came to two concepts: negation and pronouns. The categorisation of Processes was done with consideration of negation, which meant that verbs and their negated forms were regarded as different items despite sharing a main lexical verb. For instance, the verb *need* and its negated form (marked as *not need*) were categorised as different Processes. This was done to gain a more accurate picture of how different actions were used to characterise aspects of the Skinni identity. For instance, describing something as being Skinni and not being Skinni create totally opposing ideas, which is why considering non-negated and negated verb forms separately is pertinent. Other modifying elements of verbs, such as modal verbs, were not considered, as they are not relevant for the aims of the research in this thesis due to its focus on the ideational metafunction. The system of modality is concerned with the interpersonal metafunction (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 144) and thus is outside the scope of analysis here.

Concerning pronouns, they were categorised as Participants just as any nouns or noun groups were. However, in addition to this, during analysis their referents were also identified based on the context they appeared in. For example, if a post used the pronoun *you* it was assumed that it was in reference to the reader based on the context of them being the one reading the post. Another example would be the pronoun *I*, which could be inferred to refer to the writer of the post based on similar reasoning. The referents of pronouns were then categorised separately from nouns denoting the same thing to achieve a fuller understanding of the true breadth of the kinds of Participants present in the material. For instance, this meant that the noun group *a Skinni girl* was counted separately from a pronoun, such as *she*, referring to the same thing. Notably, this procedure only applied to pronouns with clearly identifiable referents within a given post. This generally meant personal, reflexive, or demonstrative pronouns that had clearly identifiable or inferable referents. Less specific indefinite pronouns, such as *no one* or *everyone*, did not have clear referents and thus were not a part of the described process.

4.2.2 Visual Methodology

Similarly to the linguistic material, after collection, the visual features within the images could be analysed using Visual Grammar. The visual analysis was done from the angles of

Contact, Social Distance, and Power. Due to these angles, the focus in this analysis was placed on images that portrayed people, as the theoretical framework established is very suitable for the analysis of how people are presented. A specific focus was placed on women depicted in the images. This was due to two reasons: skinniness being associated more with women in discourse and there being very few images of men on the Société's page. Only a few depictions of men were observed during analysis, which made the focus on women seem even more appropriate for this thesis. Additionally, even if other visual features found in the images, such as background elements, colour, or composition, can also be used in identity construction, distinguishing women as the main point of visual analysis anchored and formalised the research.

After the collection of material, the images in the posts were examined one by one and every depiction of a woman was identified. These photographs of women are henceforth referred to as *figures*. Within an image, multiple figures could be included (see Appendix 1, Figures 7 and 9 for example). This is why although there were 297 images examined, the total number of figures was 325. Similarly to the clauses, each figure was given a label that specifies its origin within the material. For example, the label P6I4F2 describes a figure that is in the sixth post of the material, is also in the fourth image in the carousel in that post, and is the second figure in the specific image. The figures within images were numbered in a similar vein to the clauses: from left to right and from top to bottom. If there was only one figure in an image, the labelling stopped at the image level, such as P20I3, as further detail was not needed.

Following this, analysis was undertaken one visual resource at a time. First, the figures were analysed based on Contact. They were categorised into Demands and Offers. Second, the analysis of Social Distance was done. The figures were categorised as either being Personal, Social, or Impersonal based on the framing of the Participants in the figures. During this part of analysis, a fourth category, *Highly Personal*, was created. This category was made because a portion of the close shots were noticeably more intense in their level of closeness. Typically, a close shot would include the head and upper torso of a Participant, but some of them had only a face or a partial face in them (for example see Figure 5, p. 62). Figures were placed in the Highly Personal category if the Participant in them was shot from such a close distance that the edges of their face could not be seen in the figure. Lastly, the figures were analysed from the perspective of Power. They were classed as displaying either Participant Power, Equal Power, or Viewer Power based on the angle of depiction used for the Participants in the figures.

Additionally, certain figures were found to have some features that made them unfit for the framework described above and thus lead to their omission from analysis. There were many figures that depicted women but focused on parts of the body that made them difficult to categorise. For example, some figures depicted the hands, legs, back, or torso of a Participant, leaving the face totally out of frame. The decision was made that to be included in the analysis, the depiction of a Participant had to involve their face and eyes. This would guarantee that a figure could be clearly classified as a Demand or Offer as the eyes are necessary in that process. It also ensured that Social Distance could be analysed more systematically due to the analysis having a single anchor point, the face. Furthermore, some figures had more than one Participant in them. They were chosen to be excluded from analysis to make the material more uniform. Focusing on figures with a single Participant ensures that the analysis follows a standard set of conventions without deviation.

4.2.3 Additional Considerations

It is important to note that the methodology of this thesis has some limitations. One key limitation is the involvement of only a single researcher. A single researcher is more prone to letting their own subjectivity affect their research, even if it happens subconsciously. Due to the immersive nature of ethnographic study, acknowledging the researcher's own subjectivity is a necessary part of research (Ataman 2022). If a researcher fails to consider their own subjective views and their potential influence on their research, the quality of it will be worse. Finding a balance between being deeply engaged with the material while simultaneously trying to remain as objective as possible requires constant self-reflection during research. Related to this reflectivity is the need for consideration within the theoretical framework. The categories outlined in the theoretical framework are ultimately not set in stone. Subjective interpretation affects the way the material is categorised, which is even more pronounced when analysis is done by a single person. Remaining attentive to the effects of subjectivity and trying to counteract them alleviates their limitations, but it cannot completely remove them.

Some other limitations are more practical, having to do with the scope of this study and the technical limitations it has. As has been already discussed, Reels, Stories, and some image-based posts were omitted from the material in part due to the limited size of the study at hand. Although these cut features would likely include material that might have been pertinent to research, having a realistic perspective of the amount of material that could reasonably be

analysed is also necessary. Similarly, the video material in Reels and Stories was excluded due to the technical challenges analysing video poses in comparison to still images. Analysing full videos would have required not only vast amounts of additional time but also more complex technological capabilities and tools. The relative simplicity of image-analysis was deemed to be a more suitable approach, even if the video-based material could have provided further insight into topic of research.

There are also ethical considerations related to the research in this thesis. The main ethical concern in any digital ethnographic study is consent, which is the case here as well. Users on Instagram might not want their accounts to be used in academic studies or they might not realise that it could even be a possibility. However, given that the account of the Société is not private and does not contain personal, intimate, or sensitive material, it was decided that informed consent was not needed to study it. The Société are very likely aware that the information they post publicly will be seen by people they do not know, which can be considered a reason for the acceptability of using their content for research (Burles and Bally 2018, 4). However, despite the public nature of the content, it is still important to remain cautious of the way the material is considered and discussed. “To do ethnography is to be involved in the community” (Ataman 2022), hence a respectful and empathetic manner is absolutely an element of the research design to keep in mind.

5 Analysis

The results of analysis are presented in this section. Just as with the theoretical framework and methodology, the results are shown in two parts: linguistic and visual. Starting with the results of linguistic analysis, they are first presented on the level of clause type. After this they are explored in more depth from the most to least numerous clause type category. The results of visual analysis are presented one visual resource at a time.

5.1 Results of Linguistic Analysis

As mentioned in Section 4, the total number of analysable clauses identified in the material was 1390. Table 3 shows the distribution of the six clause types within the total material:

Table 3 Results of Primary Linguistic Analysis (Total Number of Tokens: 1390)

| Clause Type | Number of Tokens | Percentage |
|-------------|------------------|------------|
| Relational | 646 | 46.5% |
| Material | 578 | 41.6% |
| Mental | 95 | 6.8% |
| Behavioural | 39 | 2.8% |
| Verbal | 30 | 2.2% |
| Existential | 2 | 0.1% |

As can be seen from Table 3, the most common category within the material were Relational clauses. Almost as numerous were Material clauses, which is somewhat unusual, as typically Material clauses are slightly more frequent in written English texts when compared to Relational ones (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 215). Nevertheless, it is still typical that these two categories were noticeably more numerous than the rest of the categories (*ibid.*). The next largest category, Mental clauses, follows the usual distribution patterns by being the third most common, although far less frequent, category (*ibid.*). The smallest three categories were predictably less frequent than the rest. However, it is notable that these clauses were even less frequent than they typically are (*ibid.*). For example, usually Verbal clauses account for almost 10% of written text (*ibid.*), despite only counting for 2.2% within the material of this thesis. The Existential clauses were also much less common than average, regardless of being the least common category overall.

5.1.1 Relational Clauses

The category-specific analysis of the different Processes and Participants starts in this subsection with the largest category, Relational clauses. When analysing the Processes found in these clauses, a distinction between non-negated and negated characterisation was made. Describing something through a non-negated and a negated Process realise completely opposite meanings regarding the object of description, which is why the distinction between Processes is crucial. This separation is also present in the analysis of the other clause types, but it is particularly salient to mention in relation to Relational clauses. Further reasoning behind this separation of non-negated and negated Processes is outlined in Section 4.2.1. Table 4 presents the frequencies of non-negated Processes of characterisation found in the clauses, while Table 5 does the same for the negated Processes:

Table 4 Frequency of Non-negated Processes of Characterisation

| Number of Occurrences (Total = 451) | Non-negated Processes of Characterisation |
|--|--|
| 298 | Be |
| 39 | Need |
| 22 | Stay |
| 12 | Keep |
| 13 | = (equal sign) |
| 11 | Make |
| 8 | Become, get |
| 7 | Have, look |
| 4 | Feel, require |
| 3 | Let be |
| 2 | Act like, look like, mean, sound like, turn |
| 1 | Call, do, exist, include, leave |

Table 5 Frequency of Negated Processes of Characterisation

| Number of Occurrences (Total = 195) | Negated Processes of Characterisation |
|--|--|
| 140 | Not be |
| 37 | Not need |
| 6 | Not make |
| 4 | Not mean |
| 3 | Not have |

| Number of Occurrences (Total = 195) | Negated Processes of Characterisation |
|--|--|
| 2 | ≠ (not equal sign) |
| 1 | Not do, not require, not stay, not turn into |

From Tables 4 and 5 it can be noted that non-negated characterisation was more common in the material, as out of the 646 Relational clauses 451 (69.8%) had Processes that characterised the Participants without negation. On the other hand, clauses with negated characterisation were the clear minority with 195 (30.2%) instances. The Processes used for non-negated characterisation also had more variety, with a larger number of different Processes. This might be partly due to there being a larger number of them, which increases the likelihood of variance.

The prevalence of the Processes *be* and *not be*, together constituting over two thirds of all Processes, is not surprising, as *be* and *have* are the two most common Relational Processes (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 262). However, it is quite unexpected that the Processes *have* and *not have* were relatively rare in the material, being overshadowed by other Processes. Specifically, the prevalence of *need* and *not need* is unexpected, which is further emphasized by both processes being nearly as common despite the negated characterisers being overall less numerous in the material. One factor affecting this is the coupling of clauses that include *need* and *not need* in the material. For example, the following clauses are presented to the reader consecutively:

- (1) You don't need a food plan. (P16I5C3)
- (2) You need a mindset that doesn't spiral. (P16I5C4)

As can be seen, these clauses are a set where they complete each other to deliver a complete message; the first clause presents a problem while the second clause offers a solution or a better option. This contrast is used as a tool to covertly instruct the reader. In addition, the word *need* creates a sense of urgency that heightens the effect that the clause-pair has on the reader.

The frequency of the Processes *stay* and *keep* also is also notable. These Processes were found in clauses that conveyed a static state of being, such as in Examples 3 and 4:

- (3) I stay Skinni year-round. (P28I10C5)

- (4) This group keeps me aware. (P9I5C2)

Both examples show how clauses that included these Processes evoke stability. This contrasts with Processes such as *make*, *become*, *get*, *not make*, *turn*, and *not turn into*, all of which express transformation. The preference for Processes that indicate a fixed character instead of change creates a sense of constancy in the Relational clauses the Société posts. It is a way to make the Société, and by extension its members, seem steadier and more confident in their Skinni identity.

Another somewhat unexpected Process type was composed of the Processes = (equal sign) and ≠ (not equal sign). The equal sign is used to communicate that something equals to, is, or means something else, while the not equal sign does the opposite. This is illustrated in Examples 5 and 6:

- (5) Maintenance = precision. (P8I2C3)
- (6) Standards ≠ self-hate. (P14I1C2)

In both examples the signs signify an equivalence or non-equivalence between the Participants in a streamlined way. Using signs relates the participants to each other succinctly, bypassing the choice of a more defined lexical item. It is a communication strategy that makes it simple to understand the message. Clear and concise messaging is beneficial to the Société, who want their messages to be easily understood, which could be why the signs were used.

The Participants found within the Relational clauses are analysed in two parts: Participants found in clauses with non-negated characterisation and the ones found in clauses with negated characterisation. As outlined in Section 3.1, Relational clauses include two mandatory Participants: *Be-er 1* and *Be-er 2*. *Be-er 1* is the one being characterised and *Be-er 2* is the value, attribute, or identity being given to *Be-er 1*. Table 6 shows the most common *Be-er 1* Participants found clauses with non-negated characterisation. Before observing Table 6, it should be outlined that the word *introductory* behind certain pronouns, such as *it* (*introductory*), indicates that these pronouns were used structurally in a clause to introduce new elements, and thus have no previously established referents. This notion also applies to such pronouns found in the other clause type categories.

Table 6 Most Frequent Be-er 1 Participants in Clauses with Non-negated Characterisation

| Number of Occurrences | Be-er 1 |
|-----------------------|---|
| 77 | You |
| 28 | “Implicit you” |
| 21 | I |
| 18 | The Skinni Société |
| 16 | Living a Skinni lifestyle |
| 12 | It (introductory) |
| 11 | Discipline |
| 10 | Skinni |
| 7 | The Skinni Pretty Much Survival Guide |
| 6 | Being Skinni, getting Skinni, this (introductory), what |

It should be noted that these are just the most frequent Be-er 1 Participants with non-negated characterisation. There was an extensive variety of them, most of which appeared only once or twice, meaning there were hundreds of different Participants to analyse. Thus, for the sake of brevity, only Be-er 1 Participants with five or more appearances are considered here due to their salience for analysis (for full list of Be-er 1 Participants see Appendix 2, Table 15). This same procedure is done with the other clause types and their elements as well. This mostly concerns Participants and Processes found in the three largest clause type categories, as the rest of the clause types were small enough in numbers to be analysed in full within text.

Moving onto the analysis of Be-er 1 Participants in clauses with non-negated characterisation, Table 6 shows that *you* was the most frequent Be-er 1, with the “implicit you” being second most frequent. Both *you* and “implicit you” refer to the reader, but they are used slightly differently, as Examples 7 and 8 illustrate:

(7) You are a woman in motion. (P26I8C12)

(8) Stay consistent. (P19I7C3)

As can be seen in Example 7, *you* is used to characterise the reader, whereas the “implicit you” in Example 8 is used to instruct them. The prevalence of these two Be-er 1 Participants illustrates the Société’s bid for connection; the Société is talking directly to the reader as if they had a relationship. Through imperative clauses, such as Example 8, this relationship also takes on a quality of mentorship with the Société acting as the guiding force.

The Société itself is characterised further with the next most common Be-er 1, *I*. It is used to refer to Schmidt as an envoy of the Société, which Example 9 shows:

(9) I need something structured. (P21I5C5)

As Schmidt is the founder of the Société and the main voice behind it, the way she is characterised reflects the group's identity. For instance, in Example 9, Schmidt proclaims a need for *something structured*. The reader is meant to relate to this and feel the same need. Using *I* is also a further way to make the relationship between the Société and the reader seem more personal, similarly to the direct address of the reader through *you* and the "implicit you".

As was shown in Table 6, the personal pronouns were followed in frequency by *The Skinni Société* and *living a Skinni lifestyle*. Other Skinni-related Participants were also frequent, such as *Skinni*, *The Skinni Pretty Much Survival Guide*, *being Skinni*, and *getting Skinni*. The Be-er 1 *discipline* is additionally related to this group due to the associations between skinniness and the need for discipline. These Be-er 1 Participants illustrate the central status skinniness has in the Société's identity. Having these Participants reoccur in Relational clauses with non-negated characterisation shows that they are the elements the Société deems important enough to describe often. The characterisation of Skinni-related Be-er 1 participants is also a direct channel for observing the Société's messaging as it overtly illustrates their ideas about what skinniness is.

Having introduced the most frequent Be-er 1 Participants, their related Be-er 2 Participants can be analysed next. For the sake of clarity, the Be-er 2 Participants were separated into five classes: Items, Abstract items, States of being, Qualities, and Actions. *Items* describe real-world objects, people, and places, whereas *Abstract items* include more intangible elements, such as conceptual ideas and immaterial objects. *States of being* express the way something exists, and *Qualities* describe the inherent nature of something. Lastly, *Actions* include activities and processes happening across time. It should be noted that these classes are not set in stone and are influenced by interpretation. Nonetheless, these classes mitigate some of the convolutions in presenting, analysing, and discussing the Be-er 2 Participants. Table 7 displays the most frequent Be-er 2 Participants in clauses with non-negated characterisation (for full list see Appendix 2, Table 15):

Table 7 Most Frequent Be-er 2 Participants in Clauses with Non-negated Characterisation

| Be-er 1 | Be-er 2 | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|--------|---|
| | Class | Number | Examples |
| You | Item | 18 | Your own Skinni Société, a blueprint, fewer decisions |
| | Abstract item | 18 | Discipline, a new identity, a standard, confidence |
| | State of being | 9 | Off code, festive without being full, being observed |
| | Quality | 17 | Skinni, insecure, just dramatic, addicted to guilt |
| | Action | 15 | To raise your standards, to cut excess |
| “Implicit you” | Item | 2 | A VS angel |
| | Abstract item | 1 | The energy |
| | State of being | 5 | On topic, in control of your body |
| | Quality | 20 | Balanced, Skinni, aware, consistent |
| I | Item | 2 | A skinny body, skinny habits |
| | Abstract item | 2 | Something structured, partnership |
| | State of being | 2 | Remembered for my presence |
| | Quality | 15 | Skinni, light, organized, wanted, present |
| The Skinni Société | Item | 13 | A weight loss group, a structure-focused group |
| | Abstract item | 2 | An identity shift, about direction |
| | Quality | 1 | Curated and intimate |
| | Action | 2 | Making wellness cool again |
| Living a Skinni lifestyle | Item | 3 | The Skinni algorithm, about rules |
| | Abstract item | 9 | Refinement, default, standard, the upgrade |
| | Quality | 1 | Realistic |
| | Action | 3 | About staying in tune with what feels best |
| It (introductory) | Item | 3 | What’s on your plate, a directive |
| | Abstract item | 2 | Identity |
| | State of being | 2 | About being strategic |
| | Quality | 2 | Important, okay |
| | Action | 3 | About returning to self, about holding a standard |
| Discipline | Item | 2 | A calm nervous system |
| | Abstract item | 5 | Direction, the highest form of elegance |
| | State of being | 2 | Being on time with your fuel |
| | Quality | 1 | Quiet |
| | Action | 1 | About opting in |
| Skinni | Item | 1 | About a return to speed |
| | Abstract item | 5 | A mindset, about repetition, personal power |
| | Quality | 2 | Deliberate, consistent |
| | Action | 2 | About finally thinking differently |

| Be-er 1 | Be-er 2 | | |
|--|----------------|--------|--|
| | Class | Number | Examples |
| The Skinni Pretty Much Survival Guide | Item | 7 | 100 pages of portion control, 100 pages of confidence in social settings, your roadmap to survive sugar season |
| Being Skinni | Abstract item | 3 | A service to myself, about presence, about reputation |
| | Quality | 1 | Rented |
| | Action | 2 | About thinking less about eating |
| Getting Skinni | Abstract item | 2 | Standards, about regulation |
| | State of being | 1 | Where we lead |
| | Quality | 2 | Structure, easy |
| | Action | 1 | About thinking differently |
| This (introductory) | Item | 3 | The new you, your scale sanity check |
| | Abstract item | 3 | The Skinni mindset |
| What | Item | 3 | Your personal strategy for stopping after one chic bite |
| | Abstract item | 1 | The point |
| | Quality | 2 | Different; light, lean, and clear-headed |

Based on Table 7 *you* is characterised equally through all the outlined classes, apart from States of being, which was slightly less used. The Items and Abstract items used to characterise *you* mostly focus on structure and a need for transformation. Structure is conveyed through such Be-er 2 Participants as *a blueprint, discipline, something to follow, rules, a protocol, less chaos, a mindset that doesn't spiral, a standard, your own Skinni Société, rhythm, and fewer decisions*. On the other hand, a need for transformation can be seen in *a reset, a new identity, and a rewire*. These Be-er 2 Participants describe *you* as someone in need of direction and change, which the Société can and more importantly wants to provide.

The Qualities used to characterise *you* fall into two types. The first type describes the reader in negative terms, such as *just undisciplined, just dramatic, insecure, addicted to guilt, anxious, and consumed*. On the other hand, the second type offers a much more favourable characterisation through, for example, *skinny, Skinni, expensive, smarter, confident, and more consistent*. This dichotomy is created because the Société wants to present itself as a solution to its followers' problems. The first Quality type is used to describe the reader before they have found and followed the Société, whereas the second type is used to characterise them after they have started to live the Skinni lifestyle the Société teaches.

The Actions used for describing *you* also follow a similar scheme. There is a need for transformation that can be seen, such as *to start over*, *to look like the most undeniable version of you*, and *to skinify it* (dessert). These Actions convey that either the reader must change or that they need to change something to be more aligned to the Skinni lifestyle. Similarly, an association with a need for structure is conveyed in the Actions *to raise your standards*, *to cut excess*, *to go to bed*, *to stop negotiating with the one* (routine) *that works*, and *to stop being controlled by them* (calories). Such Actions describe how the reader should act to gain a more structured and standardised way of living. In addition, there were some Actions that characterised the reader as doing unfavourable activities, like *holding* and *looking for a hit*. These were used in the same way as the negative Qualities: to describe the reader before finding the Société.

In contrast to *you*, the “implicit you” and *I* were both overwhelmingly characterised through Qualities. There was also plenty of overlap in the qualities described, for example *Skinni* was used to describe both Be-er 1 Participants multiple times. Other qualities were not exactly the same, but similar in their connotations. For example, the “implicit you” was characterised as *focused*, *aware*, *connected*, *consistent*, and *structured*, whereas *I* was described as *organized*, *present*, *sharp*, and *lean*. All these qualities are what the Société encourages its members to strive for to achieve a Skinni lifestyle. Other classifications also shared a conceptual connections to skinniness and the Société. For example, these include *a VS angel*, *a skinny body*, and *skinny habits*. It is also noteworthy that neither the “implicit you” nor *I* were characterised through Actions, which makes these two Be-er 1 Participants seem passive.

The Skinni related Be-er 1 Participants most often had Be-er 2 counterparts that were either Items or Abstract items, although other classifications also occurred. *The Skinni Société* was characterised through Items which described it as *a weight loss group*, *a structured transformation container*, *a space for empowerment and motivation*, *a transformation group*, *your blueprint*, and *a secure and sacred place*. Clearly, the ideas about transformation and achieving a Skinni lifestyle are present here too. On the other hand, *Skinni* itself was described via Abstract items, such as *a standard*, *personal power*, *a mindset*, *about a return to speed*, and *about repetition*, which follow similar thematic ideas as the other Be-er 2 Participants. *Being Skinni* and *getting Skinni* also fall into these themes, with *Being Skinni* getting described as being *a service to myself*, *about reputation*, *rented*, and *about thinking less about eating*, whereas *getting Skinni* was characterised through *standards*, *about regulation*, *structure*, and *about thinking differently*.

Lastly, *discipline* was characterised most through Abstract items. There was a strong link created between *discipline* and the concept of luxury, which can be seen in Be-er 2 Participants *the quietest luxury, your quiet luxury, and the highest form of elegance*. Additionally, discipline was characterised as something calm, seen in the Be-er 2 Participants *a calm nervous system and quiet*. This can also be seen in connection to luxury, as *discipline* is described as a quiet form of it. It was also portrayed as a personal choice to be made with the Action *about opting in*. All these characteristics make discipline seem like a necessity for an elegant and poised way of behaving.

Next, the results of the analysis of the Be-er 1 and Be-er 2 Participants found in clauses with negated characterisation are presented. Starting with the Be-er 1 Participants, Table 8 shows the most frequent Be-er 1 Participants (for full list see Appendix 2, Table 16):

Table 8 Most Frequent Be-er 1 Participants in Clauses with Negated Characterisation

| Number of Occurrences | Be-er 1 |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 61 | You |
| 10 | I, it (introductory) |
| 8 | Skinni |
| 6 | The Skinni Société |
| 5 | Discipline |
| 5 | Living a Skinni lifestyle |

Table 8 clearly displays the similarities between the Be-er 1 Participants in clauses with non-negated and negated characterisation. *You* and *I* appeared among the most recurrent Be-er 1 positions again and were used in much the same manner as they were in clauses with positive characterisation. They were used to evoke a relationship between the Société and the reader through direct contact and personalised messaging. Additionally, the other recurrent Be-er 1 Participants, *Skinni, The Skinni Société, discipline, and living a Skinni lifestyle*, are used in similar ways to the clauses with non-negated characterisation as well. They show the importance of characterising Skinni-related elements for the Société's identity.

Despite the similarities between the Be-er 1 Participants in non-negated and negated clauses, there was one noteworthy divergence: the lack of the "implicit you" as a common Be-er 1 in the clauses with negated characterisation. There were only three instances of the "implicit you" in these clauses. This lack implies that the Société prefers to instruct its members

through non-negated processes instead of negated ones. One reason behind this strategy could be the confrontational nature of negated imperative clauses. For example, compare the pair of clauses below:

(10) Be aware enough to know what's worth it. (P34I7C4)

(11) But [do] not [be] obsessed enough to ruin it. (P34I7C5)

The negated verb in Example 11 feels harsh and like an order, whereas the non-negated form in Example 10 feels more lenient and like the Société is simply aiming to guide the reader instead of commanding them. As the Société wants to create a sense of community with its members, the more severe sounding negated forms could be counteractive to their aims.

Moving onto the Be-er 2 Participants, they were classified in the same way as in the clauses with non-negated characterisation. Table 9 shows the most frequent Be-er 2 Participants in negated clauses (for full list see Appendix 2, Table 16):

Table 9 Most Frequent Be-er 2 Participants in Clauses with Negated Characterisation

| Be-er 1 | Be-er 2 | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|--------|---|
| | Class | Number | Examples |
| You | Item | 17 | A food scale, less food, another fad, a detox |
| | Abstract item | 6 | Motivation, more discipline, more willpower |
| | State of being | 10 | On a diet, off track, being polite, "faking it" |
| | Quality | 9 | Stuck, hungry, addicted to food, lazy |
| | Action | 19 | To skip Thanksgiving, to restrict, to "add things back" |
| I | Item | 2 | A child, something sweet |
| | Abstract item | 1 | Pressure |
| | State of being | 4 | In the mood, drowning in my own chaos |
| | Quality | 1 | Anti-science |
| | Action | 2 | Looking to add calories, to recover from my lifestyle |
| It (introductory) | Item | 6 | The pizza, about food, your job to track my calories |
| | State of being | 2 | About being sweaty |
| | Action | 2 | About hiding, about bouncing back |
| Skinni | Item | 3 | A sprint, how little you eat |
| | Abstract item | 2 | Punishment, about restriction |
| | Quality | 2 | Extreme, reactive |
| | Action | 1 | About dieting |
| The Skinni Société | Item | 5 | A forum, a diet club, a therapy group |
| | Action | 1 | About dieting |

| Be-er 1 | Be-er 2 | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|--------|--------------------|
| | Class | Number | Examples |
| Discipline | Abstract item | 2 | Delay, deprivation |
| | Quality | 1 | Loud |
| | Action | 2 | Missing out |
| Living a Skinni lifestyle | Item | 1 | About rituals |
| | Abstract item | 2 | Restriction |
| | Quality | 1 | Restrictive |
| | Action | 1 | About shrinking |

Based on Table 9, certain differences between the Be-er 2 Participants in clauses with non-negated characterisation and ones with negated characterisation can be noticed. For example, *you* and *I* were most often described as not needing unnecessary contrivances, not truly being a certain way, and not having to do specific actions. The contrivances deemed unnecessary included Items, such as *a food scale, a detox, another fad, another coach, something sweet, and a new morning routine*, as well as Abstract items, such as *more willpower, more discipline, motivation, pressure, and a reset*. The Items highlight how the reader does not need them anymore, as the Société is their main tool now. Surprisingly, the Abstract items propose some contradictions to the Be-er 2 Participants found in clauses with non-negated characterisation. Within those clauses *you* and *I* were characterised as needing structure and transformation, which is countered here by the Abstract items used.

As mentioned, *you* and *I* are also characterised as not truly possessing certain attributes which is done through Qualities and States of being. For example, the Qualities used for describing the Be-er 1 Participants include *anti-science, stuck, hungry, “naturally bloated”, addicted to food, lazy, broken, Skinni, and disciplined*. On the other hand, the States of being included *drowning in my own chaos, controlled by seasonal marketing, on a diet, off track, and “faking it”*. Most of these characteristics focus on describing the Be-er 1 Participants as not truly being in possession of these negative qualities but simply feeling like they have them. Again, there are also some contradictory statements, such as describing *you* and *I* as not being *Skinni* or *disciplined*. However, just as with the Be-er 2 Participants in clauses with non-negated characterisation, the negative characterisations are used to describe an individual’s status before finding the Société, thus being qualities in need of transformation.

Lastly, common Actions used for characterising *you* and *I* include descriptions not having to miss out or reinvent the self. Some examples are not having *to hit rock bottom to refine something, to lift a dumbbell to lift your standards, to start over, to ask permission, to skip dessert, to cancel plans, to skip Thanksgiving, to reset, and to restrict*. These Actions show that the Société does not require its members to completely erase previous behaviours to change into a Skinni lifestyle. Other frequent Actions revolve around food and eating habits, such as not having to *“add things back”, to stop being aware of calories, and to check your (calorie counting) app*. They reinforce the idea that despite the Société being a support group for weight loss, they do not want to overly police their members’ eating habits, even if changes in eating are often needed for losing weight.

Skinni and living a Skinni lifestyle are mostly characterised through a rejection of the negative connotations of skinniness. They are described as not being *punishment, about restriction, extreme, reactive, restriction, or restrictive*. This is strengthened by the characterisation of *discipline* as not being *deprivation, missing out, or delay*. There is a clear attempt at trying to distance the Société from these descriptions. Furthermore, the characterisation of the Skinni Société supports this. It is described as not being *a diet club, a therapy group, or about dieting*. This illustrates how despite the Société being a group meant for weight loss they simultaneously want to avoid the negative connotations of dieting. This distinction is also done to further build a unique kind of identity around skinniness on the Société’s terms.

5.1.2 Material Clauses

The second most recurrent clause type were Material clauses. Unlike with the Relational clauses, the Processes found within Material clauses will be considered after the main Participants, in this case the Actors. Table 10 shows the frequency of the most common Actors in Material clauses (for full list see Appendix 2, Table 17):

Table 10 Most Frequent Actors in Material Clauses

| Number of Occurrences | Actors |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| 202 | “Implicit you” |
| 108 | You |
| 78 | I |
| 45 | We |
| 18 | She |

| Number of Occurrences | Actors |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| 15 | They |
| 8 | It |
| 7 | Skinni girls |

As can be seen from Table 10, personal pronouns dominated the Actor-roles with only one disparate Actor, *Skinni girls*, appearing in the most frequent ones. Over a third of the clauses included the “implicit you” as the Actor, which was due to the large number of imperative clauses, such as Example 12, found within the material.

(12) Stop trying to “be good.” (P18I7C1)

As discussed in Section 5.1.1, imperative clauses are used to instruct the reader. Including such a large number of Material clauses that are imperative shows that the Société is especially keen on instructing its members to act a certain way or to do specific actions. There was not such an emphasis on guiding the reader with the Relational clauses, which shows that rather than instructing the reader to be a certain way, the Société instead prioritises instructing its members by giving them concrete examples of actions to do or to avoid.

In addition to the “implicit you”, other personal pronouns were among the most frequent in the material. Just as with the Relational clauses, *you* refers to the reader, and *I* refers to Schmidt. *We* is used to create a relationship and sense of community between the Société and the reader. It refers to the members of the Société as a group, seen in Example 13:

(13) We move with priorities, not vibes. (P4I8C7)

This example highlights how *we* makes the members of the Société seem united in their actions. They act together, and this feeling of community is presented as an aspirational notion to the reader, who is likely to be seeking support with either weight loss or maintenance.

The remaining pronouns, *they* and *it*, have various referents. For instance, *they* is used to refer to Skinni girls and other related Actors, such as models and members of the Société, such as Example 14:

(14) They eat to be done. (P18I7C3)

Here *they* is used in place of *Skinni girls*, who were mentioned in the previous clause. On the other hand, *it* is used to refer to more abstract or non-human Actors. These were *motivation*, *being Skinni*, *the spiral*, *hunger*, *the Skinni Protocol*, and *the scale*. The referents of *it*, although diverse, are still associated with skinniness, losing weight, and a *Skinni* identity. Additionally, the only frequent Actor that was not a pronoun was *Skinni girls*. It is also a sign of the conceptual priorities of the *Société*, akin to the prevalence of *Skinni*-related Participants in the Relational clauses. Because it is the most recurrent non-pronoun Actor, it is clearly important enough to warrant usage by the *Société*.

Proceeding with the Material Processes and Goals next, they were observed to have a substantial amount of variability. Table 11 displays the most frequent Material Processes and their possible Goals. In this case only Processes with six or more instances are included due to the large quantity of Processes, most of which had only few occurrences (for full list see Appendix 2, Table 18). It is also important to remember that not every Process has a Goal, and that the number of Processes and Goals analysed can be different due to the Goal not being a mandatory element in all Material clauses (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 236). Additionally, it should be noted that the Goals are presented in alphabetical order here for clarity. Also, the numbers behind certain Goals, for example *less* (2), indicate the number of Occurrences these Goals had in the cases where there were more than one. The alphabetisation and numbering of appearances is also undertaken in the subsequent clause type categories.

Table 11 Most Frequent Material Processes and their Possible Goals

| Number of Occurrences | Processes | Possible Goals |
|-----------------------|-----------|--|
| 31 | Eat | Air; less (2); less than normal; one (cookie); one cookie; one dessert bite; something small, clean, and stabilizing; the candy; the cookie; the hot dog; to be done; to feel elegant; what they want |
| 30 | Stop | Abusing it (food), being the main character, chasing results, chasing someone else's bone structure, eating like an athlete, feeling fullness, hiding behind "clean" ingredients, inhaling it (sugar), knocking, labeling it (a craving) a binge, making every bite a moral crisis, performing clean girl wellness, rushing, saying: "I can't be trusted with food.", saying: "I'll just start over tomorrow.", saying: "I'm bad for eating that.", saying: "I ruined it.", scrolling, shoveling food in, stuffing your stomach, talking, trusting your instincts, trying to "be good", worshipping "no" |
| 19 | Start | Asking your phone what to eat; doing that (portioning); eating like a woman; embodying them (results); labeling it (a craving) what it is; living like the girls you admire; sounding like her (a <i>Skinni</i> girl); talking like the woman who already lives in the body you want; to do the same (to binge, complain, and spiral); walking; walking and reflecting too; your morning with fiber, protein, and electrolytes |

| Number of Occurrences | Processes | Possible Goals |
|-----------------------|-----------|--|
| 13 | Join | The Skinni Société (12), us |
| 13 | Walk | It (skinniness) |
| 11 | Apply | To join, to the Skinni Société (5) |
| 8 | Open | - |
| 7 | Share | A meal; her top 5 secrets to staying consistent without the stress (2); recommended supplements; routines and reminders to stay in control; wins; your good days |
| 6 | Choose | It (being skinni), one chic indulgence, the voice that keeps you sane, what |
| 6 | Do | A 20-minute walk during a call, her skincare, it (staying small, sharp, and structured), it (turning skinni), this (being skinni), workouts you hate |
| 6 | Go | Outside, to bed, to events, to the party, on walks |
| 6 | Hold | A sparkling water or tea, it (eye contact), it (one's confidence), the appetizer plate like a clutch, the same standard, water |
| 6 | Have | Dessert, one slice, the cookie or the apple pie, the one drink, the themed drink, 3 bites of beauty |
| 6 | Move | - |
| 6 | Trade | Calorie math, chaos, cravings, fullness, late-night snacking, quantity |

Based on Table 11, it can be observed that the most common Process was *eat*. As eating is conceptually tied to weight loss, and is a part of many lifestyles, its prevalence is understandable. Additionally, *have* is another Process that is used to refer to the action of eating. The Goals connected to *eat* and *have* reveal how the Société wants its members to eat. There are Goals that both instruct the reader to eat a restricted amount of something, as well as ones that tell the reader that they can eat freely. For example, Goals that suggest restriction include *less*, *less than normal*, *one* (cookie), *one cookie*, *one dessert bite*, *to be done*, *one slice*, *3 bites of beauty*, *the one drink*, and *something small, clean, and stabilizing*. In contrast, free eating is implied through *the candy*, *the cookie*, *the hot dog*, *dessert*, *the cookie or the apple pie*, *the themed drink*, and *what they* (Skinni girls) *want*. This seeming contradiction disappears when the Goals are observed carefully, as it reveals a key tenet: portion size. Many of the more restrictive Goals focus on the amount of food, which highlights its importance, and shows that the other Goals are not truly in opposition; members can eat what they want as long as they remember the appropriate amount.

Stop and *start* were the next most frequent Processes, and they highlight the Société's role as an instructor and authority figure. They mostly appeared in imperative clauses, strengthening

the sense of guidance. The Goals linked to *stop* related most frequently to food and a lack of focus. For example, the reader is told *to stop abusing it* (food), *a binge, eating like an athlete, inhaling it* (sugar), *shoveling food in*, and *stuffing your stomach*. Just as with *eat* and *have*, a proper portion size is emphasized and eating too much is discouraged. Removing a lack of focus is expressed by instructing the reader to *stop chasing someone else's bone structure, rushing, scrolling*, and *saying: "I'll just start over tomorrow."* Actions that are seen as distractions or avoiding accountability are clearly deterred by the Société. On the other hand, *start* was often associated with directly initiating a Skinni lifestyle, seen in many of the Goals linked to it, such as *doing that* (portioning), *eating like a woman, living like the girls you admire, sounding like her* (a Skinni girl), and *talking like the woman who already lives in the body you want*. Evidently, *stop* and *start* are overt ways for the Société to instruct its members to eat a certain way, to be more focused, and to live the Skinni lifestyle they teach.

The Processes *join* and *apply* are used to encourage the reader to become a part of the Société, highlighted by the prevalence of Goals mentioning the Société connected to them. They were also exclusively found in imperative clauses, which reinforces their role as direct instructions. The frequency of these Processes highlights the importance recruitment has for the Société; they want to acquire more members, which necessitates active effort into encouraging people to join. In addition, an effort is also made to build community once people have joined. The Process *share* illustrates this, as its Goals focus on instructing the members to share their positive experiences, like *wins* and *your good days*, and the Société sharing supportive instructions, such as *recommended supplements, routines and reminders to stay in control*, and *her* (Schmidt's) *top 5 secrets to staying consistent without the stress*. Sharing information and positivity amongst each other is a way to build a stronger relationship between the Société and its members.

Walk, do, move, go and *hold* are all Processes used to describe physical actions. Although their Goals were rather varied, there were some thematic recurrences. Many Goals referred to exercising, such as *a 20-minute walk during a call, workouts you hate*, and *on walks*. The Processes *walk* and *move* also support this, as despite them not having Goals, except *it* (skinniness), they nonetheless refer to movement. Another theme was qualities that refer to a balanced lifestyle, including *outside, her skincare, a sparkling water or tea, to bed, water*, and *the same standard*. Spending time outside, doing skincare, sleeping, and drinking water are all parts of a healthy life, which the Société evidently wants to encourage. In addition to this, some Goals referred specifically to acting according to a Skinni lifestyle. For instance, *it*

(staying small, sharp, and structured), *it* (turning skinni), and *this* (being skinni) all evoke skinniness. Having multiple Goals that refer to exercise, healthy lifestyle qualities, and skinniness conveys their importance to the Société. It creates an implication that these Goals are a part of the Skinni lifestyle.

Finally, *choose* and *trade* in connection to their Goals were used to directly instruct the reader to make choices that align with the Skinni lifestyle. *Choose* is connected to Goals that the Société wants its members to opt for, such as *it* (being skinni), *one chic indulgence*, and *the voice that keeps you sane*. In contrast, *trade* is used to express Goals that the Société wants its members to exchange for better ones, such as *calorie math*, *chaos*, *cravings*, *fullness*, and *late-night snacking*. These Processes along with their Goals present skinniness, self-control, and sanity as favourable options, and disorderly eating habits and chaos as unfavourable ones. Through them, the Société can communicate what belongs to a Skinni lifestyle and what is better left out of it.

5.1.3 Mental Clauses

Proceeding on, the results of the analysis Mental clauses are presented in this subsection, starting with Sensers. The distribution of Sensers followed an interesting dichotomy; there were some Sensers that appeared notably frequently, and others that were opposingly very rare within the material. Table 12 shows the frequencies of the Sensers:

Table 12 Frequency of Sensers in Mental Clauses

| Number of Occurrences | Sensers |
|-----------------------|---|
| 36 | You |
| 21 | I |
| 17 | “Implicit you” |
| 3 | She, your body |
| 2 | Girls, it (change), it (the scale) no one, we, your brain |
| 1 | People, the scale, this (food), skinni girls, the skinni version of her, what |

The most common Senser *you*, together with the slightly rarer “implicit you”, again refer to the reader. As an extension, *your body* and *your brain* refer to the reader as well. The Senser *she* refers to a Skinni girl, and *we* refers to the members of the Société. *It* is in one instance in reference to change and the second time to a scale, whereas *this* refers to food. Change, a

scale, and food all support the thematic connections between skinniness, weight loss, and eating already established. *I* on the other hand refers to Schmidt in most cases, although there were also 8 instances where *I* is in reference to the reader, such as in Example 15:

(15) I want to lose 50 pounds. (P12I1C1)

These 8 clauses imply that they represent the reader's supposed thoughts, hence they do not refer to their writer as they do in the rest of the clauses where *I* is the Senser. Making assumptions about the reader's thoughts is a way to influence them. By presenting certain thoughts as if they were the reader's own, the reader is encouraged to feel like they should be thinking that way, for example that they should want to lose 50 pounds as in Example 15.

The Processes found in the clauses followed a similar pattern to the Sensers; they had both items which occurred quite commonly and items which had very few instances. Table 13 presents the distribution of the most frequent Mental Processes (for full list see Appendix 2, Table 19). The Phenomena connected to the Processes are also included in Table 13, as to understand how the Phenomena are to be interpreted, it is necessary to see what kinds of Processes they are related to.

Table 13 Most Frequent Mental Processes and Phenomena

| Number of Occurrences | Processes | Phenomena |
|-----------------------|-----------|--|
| 17 | Want | This (a drink), this (changing one's body) (2), to arrive light, to be Skinni, less (2), to change your body, to feel bloated, to feel balanced and Skinni, to feel festive, to look like Candice Swanepoel (2), to lose 50 pounds (2), what aligns |
| 11 | Learn | How to eat when you're hungry; how to handle food pushers; how to look like a snack; how to make food not the main character; how to pick your indulgences and stay in control; how to stay confident, disciplined, and in charge of your body through every holiday; my mindset to stay in control before, during, and after parties; the difference between needing a snack and needing a life; the secret weapon for surviving sugar season; the Skinni Halloween rules; to manage every craving, event, and indulgence with strategy |
| 10 | Know | How to feel light, lean and clear-headed; how to stop, reset, and carry on; My body (2); my portions (2); [that] one Skinni choice is more powerful than ten dramatic excuses; the general calories; when she's slipping; yourself |
| 7 | Think | Being "so good all day" means you're disciplined, food is the problem, listening to your body means overeating, shame will make you disciplined, tracking gives them control, weight loss is about restriction, what |
| 6 | Respect | Admins & moderators, any decisions regarding content moderation or disputes within the group, everyone's privacy, it (information about someone's weight loss), the admin's decisions, your body |

| Number of Occurrences | Processes | Phenomena |
|-----------------------|-----------|---|
| 5 | See | Discipline, it (one's arrival), smaller portions, standards, what I do every single day |

From Table 13, it can be seen that *want* was the most common Mental Process. Mental clauses are concerned with either emotion, cognition, perception, or desire (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 256). *Want* as a Process expresses a desire for something, and it is compelling to see it in such a prominent role. The Société choosing to express want in many clauses reflects the reader's want for something that they might be seeking through the Société. This can be seen in the Phenomena being wanted, many of which revolve around wanting to change one's body (particularly to lose weight), wanting to be Skinni, or simply wanting less. The wanted elements align with what the Société promises to deliver to its members: help with weight loss, transformation, and achieving a Skinni lifestyle.

The other Processes, *learn*, *know*, *think*, and *respect*, are cognitive in nature. They express the internal flow of ideas the Sensors have. This might be why the Phenomena connected with these Processes are generally more complex, often comprising of dependent clauses instead of single words or simple phrases. Example 16 below illustrates this:

- (16) Inside, you'll learn how to eat when you're hungry, not because you're told to. (P30I4C1)

Example 16 show how the Phenomena related to cognitive Processes express full thoughts. This is typical of Mental clauses of cognition, as they can set up other clauses that represent the content of thinking or the ideas created by cognition (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 246). The inclusion of clauses of cognition is a way for the Société to convey more intricate ideas, which might be one reason why they are so numerous in within the material when compared to the other kinds of Mental clauses.

The only frequent Process of perception is *see*. As Mental clauses are often used for describing sensations (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 245), it is quite unusual that these kinds of clauses were relatively rare. The Phenomena being seen are quite varied; they included more abstract ideas, such as *discipline* and *standards*, as well as more concrete elements, such as *smaller portions* and *what I (Schmidt) do every day*. Foregoing the use of clauses of perception in favour of clauses of cognition and desire might be a method for the Société to avoid overtly individualistic language use. While they want to create a sense of

community with their members, maintaining a position of authority could be lost with the use of too many clauses that describe private perceptions. This might also be the reason for no Processes of emotion being found among the most frequent ones.

5.1.4 Other Clause Types

The remaining three clause types are discussed in a shared subsection due to their relatively small number of occurrence in the material. Starting with Behavioural clauses and their Processes, there was quite a lot of variation within them. Despite this variability, there was one notable exception which appeared more than the rest: *not spiral*. It was the Process in 11 clauses, such as in Example 17:

(17) We don't spiral. (P16I11C3)

All instances of spiralling, including Example 17, refer to an escalating deterioration in one's mental state, and not the physical act of moving in a spiral or the quality of having a spiral shape. The fact that *not spiral* is so prevalent in the material is an indicator of the Société's aims. As Example 17 displays, the Société does not spiral, which makes it seem stable and dependable, qualities that are needed in a position of authority such as the one the Société has. The rest of the Processes included *speak* (3), *watch* (3), *pay attention* (2), *scream* (2), *spiral* (2), *talk* (2), *call* (2), *cry*, *not cry*, *not guess*, *not negotiate*, *not sit*, *read*, *reflect*, *sleep*, *sit*, *taste*, *think*, and *whisper*. Each of these describes an action that a person might do, which is understandable because Behavioural clauses describe physiological and psychological behaviour that is deemed typically human in nature (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 301). All these actions are used to define what the typical behaviour of the Société, and its members includes.

The most common Behaver was the "implicit you", as many Behavioural clauses were imperative, akin to the other clause types. The "implicit you" appeared 13 times, followed by *I* (7), *you* (4), *she* (4), *Skinni girls* (2), *we* (2), *everyone*, *fake hunger*, *it*, *no one*, *skinni*, *snacks*, *the Skinni girl*, and *your body*. Once again, *I* refers Schmidt and *you* refers to the reader. *She* refers to a Skinni girl, a type of girl evoked further with the Behavers *Skinni girls* (2) and *the Skinni girl*. Additionally, *we* refers to the members of the Société as it did in the other clause types. *Fake hunger* and *snacks* connect to the previously established thematic notions of food and eating discussed above.

Moving onto Verbal clauses, which are the second to smallest clause type category. The most common Verbal Process was *say*, which occurred in 13 clauses. This was to be expected, as *say* is the unmarked, most prototypical verb encountered within Verbal clauses (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 303). Other processes included the verbs *tell* (6), *ask* (5), *not ask* (2), *not say*, *repeat*, *respond*, and *command*. All these Processes indicate an act of verbal communication or a dialogic exchange. On the other hand, the most common Sayer was the “implicit you”. It appeared in 17 clauses, with the other Sayers being *you* (5), *I* (4), *no one*, *neutrality*, *standards*, and *girls*. Once again, *you* refers to the reader and *I* refers to Schmidt, similarly to the other clause types. In addition, nine clauses also included the optional Receiver Participant, as in Example 18:

(18) Every holiday season, girls tell themselves the same lie. (P30I2C1)

Here the pronoun *themselves* is the Receiver. The remaining Receivers were *me* (2), *you* (2), *yourself* (2), *others*, and *my girls*. The Receiver *me* is in reference to the writer, presumably Schmidt, and *you* here refers to the reader again.

Lastly, there were only two Existential clauses found within the material, both of which are presented below:

(19) There is a difference between restriction and refinement. (P14I4C9)

(21) There is always an answer. (P29I9C3)

The clauses share the same Process, the verb *be*. This is not unusual, as Existential clauses typically include this verb as the Process (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 309). Both clauses also included the existential *there*, which is neither a Participant nor a circumstantial element, but simply serves to indicate the feature of existence as a concept (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 308). Along with the Process and existential *there*, both clauses also contain Existents. In the two clauses the Existents are *a difference between restriction and refinement* and *an answer*.

5.2 Results of Visual Analysis

The results of visual analysis are presented in this subsection. As stated in Section 4, within the 297 images that formed the research material, a total of 325 figures suitable for analysis were identified. They were analysed through the lenses of Contact, Social Distance, and

Power. Table 14 shows the results of analysis, which are examined below one visual resource at a time:

Table 14 Results of Visual Analysis (Total Number of Tokens: 325)

| Visual Resource | Dimension | Number of Tokens | Percentage |
|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------|
| Contact | Offer | 165 | 50.8% |
| | Demand | 160 | 49.2% |
| Social Distance | Personal | 158 | 48.6% |
| | Social | 96 | 29.5% |
| | Impersonal | 48 | 14.8% |
| | Highly Personal | 23 | 7.1% |
| Power | Equal Power | 150 | 46.2% |
| | Participant Power | 107 | 32.9% |
| | Viewer Power | 68 | 20.9% |

5.2.1 Contact

Based on the analysis of Contact, the figures were nearly evenly split into Demands and Offers. The even division between Demands and Offers means that there is an equal attempt at connection and objective representation. The choice between engaging the Viewer and keeping them detached tells of a communicative preference; it is an indication of who may or may not address the Participant directly (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 106). Because the material includes a similar number of Demands and Offers, it creates an ambivalence in the visual communication. There is no clear inclination for whether the Société aims to engage the Viewers or to keep them disconnected. It is also possible that they want to focus on engagement and objective representation in a balanced amount. The possible reasoning behind this equivocation is discussed in more detail in Section 6.2.

Interestingly, there was one notable and re-occurring reason for some figures being Offers. Of the Offers, 35 were classified this way due to the Participant's eyes being obscured by sunglasses, such as in Figure 4:



Figure 4 Example of an Offer Created by Inclusion of Sunglasses (P2018)

The inclusion of sunglasses makes the division between Demands and Offers more complicated. While images that contain no human or otherwise anthropomorphised Participants in eye-contact with the Viewer are always classified as Offers (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 105), the sunglasses haze this strict separation. The obscuring sunglasses create a sense of uncertainty regarding the gaze of the Participant. There is no direct way to know if the Participant meets the Viewer's gaze or not, which generates an air of variability. This sunglass-related subcategory of Offers is a way to mystify the Viewer and make the figures seem more unpredictable in their communicative pursuits.

5.2.2 Social Distance

Based on Table 14, one category of Social Distance was noticeably more dominant than others. Out of the figures, nearly half were Personal. An image with Personal Distance is a bid for connection. In interaction, social relations determine the literal and figurative distances people keep from one another (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 109). The better one knows a person, the closer they are allowed to get. While the relationship between a Viewer and a Participant is often imaginary, the portrayal of Participants in close shot allows the Viewer to get close to them as if they were acquaintances (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 110). Using Personal Distance is a way for the Société to build this sense of closeness and community with the Viewer by seemingly allowing them close to the Participants.

The sense of a close relationship was further heightened in the category of Highly Personal figures. As outlined in Section 4.2, this category was created due to the extremity of certain close shots in the material. Figure 5 is an example of such a figure:

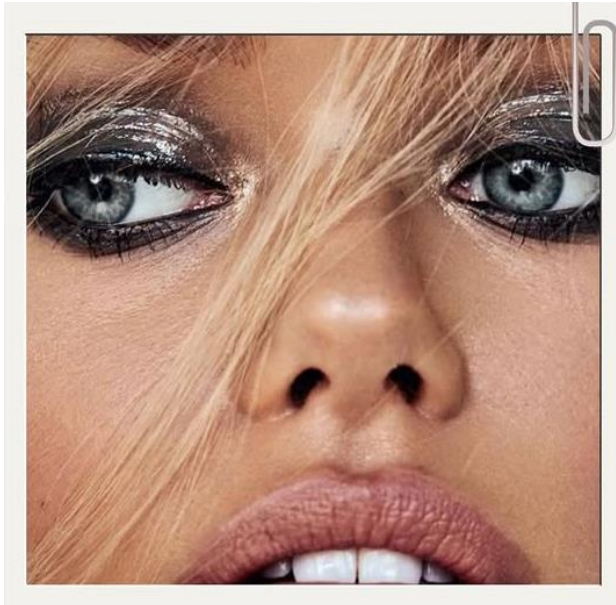


Figure 5 Example of a Highly Personal Figure (P10I5)

Figure 5 illustrates how intense the closeness within these figures is, which is why a separate category was created for them. Not only is the Viewer let in close to the Participant, but they are at such an intimate distance, that if they were standing in such a way in real life, they would be practically nose-to-nose with one another. This level of intimacy goes beyond close relationships. It almost borders on a kind of abstraction, where the personhood of the Participant is somewhat lost due to the frame being filled with only their face from an acutely close distance. Hence, the effect of Highly Personal images differs from Personal ones slightly, even if they share the aim of creating a relationship.

The rest of the figures had either Social or Impersonal Distance. Around a third of the figures depicted Social Distance. This means that they were relatively common in the material, but not nearly as frequent as Personal figures. This type of Social Distance is reserved for social interaction where the participants are neither intimately connected nor total strangers (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 108). In other words, it reflects the kinds of everyday interactions that require politeness towards others, be they previously familiar or not. For example, interacting with a cashier in a store involves relatively close physical contact, and necessitates respectful behaviour between participants that are often strangers. Similarly, images that are Social

create a sense of comradery without deeper emotional connection. The Société's use of Social figures generates a feeling of an imaginary relationship that is casual, yet amiable in nature.

Lastly, Impersonal Distance was the least frequent, seen in Table 14. This Distance signals that the Participants are strangers and that there is no need to become acquainted with them (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 110). Therefore, it is not surprising that the Société would disprefer this Distance, as one of their aims is to create a sense of community. The Impersonal Distance counteracts this goal by creating an air of remoteness and disinterest between the Participant and Viewer. Nevertheless, posting Impersonal figures does still have at least one role in the Société's messaging: creating an identity around skinniness. Skinniness is tightly interwoven with the body itself. The use of Impersonal Distance allows for the full body of a Participant to be displayed. Identity construction around skinniness is inseparable from the body, hence why the Société might still want to include Impersonal figures despite of their detached nature.

5.2.3 Power

The last visual resource to be considered is Power. Within the material, around half of the figures had Equal Power. When the Viewer is on the same level as a Participant, there is no suggested difference in power between them (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 120). This created sense of equal standing makes the Viewer and Participant seem like peers or companions of otherwise equivalent power. The commonness of these kinds of images in the material is apt when considering the Société's intentions. As mentioned previously, the Société aims to create a sense of community with its followers. Signalling that the Viewer and Participants are supposedly equal is a way to highlight the wanted sense of companionship. If the Viewer feels like they are considered an equal by the Société's posts, they are more likely to feel welcome and identify themselves with the group.

The second most common type of Power in the material was Participant Power, with a third of the figures having it. Depicting a Participant from a low angle signals to the Viewer that the Participant is exercising symbolic power over them (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 120). A low angle makes the Participant seem imposing and awesome (*ibid.*), which lessens the Viewer's power. Giving the Participant more power is a way to make them someone the Viewer is supposed to respect or aspire to become. From the Société's perspective, it is beneficial to use figures where the Participants have Power because they can act as either motivation or instruction for the Viewer on what they are supposed to look like. Depicting

Participants as powerful is also an avenue for the Société to exercise their own power over their followers. As the posts come straight from the Société, they reflect its ideology and messaging, for example signalling a stance of authority over their followers with figures where the Participants, representing the Société, have more power.

Viewer focused Power was the least common category in the material, which can be observed from Table 14. Images where the Participant is shot from a high angle grant the Viewer command over the Participant (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 120). Thus, the Participant is less than equal, and within reach for the Viewer to control, appraise, or instruct (ibid.). As this arrangement of Power was not frequent in the material, it means that the Viewer is not allowed to feel in charge when observing the Société's posts. Of course, there are still instances where the Viewer has more power, but their rarity indicates a desire to keep the Power with the Société or as an equally shared element. Because the Société mainly aims to create a sense of community or act as a guide, mostly keeping the Power away from the Viewer serves these goals. If the Viewer looked down upon many of the depicted Participants, it would undermine the Société's position in a reversal of the way using Participant Power enforces it.

6 Discussion

Based on the results of the analysis, a deeper discussion about their relation to identity construction is entailed. The aim is to gain an understanding of what a lifestyle identity based on skinniness means from the Société's perspective. As with the previous sections, the linguistic means of constructing identity are considered first. A discussion of how the different clause types are used in identity construction is undertaken. This is followed by a similar exploration based on the visual resources. Lastly, the relationship between the linguistic and visual resources is examined in relation to identity construction, and their combined effect in discourse surrounding skinniness is considered.

6.1 Linguistic Identity Construction

Before discussing the linguistic means of identity construction, a brief reminder of what a skinny lifestyle identity involves is in order. A skinny lifestyle identity revolves around two factors: defining what skinniness is and creating a sense of community based on a mutual understanding of it. In Section 2, it was outlined that skinniness in the West is connected to the idealisation of a skinny body, a view of skinniness as being moral, and ways of achieving and maintaining skinniness. It was also shown that identity is not only based on an individual's understanding of the self, but that it is additionally socially ratified and formed. Furthermore, group identities constructed around specific lifestyles were explained to stand on a foundation of shared intragroup values and common aesthetic qualities. Based on these factors, the aim is to discuss how the different clause types with their elements are used to reinforce these ideas about skinniness in the Société's messaging. In simple words, the target is to understand what the Société presents as a skinny lifestyle identity, and how that is manifested through their linguistic choices.

The construction of identity begins already on the level of the clause types themselves. As the clause types are used to construe different ideational processes, each of them brings their unique way of understanding various concepts, including identity, into communication. Relational clauses were the most common category, which is a marked difference from the trends of clause type distribution of written text, where Material clauses are typically the most frequent (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 215). Characterising a group is highly important in identity construction; to build positive in-group associations and to be able to compare the group to outside ones, the typical characteristics of the group must be defined. This is why

Relational clauses were so frequent in the material. To construct and maintain a group identity around a skinny lifestyle, the Société must show what they mean by it.

Additionally, the importance of characterising skinniness is especially salient to the Société, who have created their own label for it; they do not describe a skinny lifestyle, but a *Skinni* one instead. As was outlined in Section 2.3, *Skinni* is an attempt to distance the Société from the negative connotations of skinniness. Despite the supposed difference between *Skinni* and *skinny*, an argument can be made that they do not differ in any meaningful way. The Société may well want to distance themselves from negative connotations of skinniness but simply changing the spelling of the word *skinny* slightly and stating that it has subsequently become a purely positive quality does not remove the less favourable associations of skinniness. In addition, based on the results of analysis and the upcoming discussion it is evident that the clause types and elements evoke culturally enshrined ideas about skinniness. Nonetheless, to see what the Société conceives skinniness to be is central to understanding how it can be used as a basis for a lifestyle identity.

The Material clauses being the second most common category reflect the Société's role as a guide. Material clauses are clauses of doing; they describe concrete changes in the flow of real-world events (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 224). Living any lifestyle includes doing activities and undertaking actions, which are expressed through Material clauses. Lifestyle identities also rely on influencing peoples' behaviour through digital media, such as Instagram posts (van Leeuwen 2021, 2022). Without Material clauses, the Société on their Instagram page would be unable to demonstrate what the activities and actions needed for a *Skinni* lifestyle are. Furthermore, the Société acting as a guiding voice facilitates the frequency of Material clauses specifically because instructions are predominantly expressed through this clause type (*ibid.*). To help their members live a *Skinni* lifestyle the Société must have a way to instruct them directly, which they achieve by using many Material clauses, especially imperative ones.

On the other hand, the rest of the clause types were quite rare in the material. With the Verbal and Existential clauses an explanation can be found in the type of written text the Société produces. Verbal clauses are used in written text to facilitate dialogic passages (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 302), and the Existential clauses serve to introduce participants into the narrative (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 308). The Société does not use written text to create complex or prolonged narratives. They prefer a simpler communication strategy where

the message can be understood quickly and effortlessly. This is one reason why the Société prefers other clause types that fit their communication style better. Mental and Behavioural clauses could have been dispreferred by the Société because they do not serve their aims of characterisation and instruction as aptly as other clause types. Both clause types revolve around the unique feelings, thought patterns, and routines of specific individuals. Projecting assumptions about their members feelings and behaviours could alienate them, if these projections do not match their experience. Driving away potential members goes against the Société's goal of creating a group identity with their followers. The preference for Relational and Material clauses is a sign of what the Société strives to achieve most: characterise skinniness and instruct its members. This explains why the other clause types are rarer.

Before moving onto a clause type specific analysis, an important notion must be acknowledged. Based on the analysis, it can be observed that the most frequent active main Participants (Be-er 1 Participants, Actors, Sensors, Behavers, and Sayers) have a remarkable amount of overlap. In all clause types, the most common main Participants were either personal pronouns or Skinni-related parties. Using many of the same Participants repeatedly makes the Société's communication cohesive and adds a sense of continuity between posts. For example, in Section 5 it was observed that most of the pronouns often retained their referents across clause types: *you* referred to the reader, *I* to Schmidt, *we* to the members of the Société, and *she* to a Skinni girl. Skinni-related Participants appearing often is a sign of the Société's priorities. The Société is adamant about Skinni being different from the typical notion of skinniness. To define a new characterisation of the concept they obviously need to mention what their version of Skinni entails. This explains why such Participants were common in most clause type categories.

Out of the Participants, *you* and the "implicit you" were particularly recurrent. As has been shown, imperative clauses were relatively common in the material across all clause types, which offers a grammatical reason for why the "implicit you" was so frequent. However, favouring these two Participants is also a stylistic and rhetoric choice meant to make the reader feel like they have a relationship with the Société. Markedly, this relationship between the reader and Société is not an equal one, even if it is used to build community. The Société is an authority figure, which enables them to dominate, coerce, and control parties with less power, such as their members (Machin and Mayr 2023). Hence addressing the reader directly is not only a bid for connection but also an expression of their ability to overtly command their members.

The other personal pronouns create a sense of closeness and community. Pronouns are used to refer to nouns that have already been mentioned before (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 384). Keeping the referents of personal pronouns consistent makes the reader feel familiar with the written material, increasing their sense of closeness to the text's producer, the Société. The pronouns are also a sign that the Société trusts the reader to be familiar with their material to some extent. There is an assumption of group identity because a previous relationship is presupposed to exist. Of course, it is also important to remember that pronouns were frequent in part due to grammatical reasons. It would be cumbersome to forego using pronouns and to keep repeating proper nouns or longer noun groups. As pronouns fulfil their role in syntax by eradicating the need for this repetition as was mentioned, it is understandable that they are common. Nonetheless, they still express a sense of familiarity with the Société's written material and display the relationship between the Société and the reader.

Proceeding onto the Relational clauses, to see what a Skinni lifestyle identity entails, the way it is described must be explored. The non-negated characterisation focused on concepts relating to structure, discipline, and a need for transformation. For example, skinniness and related concepts were described through such terms as *consistent*, *focused*, *organized*, *sharp*, and *structured*. These kinds of terms, in combination to *discipline* being one of the most common Be-er 1 Participants, make the Skinni lifestyle appear principled, which harkens back to the moral associations of skinniness. A good moral character is quite often viewed as something consistent and controlled. With weight-related morality this can be seen in the way that fatness is seen as a result of overindulgence (Fahs 2017, 185). In other words, fat signals a lack of control or discipline. Because of these negative association, possessing control, structure, and discipline becomes a virtue in juxtaposition. Through their messaging about a Skinni lifestyle being about structure and discipline, the Société can gain this moral status.

On the other hand, a need for transformation being central to the Skinni identity is related to dieting, appearance-work, and fitspo content. Appearance-work is often seen as a requirement, especially for women, for being accepted. It is born from the expectation that continuously working on the body can transform it into a desired form (Riley, Evans, and Robson 2022, 2). In the Western context, this desired form is the idealised skinny body. The Société through their messaging is upholding this expectations of striving for a supposedly better body as normal and presumed for women to undertake. This might be because the Société wants to present this continuous work as something positive, rather than limiting. As outlined in Section 2.2, dieting can be a way to seek meaning and fulfilment (Lelwica 2006).

The Société's encouragement of appearance-work is an offer for a more meaningful life characterised by skinniness achieved through never-ending effort put into trying to look a certain way.

This more positive view of dieting and appearance-work links the Société's ideas with notions connected to fitspo. The Société brings up health-related concepts, such as exercise, skincare, and hydration, in its messaging. Fitspo content is framed from the perspective of health (Riley, Evans, and Robson 2022, 6–7). However, it is simultaneously still connected to the idealisation of skinniness (*ibid.*), although it uses a more favourable angle to propagate this ideology. As has become clear, the Société has an interest in separating skinniness from negative associations, which makes this health-focused framing very appealing to them. They can continue to uphold the body image ideal of being skinny, if they frame it as healthy or at least health concerned. This, in combination with associating themselves with moral goodness and meaningfulness, is a way for the Société to deflect criticism for upholding potentially harmful body standards. It directly supports their opinion of the concept of Skinni being detached from the previously established negative sides of idealising skinniness.

In contrast, the negated Relational clauses characterised the Skinni lifestyle as not being about restriction, missing out, or passing fads. Restriction is associated with disordered eating, particularly anorexia, where individuals do not eat enough to achieve a skinnier body (NHS 2024). As the Société wants to avoid any negative connotations of skinniness, including eating disorders, branding their idea of Skinni as not being restrictive, punishing, or extreme assists in this endeavour. This is also connected to the idea that a Skinni lifestyle is not about missing out on life. This is meant to reassure the members that despite a new lifestyle inherently bringing changes and a skinnier body often requiring some level of restriction, it does not mean that their life must completely transform into something entirely removed from their previous routines. A more lenient or adaptable transformation also makes the Skinni lifestyle seem more achievable, which acts as encouragement.

In addition, a Skinni lifestyle not being about fleeting trends or fads is also connected to the Société's ideas of skinniness being something achievable and maintainable. The Société describes how its members will have no need for detoxes, coaches, or new routines if they follow the instructions given to them by the Société. This was expressed particularly through the paired statements mentioned in Section 5.1.1, where the Société first uses a clause to propose a problem and then follows it with another that states a solution. The Société gives its

members the keys to a Skinni lifestyle, something more holistic than trendy diets or supposedly easy solutions to weight loss. This creates a sense of stability and security around the Société, which increases their believability and authority. It also reinforces the idea of the Société being a solution to a problem its members are trying to solve, in this case being their dissatisfaction with their weight.

Notably, the elements used to characterise and differentiate the Skinni identity were often expressed through need, which is another example of the Société exercising its authority over its members. *Need* and *not need* were among the most frequent Relational Processes. The Société making a statement about what its members supposedly need or do not need is an overt way for them to assert that they know better than their members what it is that they require. It is a clear illustration of the dominance the Société holds in the relationship between them and their members. Of course, it should not be overlooked that other Relational Processes were very common in the material as well. For example, *be* and *not be*, which are particularly typical in Relational clauses (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 262), were very frequent. In addition, Processes conveying a constant or continuous way of being, such as *keep* or *stay*, were quite common too. Nonetheless, the unusual frequency of *need* and *not need* makes them stand out and highlights the way the Société want to portray skinniness as a goal.

The Material clauses were used for multiple purposes in identity construction. The main aims of these clauses were to further connect the Société to a health-focused framing, to instruct their members, to create community, and to highlight the fact that a Skinni lifestyle is a choice. As was outlined in Section 5.1.2, *eat* was the most frequent Material Process. Eating is conceptually intertwined with many aspects of skinniness, from restricted eating connected with eating disorders to encouragement for eating in a healthy way found in fitspo. Eating is one of the main ways individuals can control their weight (NHS 2024), so its prevalence is understandable. Related to eating, the Société's focus was on what they deem to be an appropriate portion size; they approved of and even motivated their members to freely eat what they want, if they eat a small enough amount to remain skinny. This is in direct contrast with the Société's claims about a Skinni lifestyle not being restrictive.

The Société's fitspo connections were further illustrated with the many mentions of movement and exercise found in the Material clauses. In addition to eating, movement is the other major way people can control their weight (NHS 2024), explaining its importance to the

Société. Several Material Processes were used to motivate the members to move. Of course, there is nothing inherently nefarious about encouraging people to exercise, but in the context of the Société the underlying message behind such encouragement is that it must be done to maintain the idealised skinny body. In this, the health framing of fitspo is on clear display. In addition, the thin line separating fitspo and pro-ana oriented messaging can also be seen through this kind of encouragement. Whereas fitspo would focus more on motivating people to exercise for the health benefits or joy of movement, pro-ana messaging would do so because it wants to convey the idea that movement is a way to gain the needed vital body. Based on the Société's way of instructing its members to move, their messaging falls more in line with the latter, as the main driving force behind any of their actions is achieving skinniness.

Some Material clauses were used for building the sense of community in a straightforward way. For example, *join* and *subscribe* were overt invitations from the Société to become a part of their group. They show how the Société wants to present itself as welcoming to potential members. Furthermore, they also emphasize the Société's want for a larger following on Instagram. Community was also built through the Process *share*, which was used to encourage members to talk about their experiences with other group members. As has been mentioned, group identity is built on positive in-group associations and a sense of belonging (Spears 2011, 203). Sharing experiences is a great way to create these positive intragroup associations and become more familiar with in-group members. Creating a larger community that stays committed is beneficial to the Société due to the monetary element of their operation. They need more people to pay to become members, and they need current members to remain loyal as they want them to buy the various products they sell.

Stop and *start* were used to guide the members of the Société in their journey towards a Skinni lifestyle in a direct way. For example, the members were told to stop overindulging in food and being disorganised or unfocused. They were also told to start living according to a Skinni lifestyle. Direct commands like these once again highlight the Société's authority over its members. Specifically, using such overt directions is a head-on strategy for expressing how the Société is in control of the community. To be able to be in the authority role of an instructor, the Société must remind its members of its control over them. Direct commands are a suitable way to achieve this. *Stop* and *start* are also very difficult to misinterpret as commands; they place the blame for not being able to gain or maintain the idealised skinny

body on the members instead of the Société. If the members were given clear instructions on how to live a Skinni lifestyle, then failing to do so correctly is their own fault.

The Skinni lifestyle identity was also presented as a conscious choice to be made. The Processes *choose* and *trade* emphasized this by goading members to opt for choices that lead to skinniness, and by telling them to swap previous habits for skinnier ones. As lifestyle identities are freely chosen (van Leeuwen 2021, 20), making direct offers for adopting a lifestyle focused on skinniness is a fitting way for the Société to make more people adhere to it. Additionally, because skinniness is presented as a choice, it gains even further connotations to morality. If having a skinny body makes one a morally good person, foregoing this decision is sign of being immoral. The fear of not being moral then encourages the members to live a Skinni lifestyle to avoid judgement. This fear is also further accentuated by the fact that people seeking weight loss, such as the members of the Société, are often more motivated by a want to eschew the unfavourable fat body image rather than the want to achieve the idealised skinny one (Fahs 2017, 186). Thus, choosing a Skinni lifestyle becomes closer to a necessity propagated by the Société instead of a neutral choice about a way of living.

Mental clauses overwhelmingly presented skinniness as something that the reader must have. This was realised through *want*, a Process of desire, being the most frequent Mental Process. Skinniness being the object of desire was reinforced through the Phenomena related to want, which included mentions of transformation, smaller amounts of food, and living a Skinni lifestyle. This desire for skinniness supports the Société's intentions of presenting the Skinni lifestyle as something aspirational that they can help in achieving. It also shows how the Société's ideas align with cultural ideals about skinniness. As was outlined in Section 2.2, skinniness in the West is seen as a moral, and in the case of women expected quality to strive for. Hence wanting a Skinni lifestyle and an idealised skinny body conforms to these ideas and helps in normalising them as a standard.

The rest of the Mental clauses, along with the Behavioural, Verbal, and Existential ones mainly support the other ideas discussed. The Mental clauses used Processes of cognition to express ideas and thoughts related to the Skinni lifestyle. Similarly, Behavioural clauses described habits and actions that are a part of living in a Skinni way. Particularly, the Behavioural clauses emphasised the structured nature of a Skinni lifestyle, which was done by repetition of the Process *not spiral*. Verbal clauses also focus on characterising the Skinni lifestyle, just in the form of direct verbal assertions. Lastly, the two Existential clauses are

used to state how there is a difference between restriction and refinement and how there is always an answer. Both statements support the Société's other messaging by reinforcing the separation of Skinni from the negative connotations of skinniness and the Société's role as a solution.

6.2 Visual Identity Construction

Just as with the linguistic features, the aim of this subsection is to offer discussion of the conceptualisation of skinniness and creation of a group identity based on a Skinni lifestyle. This visual identity construction is discussed one visual resource at a time, starting with Contact. Contact is a key part of creating identity visually. In a sense, identity can be said to be all about contact due to the social aspect of identity being dependant on the relationships between people and the recognition of others. As has been established, the two dimensions of Contact, Demands and Offers, engage the Viewer in different ways. Demands create a relationship between the Participant and the Viewer (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 104), whereas Offers focus more on objectively representing the Participant (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 105). Thus, Demands create a sense of group identity through social connection, while Offers do not. The Société's ambivalent attitude towards favouring neither Demands nor Offers was mentioned in Section 5.2.1. Using both Demands and Offers equally often could be due to the Société's nature as a group for not only support, but guidance as well.

For a support group, a sense of group identity is highly important. Creating a space where group members feel seen is a key part of making the sense of intragroup community stronger. Demands create a connection through which these positive notions of belonging can be conveyed. However, as the Société is in the role of an instructor, it cannot solely focus on creating contact with Demands. Offers are a way to present visual information from an objective perspective; they ostensibly do so free of subjective opinions (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 106). This is an important realisation because it reveals what the Société wants to present objectively through Offers. The Offers are mostly depictions of women who have the idealised skinny physique. Presenting such figures objectively normalises them to the Viewer and makes them seem like a standard way of being. Because the Société wants to encourage a Skinni lifestyle, such a phenomenon helps them in this endeavour by embedding the idea of a skinny body as the standard.

Social Distance is also one way to create community and help in building a group identity. As was discovered during analysis, Personal Distance was favoured by the Société. It was also mentioned that Social Distance mirrors the literal and figurative distances people keep from one another (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 109). Depicting people in close shot is thus a way to signal closeness between the Viewer and the Participant. To create a sense of community, the Société must create the illusion of closeness, which explains their preference for Personal Distance. This was further exasperated through the Highly Personal images, which take this closeness to an extreme level. The exaggerated sense of intimacy is a hyperbolic way to signal a personal relationship between the Société and its members.

Nevertheless, depictions of figures from farther away are also important in Skinni identity construction. The body is a central element of skinniness; it is mostly in and through the body that being skinny can be experienced and observed by others. As identity is socially ratified (van Leeuwen 2021, 19), this bodily focus of the Skinni identity gains importance in its creation and maintenance. Put simply, a Skinni identity is verified when other people see and recognise it through an individual's body. Hence, the Social and Impersonal images facilitate this process of identity formation by depicting the body in either most part or fully. In addition, just as with the Offers, the figures shot from further away help in the normalisation of skinniness as the ideal. They similarly implant ideas about skinniness being a standard look and lifestyle, increasing the encouragement to achieve such a way of being.

Power is also used in creating a group identity and it is the visual resource that expresses the Société's authority overtly. This authority was conveyed through images with Participant Power. As explained in Section 5.2.3, depicting a Participant from a low angle signals that this figure is exercising symbolic power over the Viewer (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 120). The Société expressing this kind of visual power reflects their literal role as an authority figure. In addition to authority, Participant Power serves another purpose for the Société: inspiration. A low angle of depiction evokes superiority and triumph (ibid.), which makes Participants depicted in this way seem aspirational. As the Société wants its members to live and look a certain way, offering inspirational examples of people embodying these ideals is a way to encourage the members to work harder to achieve these goals.

Despite this, it should not be overlooked that Power was also used for community creation, which was expressed through the frequency of Equal Power. Images where the Viewer and Participant are at eye level to one another signal that there is no difference in power between

them (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 120). These kinds of images invite the Viewer to feel like they are equal members of the *Société*, which creates a positive sense of in-group belonging. Of course, as has been mentioned, this sense of equality is in part a false one. The *Société* is not equal in power with its members, but above them. However, an imbalance in authority does not necessarily mean an imbalance in the appreciation or importance of group members. In a freely chosen, democratic group power is often given to a specific actor that is believed to legitimately deserve it (Machin and Mayr 2023). Everyday examples are the way politicians are elected in democracies or how doctors are given power over people in medical environments (*ibid.*). Hence, the *Société* can act as the leader of other group members without it meaning that the members have no value in comparison, which Equal Power expresses.

6.3 Overall Effect and Discourse Implications

To understand the full effect and discourse implications of the *Société*'s messaging, the linguistic and visual features must be considered in combination with one another. As was outlined in Section 2.2, semiotic resources are inherently interdependent due their different affordances, possibilities, and limitations (Ledin and Machin 2018, 64). When multiple resources are used in tandem, such as in the *Société*'s posts, it must be noted that they do not simply work alongside each another but complete one other. For example, visual features are frequently used to draw attention to, complement, or counter linguistic material (Wodak and Meyer 2015, 195). This is clearly illustrated in the *Société*'s posts, where written text and images work together to convey messages. In these posts, the written material often defines the topic or theme of a post, whereas the images support it on a more subconscious level. Through this the *Société*'s messaging can rely on the strengths of both linguistic and visual semiotic resources, producing more effective and affective results.

As described, the linguistic and visual features were used to construct an identity around skinniness by building a sense of community, offering guidance, enforcing the *Société*'s authority, defining what a *Skinni* lifestyle is, and presenting skinniness as moral or ideal. To understand how these elements feed into larger discourses surrounding skinniness, their context needs to be considered. Interpretation is not entirely subjective but informed by the cultural and situational context in which it happens (van Leeuwen 2021, 50-51). With the *Société*, the context of interpretation rests on the *Société* being a weight loss group. Because of this, when discussing the larger implications of a skinny lifestyle presented by the *Société* it is important to remember that all their actions are permeated by the belief that losing weight

is a virtuous pursuit. According to them striving for and maintaining a skinny body is a requirement of a fulfilling and meaningful life. Clearly, their stance is not neutral. In discourse, messaging can appear neutral and present ideas as being common sense while simultaneously upkeeping hegemonic attitudes and beliefs (Machin and Mayr 2023). Recognising this fact before discussing the implications of skinny lifestyle construction aids in observing the true implications of the Société's messaging.

One of the main goals behind the Société's communication was to create a sense of community to facilitate a group identity focused on a Skinni lifestyle. Group identities are often ideologically oriented, which is also true of lifestyle identities, which are built partially on the shared values of group members (van Leeuwen 2021, 20). Values can be based on an ideology, as, for example, in many religions the value-systems believers hold are guided by their ideological beliefs. Within specific discourses, ideological actors can spread their point of view through, for instance, different media channels (Machin and Mayr 2023). By doing this, their ideas become reproduced in the discourses and start to influence the way in which individuals in touch with these discourses think of themselves (ibid.). In simple terms, ideology is a way to influence people who encounter it. This is why the Société wants to create a strong sense of group identity based on their ideology of skinniness. By guiding people into their ideologically formed lifestyle they can more easily influence these individuals.

Additionally, this increases the authority of the Société, making them even more capable of spreading their ideology. Authority is clearly important to the Société, as they were seen to express it over the members of the community in several ways. Those in power are enabled to directly dominate, coerce, and control their subordinates (Machin and Mayr 2023). This goes beyond simply influencing people, as direct dominion is more concrete. Having authority is also beneficial to the Société in other ways than influencing or being able to command its members. Configurations of power, including authority figures akin to the Société, produce self-regulation in people (Lazar 2018, 373). This is a level of control that has become so deeply internalised that external guidance to behave a certain way is not needed as much anymore. The Société is trying to coerce its members to adopt a specific lifestyle and inducing self-regulation is a way to create more consistent and long-lasting adherence to it. It is what the Société wants to ultimately achieve; members who internalise their guidance to a high degree to perpetually live the Skinni lifestyle and thus prove that it is sustainable. If the Skinni way of living can be proven to be this way, the criticism of it becomes less effective.

However, the self-regulation the Société seeks in its members might still ultimately work against them. The Société propagates the idealisation of skinniness and tries to create positive associations with the Skinni lifestyle. The more the Société spreads its ideology that supports ideas about skinniness as an ideal, the more their members begin to internalise and conform to them through self-regulation. As was outlined in Section 2.2, an internalisation of skinny ideals is linked with behaviours associated with disordered eating (Abdoli et al. 2024, 14). Additionally, it was discussed how adolescents are at more risk when considering this internalisation of ideas (Abdoli et al. 2024, 15). This is the main reason why idealising skinniness can be dangerous and lead to harm, even if it seems like a neutral thing to do on a surface level. The Société wants to avoid the negative connotations of skinniness but through their own actions they inadvertently feed into the very idea of skinniness sometimes being unhealthy and unsustainable. They may not directly support behaviour linked with eating disorders, in fact they claim to be strictly against it, but the idealistic messaging they spread nonetheless can lead to people, especially adolescents, being driven to disordered eating.

The Société's actions also harm the woman-focused community they are building, and who they claim to be offering a fulfilling lifestyle. The idealisation of skinniness is linked with gendered power imbalances in society. As was outlined in Section 2.1, skinniness and its attainment through, for example, appearance-work, dieting, or even disordered eating, is more often required from women. Women might seek fulfilment or meaning through striving for or embodying the ideal skinny body, but these actions tie them more tightly to restrictive norms placed upon them by society (Lelwica 2006). This shows how discourse has material consequences in peoples' lives (Lazar 2018, 374). Being required to spend more time, resources, and effort to upkeep a specific and sometimes unattainable or unsustainable standard is a gendered disadvantage. Hence, the promotion of skinniness as the only ideal female body image acts in direct opposition to women's emancipation. The Skinni lifestyle promoted by the Société would in many cases be limiting to the women they offer it to at least to some extent.

Ultimately then, the Skinni identity constructed on the Société's Instagram page does not differ from culturally prevalent ideas surrounding skinniness in any noticeable way. As has been shown, the identity constructed around skinniness, be it expressed through the word *skinny* or *Skinni*, follows, reinforces, and helps in creating the culturally established ideal body image. It is tied to the ideas of morality, health, dieting, and eating disorders that have long been connected to skinniness in Western culture. The requirements of this lifestyle

identity also mostly affect women, which is also in line with cultural standards and normalised ideas about who is required to be skinny to be accepted. The Société's attempts to brand Skinni as something new and solely positive seem to not have worked when observing their wider discourse implications. At the end of the day, their ideology is still an avenue for people, mostly women or adolescent girls, to potentially fall into a way of living that can lead to dieting or even disordered eating in the pursuit of the ideal body. At the very least it still ends up supporting the pre-established and normalised ideas about only skinny bodies fitting the ideal.

7 Conclusion

To return to the research questions posed in the Introduction of this thesis, they can be answered based on the results of analysis and discussion. The four research questions sought to find out various aspects of the Société's construction of a skinny lifestyle identity. The first two questions focused on what the most frequent clause types and elements were, as well as what the most frequent visual features were. The third question was used to examine how the most frequent linguistic and visual features were used to construct the skinny lifestyle identity. Finally, the fourth question pondered what the wider implication of spreading and supporting a skinny lifestyle were in discourse. These questions are answered below after which ideas for further research are presented. This is followed by concluding remarks about the findings of this thesis.

Starting with the results of linguistic analysis. It was discovered that the most common clause type in the material was Relational clauses. The Relational Processes were considered in two parts: non-negated Processes and negated ones. The most frequent non-negated Processes were *be*, *need*, *stay*, *keep*, = (equal sign), and *make*, whereas the most recurrent negated Processes were *not be*, *not need*, *not make*, and *not mean*. In clauses with non-negated characterisation the most common Be-er1 Participants were *you*, "implicit you", *I*, *The Skinni Société*, *living a Skinni lifestyle*, *it* (introductory), *discipline*, and *Skinni*. These Participants were characterised with Be-er 2 Participants that focused on themes of structure, discipline, consistency, transformation, and choosing and maintaining a Skinni lifestyle. On the other hand, the most frequent Be-er 1 Participants in clauses with negative characterisation were *you*, *I*, *it* (introductory), *Skinni*, *The Skinni Société*, *discipline*, and *living a Skinni lifestyle*. They were characterised through Be-er 2 Participants that thematically evoked a separation from the negative associations of skinniness, restrictions, and dieting, as well as letting go of unnecessary habits and qualities.

Material clauses were the second most frequent clause type. The most common Actors were the "implicit you", *you*, *I*, *we*, *she*, *they*, *it*, and *Skinni girls*, out of which the "implicit you" was particularly recurrent. This was in part due to the large number of imperative clauses in the material. Common Material Processes included *eat*, *stop*, *start*, *join*, *walk*, *apply*, *open*, *share*, *choose*, *do*, *go*, *hold*, *have*, *move*, and *trade*. Out of these, especially frequent were *eat*, *stop*, and *start*. The Goals connected to these Processes most often revolved around themes of

food and eating habits, exercise and movement, becoming a member of the Société, sharing positive experiences and advice, and choosing actions that align with a Skinny lifestyle.

Mental clauses were the next most recurrent clause type. The most common Sensors were *you, I*, the “implicit you”, *she, your body, girls, change, the scale, no one, we*, and *your brain*. Frequent Mental Processes included *want, learn, know, think, respect*, and *see*. Most of these were cognitive in nature, with the others describing desire and perception. The most frequent Phenomena observed revolved around weight loss, body and lifestyle transformation, acquiring discipline and standards, and achieving a Skinny way of living. The other three clause types were notably less frequent than the rest. Within Behavioural clauses the most common Behavers were the “implicit you”, *I, you, she, Skinny girls*, and *we*, whereas the most common Processes were *not spiral, speak, watch, pay attention*, and *scream*. In Verbal clauses the most common Speakers were the “implicit you”, *you*, and *I*. The most recurrent Processes were *say, tell, ask*, and *not ask*. Some Verbal clauses also included Receivers, most common of which were *me, you*, and *yourself*. Finally, there were only two Existential clauses in the material, both of which included the Process *be*. The two Existents were *a difference between restriction and refinement* and *an answer*.

In the analysis of the most frequent visual features, it was found that based on the visual resource of Contact, Offers were more frequent than Demands, but only by a very slight margin making them nearly equal in numbers. Within the resource of Social Distance, the most frequently encountered distance utilised was Personal Distance, with around half of the images falling into this dimension. This Distance was followed in descending order of frequency by Social Distance, Interpersonal Distance, and Highly Personal Distance. From the perspective of Power, most images had Equal Power between the Viewer and Participant. Participant Power accounted the next most frequent category and Viewer Power was least common.

In the Discussion section it was argued that the linguistic and visual features were mainly used to construct a skinny lifestyle identity by creating a sense of community, asserting the Société’s authority, and defining what a skinny lifestyle is and includes in the Société’s opinion. It was observed that a skinny lifestyle was presented as a moral, healthy, and fulfilling way to live. However, it was simultaneously shown that the characterisation of a skinny lifestyle also supported pre-existing ideas and cultural standards surrounding skinniness. This was despite the fact that the Société wanted to separate their concept of

Skinni from the more negative associations of skinniness. Regardless, it was noted that the Société's messaging could still potentially support harmful ideas connected living a skinny lifestyle, such developing eating disorders. Ultimately, it was illustrated that *Skinni* and *skinny* as terms are not that different from one another, and both still lead to the idealisation of skinniness.

Finally, after discussing the skinny lifestyle, its wider discourse implications were considered. The Société's spreading of ideology over people as an authority figure was shown to be a way to influence, control, and dominate people. It was shown how this impact on people could lead to self-regulation through the internalisation of ideas connected to skinniness. These internalised ideas put people, especially adolescents, at risk of trying to achieve the idealised skinny body in potentially extreme ways, including disordered eating. This was deemed to be the most negative effect of supporting and propagating an ideology that idealises a skinny body as the ideal. The effect of idealising and spreading the skinny lifestyle was additionally discussed with reference to the fact that it was more likely to affect women specifically. As skinniness is expected more of women, ideas that upkeep this notion help in disadvantaging women by placing restrictive bodily standards on them and requiring more from them to be accepted.

Based on the findings of this thesis, multiple ideas for future research relating to the material, topics, and themes explored arise. Firstly, an in-depth analysis of all the material collected for this thesis could be undertaken to examine whether the less frequent clause types and elements would yield similar results. Additionally, an analysis from the perspective of the two other metafunctions of SFL would likely reveal more about the identity construction done by the Société, making it a compelling option for future research. Similarly, additional visual features, such as composition, font choice, colour language, or symbolism, could also be undertaken. Furthermore, the video-material posted by the Société could also be analysed to see if their strategy for identity construction is the same between still images and videos.

In addition, a similar study could also be devised to examine other lifestyle influencers or weight loss support groups online. It would be germane to observe what kinds of strategies other online actors might use in identity construction. Moreover, comparing different creators or organizations with the Société would reveal if the strategies of constructing identity around skinniness are universal or varied between actors online. It would also be pertinent to observe whether the findings of this research are similar across other social media platforms, such as

TikTok, YouTube, or X. There is a possibility that different strategies of identity construction are used outside of Instagram or that the strategies used vary in the way they are utilised between platforms. Researching additional platforms could also give a fuller and more comprehensive picture of the identity construction of skinniness online, which cannot be achieved when studying a single platform or not to mention a single account.

To conclude, with the rising trend of skinniness that has returned to the media landscape and culture, it is ever more important to be aware of the underlying messaging that might be connected to it. Actors on social media, such as the Société, may talk of the positives that come with being skinny and living a skinny lifestyle while simultaneously spreading potentially dangerous ideas. Of course, they might not be doing so on purpose or with malicious intent, but remaining critical is still important. Skinniness has a long and complicated cultural history in the West, and this thesis has examined the way that one Instagram account continues to build, maintain, and perhaps even change the way we view skinniness. Gaining an all-encompassing understanding of what a skinny lifestyle might be is impossible, as it is conceived differently by everyone. Nonetheless, through observation of the Société's messaging, at least some of the ways in which idealising skinniness affects people could be explored to see their potential implications in everyday lives.

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Appendix 1 — Example of Posts Made by The Soci  t  

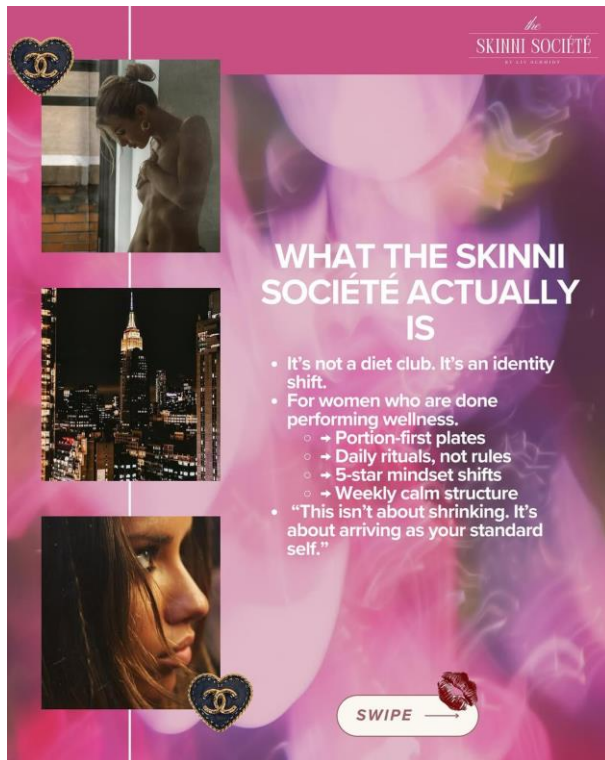


Figure 6 Example of a Skinni Soci  t   post (P24110)



Figure 7 Example of a Skinni Soci  t   post (P16111)

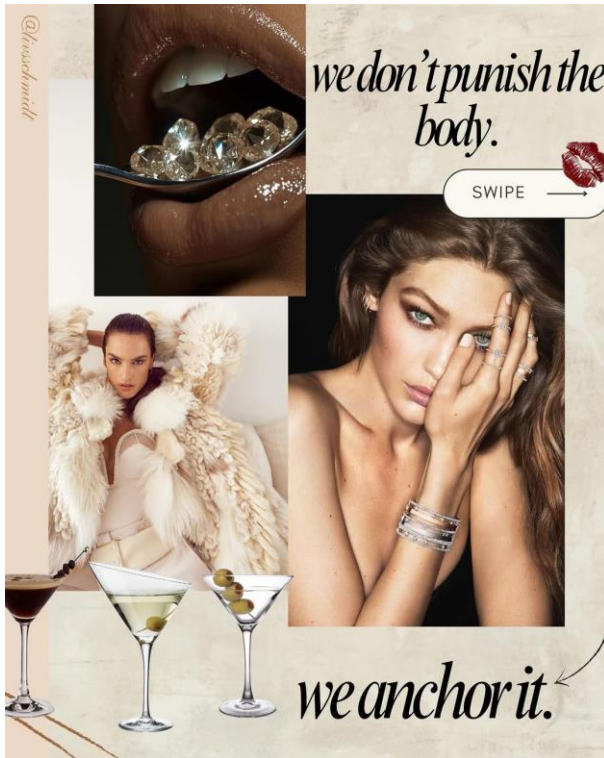


Figure 8 Example of a Skinni Société post (P317)



Figure 9 Example of a Skinni Société post (P2614)

Appendix 2 — Full Lists of Linguistic Material

Be-er 2 Participants, Goals, and Phenomena are listed in chronological order, instead of alphabetically as they were within the main text.

Table 15 Full List of Be-er 1 and Be-er 2 Participants in Clauses with Non-negated Characterisation

| Number of Appearances | Be-er 1 | Be-er 2 |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---|
| 77 | You | Rhythm, flow, an outfit, to start over, to accept if you wanna be skinni, just undisciplined, discipline, fat off chicken, skinny, just fuller, just dramatic, to raise your standards, smarter, living differently, expensive, insecure, her, it (confident), Candice, different bone structure, different genes, different symmetry; to look like the most undeniable version of you, something to follow, a blueprint, a daily protocol, the only five habits, less chaos, under-hydrated and overstimulated; a model standard body, structure that doesn't rely on motivation, festive without being full, off code, addicted to guilt, undisciplined and disconnected, a mindset that doesn't spiral, skinni, under-fueling, anxious, satiation, here to outgrow them (cravings) , gaining reactions, holding, on cycle, to go to bed, silence to remember who you are, a standard, a reset, a rewire, a new identity, framework, a culture, to stop negotiating with the one (routine) that works, fewer decisions, looking for a hit, a protocol that fits your personality, a standard, here to learn structure, to cut excess, here to focus on your own plate, welcome to share your experience, allowed to be human, a woman in motion, to skinnify it (dessert), a protocol, a standard, your own Skinni Society, it (one's own Skinni Society), rules, who you're surrounded by, to stop being controlled by them (calories), consumed, aware without being attached, standards, confidence, being observed, the prize, on brand, selecting, more consistent |
| 28 | "Implicit you" | Smarter, on topic, focused on health, fitness, wellness, and related goals, uplifting, mindful, aware, close to Skinni Société, structured, connected, skinni, a VS angel, in control of your body, the room is yours, consistent, calm, Skinni, elegant and non-triggering, Skinni for life, around girls who complain, binge, and spiral; around girls who portion, walk, and reflect; aware enough to know what's worth it, more interesting than food, balanced, aware, structured, the energy, Skinni alone, Skinni together |
| 21 | I | A skinny body, skinny habits, allowed to be confident, light, sharp, seen, present, anti-delusion, skinni (4), lean, organized, something structured, wanted, magnetic, remembered for my presence, Skinni year-round, hot in photos, partnership |
| 12 | It (introductory) | About holding a standard, about returning to self, identity, important to create a supportive, non-judgemental space, the 4 slices, garlic knots, soda, dessert; how much, about being strategic, called nutrient layering, what's on your plate, a directive, about feeling like herself, okay to know your body, time to audit your interests |

| Number of Appearances | Be-er 1 | Be-er 2 |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| 12 | This (the Skinni Société) | A space for encouragement, a space for empowerment and motivation, a weight loss group, your insurance policy against slipping back into who you used to be, a structured transformation container, a secure and sacred place, a structure-focused group, a weight loss group, a space meant for women pursuing weight loss, a transformation group, a private container, your blueprint |
| 7 | That (living a skinni lifestyle) | The upgrade, standard, why I created the Skinni Société, what we build in the Skinni Société, how you stay disciplined, why you'll win this game, the Skinni Algorithm |
| 6 | Discipline | How we stay in momentum, quiet, the highest form of elegance, a calm nervous system, the quietest luxury, your quiet luxury |
| 6 | It (living a Skinni lifestyle) | Realistic, about staying in tune with what feels best, about rules, about control, about arriving as your standard self, default |
| 6 | It (Skinni) | A standard, about repetition, how much you've mastered, about finally thinking differently, about how you think, personal power |
| 6 | The Skinni Pretty Much Survival Guide | 100 pages of portion control, 100 pages of mindset strategy, 100 pages of craving control, 100 pages of confidence in social settings, 100 pages of post-party recovery, 100 pages of the Skinni Halloween rules |
| 6 | This (introductory) | The Skinni Mindset (3), the new you, your scale sanity check, the Always Something Standard |
| 6 | What | Light, lean, and clear-headed; different; your personal strategy for stopping after one chic bite; one fall non-food comfort you can commit to romanticizing; the point, the Always Something I can do right now |
| 5 | It (being skinni) | About eating like you actually trust yourself, about reputation, rented, about thinking less about eating, about presence |
| 5 | It (discipline) | About opting in, being on time with your fuel, the invisible rituals you refuse to skip, direction, your quiet luxury |
| 4 | Confidence | Physical first, trained, the new candy, Skinni |
| 4 | It (changing one's body) | About being sharper to be aligned, self-editing, self-curating, self-elevating |
| 4 | It (getting skinni) | About thinking differently, about regulation, structured, standards |
| 4 | That energy (freed up by not tracking calories) | Discipline in your morning routine, focus in your work, calm in your relationships, space to actually live |
| 4 | This group | Intended for women ages 18+, aware, sharp, skinny |
| 3 | Food | Fuel, a side dish to your life, there |
| 3 | It (a rule about not overeating) | About control, about confidence, about learning how to indulge without undoing yourself |
| 3 | It (change) | Honesty, taste, standards |

| Number of Appearances | Be-er 1 | Be-er 2 |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| 3 | It (the Skinni Société) | About direction, an identity shift, curated and intimate |
| 3 | Skinni | Consistent, a mindset, about a return to speed |
| 3 | That (introductory) | It (idiomatic expressive use!), alignment, performance |
| 3 | That (needing to eat less for weight loss) | Science (2), structure |
| 3 | The Skinni Société | My insurance plan, making wellness cool again, so that (hating one's reflection) never happens again |
| 3 | This (fall) | Skinni season (2), your season to look like a snack |
| 3 | This (living a skinni lifestyle) | How you actually stay consistent, how you enjoy, refinement |
| 3 | Us | Honest, real, clear |
| 3 | We | Here to cut through it (chaos), obsessed with freedom; here for intentional, structured weight loss |
| 2 | "All or nothing" | The fastest way to destroy progress, powerless |
| 2 | Halloween | One of the trickiest holidays for staying in control, temptation in disguise |
| 2 | Hunger | A mirror, feedback |
| 2 | It (the scale going up) | Reactions, your sodium |
| 2 | It (the Skinni Holiday Survival Guide) | A step-by-step blueprint built around habits, mindset, and accountability; the system that creates lasting results |
| 2 | Maintenance | "Freedom", precision |
| 2 | Motivation | Scam (2) |
| 2 | Movement | Feel smaller, non-negotiable |
| 2 | Reverse dieting | A plan, exactly what you need |
| 2 | Shame | Desperate, loud |
| 2 | That (being undisciplined) | Fixed, why they (girls) spend January hating their reflection |
| 2 | That (hunger) | Your lunch calling, needing a break |
| 2 | That (knowing whether one wants a drink or just feel festive) | The difference, the discipline |
| 2 | That (trusting oneself) | Freedom, discipline disguised as peace |
| 2 | The only subscription that | Feel sexy (2) |
| 1 | "Always something" | CEO |
| 1 | 10 bites | Problem |

| Number of Appearances | Be-er 1 | Be-er 2 |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| 1 | 10,000+ steps | Skinni baseline |
| 1 | 3 bites | Pleasure |
| 1 | A Skinni girl | Sloppy |
| 1 | A Skinni plate | The runway for your willpower |
| 1 | Accountability | The new appetite suppressant |
| 1 | All indulgences | Chaos |
| 1 | Always something | Always skinni |
| 1 | Autumn food porn | Marketing |
| 1 | Beauty | Behavior |
| 1 | Being skinni | A service to myself |
| 1 | Being undisciplined | Hard |
| 1 | Chaos thinking | Fat |
| 1 | Cortisol | Stuck |
| 1 | Cravings | Your brain testing if you still care about your standard |
| 1 | Dining hall | A carb explosion |
| 1 | Each private group | Capped at 250 members |
| 1 | Effort | Elegant |
| 1 | Energy | Earned |
| 1 | Every "something" | A vote for the body you want |
| 1 | Every extra bite | Stuffed |
| 1 | Every fall step in heels or a trench coat | Slimmer |
| 1 | Every scroll, every search, every "what I eat in a day" | Just another way to think about food |
| 1 | Every step | Deliberate |
| 1 | Everyone | At a different point in their process |
| 1 | Everyone's journey | Different |
| 1 | Everyone's relationship with food and their body | Personal |
| 1 | Finding it (an answer) | Aligned with the Skinni identity |
| 1 | Getting skinni | Easy |
| 1 | Glam | A ritual |

| Number of Appearances | Be-er 1 | Be-er 2 |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| 1 | Half your work | Done before the first canapé |
| 1 | Having no standard | Toxic |
| 1 | Her reward | A hot shower, body oil, and dry brushing |
| 1 | Here (introductory) | The real rule I live by |
| 1 | How I act after overeating | Defines me |
| 1 | It ("being good all day") | Starving |
| 1 | It (a problem) | How you talk to yourself |
| 1 | It (a room) | Yours |
| 1 | It (a workout) | To be done |
| 1 | It (an appropriate amount to eat dessert) | A bite |
| 1 | It (balance) | Proof you've grown |
| 1 | It (fall comfort) | Cashmere, candles, and discipline |
| 1 | It (fall weight gain) | Optional |
| 1 | It (fall) | About being the chicest version of yourself in a trench coat |
| 1 | It (following a plan) | About freedom |
| 1 | It (food) | Logistical one (decision) |
| 1 | It (fullness) | Clutter |
| 1 | It (guilt) | The heaviest thing you're carrying |
| 1 | It (Halloween) | About staying in control while the world loses it |
| 1 | It (hunger) | A cue |
| 1 | It (knowing that eating more causes weight gain) | Basic math |
| 1 | It (liquid) | Probably your maintenance weight in disguise |
| 1 | It (marketing) | All campaigns designed to sell you fluff |
| 1 | It (obsession) | Chaos in disguise |
| 1 | It (one's body) | A decision |
| 1 | It (one's plate) | Curated |
| 1 | It (privacy) | Policy |
| 1 | It (replacing snacking with movement) | Identity reprogramming |
| 1 | It (reverse dieting) | A tool |

| Number of Appearances | Be-er 1 | Be-er 2 |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| 1 | It (sleep) | Free |
| 1 | It (starving) | Sloppy |
| 1 | It (staying Skinni) | About knowing when to stop |
| 1 | It (the goal) | Intention |
| 1 | It (the scale) | A receipt |
| 1 | It (the skinni mindset) | Precision |
| 1 | It (The Skinni Pretty Much Survival Guide) | Your roadmap to survive sugar season |
| 1 | It (the standard) | "Structured like you" |
| 1 | It (trust) | Precision |
| 1 | It (wanting less) | Math |
| 1 | Lack of control | The problem |
| 1 | Liquid cals | Still cals |
| 1 | Looking put together | Staying on plan |
| 1 | Looking Skinni | People assume you are disciplined |
| 1 | Magnesium oil | Her nightcap |
| 1 | Moderators | Here to enforce structure and safety |
| 1 | Modern wellness | A mess |
| 1 | Most cravings | Mismanaged emotions |
| 1 | Most girls | The same weight or even lose up to 3 pounds during the holidays |
| 1 | My goals | To stay lean and feel light |
| 1 | My presence | The priority |
| 1 | My steps | My indulgence |
| 1 | One indulgence | A luxury |
| 1 | One meal | Aesthetic & tiny |
| 1 | Overeating almond flour cookies | Overeating |
| 1 | Pilates | Enough |
| 1 | Poor sleep | Puffier face, slower digestion, scale confusion |
| 1 | Portion | Power |
| 1 | Portions | Chic no matter the menu |
| 1 | Posture | Your entrance |
| 1 | Presence | Fullness |
| 1 | Progress | Polished |

| Number of Appearances | Be-er 1 | Be-er 2 |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| 1 | Progress pics | Welcome |
| 1 | Progress pictures | Welcome |
| 1 | Restricted girls | Hungry |
| 1 | Rituals | Religion |
| 1 | Screens | Autopilot |
| 1 | She (a Skinni girl) | Strategic |
| 1 | She (skinni) | Deliberate |
| 1 | Skinni-coded sleep prep | Skincare |
| 1 | Skipping meals to "save calories" | Why you're out of control |
| 1 | Sleep | A skinny tool |
| 1 | Slow | Powerful |
| 1 | Snacking | A habit |
| 1 | Some goals | Rooted in precision |
| 1 | Thanksgiving | Social theatre |
| 1 | That (being mean to oneself) | Where the damage lives |
| 1 | That (getting skinni) | Where we lead |
| 1 | That (idiomatic) | All |
| 1 | That (listening to one's body means overeating) | What you did when you had no structure |
| 1 | That (need for discipline) | Why I built the Skinni Société |
| 1 | That (not needing to recover from one's lifestyle) | The flex |
| 1 | That (obsessively tracking calories) | Self-abandonment |
| 1 | That (overeating) | A choice |
| 1 | That (replacing snacking with movement) | Why the TSS girls keep the weight off |
| 1 | That (structure) | What the Skinni Société gives you |
| 1 | That (thinking one's day is ruined by missing a workout) | Chaos thinking |
| 1 | That (wanting to change one's body) | Taste |

| Number of Appearances | Be-er 1 | Be-er 2 |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| 1 | The content posted | Female-focused |
| 1 | The content, structure, and accountability shared here | Maturity and legal consent |
| 1 | The day | Ruined |
| 1 | The girl who | Tired of craving chaos and food noise |
| 1 | The number | Data |
| 1 | The only thing you've fed all year | Your obsession with food |
| 1 | The portion | The problem |
| 1 | The quiet restraint | A flex |
| 1 | The real damage | What you do next |
| 1 | The scale | A moment |
| 1 | The Skinni protocol | Simple |
| 1 | These (introductory) | The habits that hold the line |
| 1 | They (angels) | Impactful |
| 1 | They (not skinni people) | Vain, obsessive fake |
| 1 | They (one's non-negotiables) | Reminders of who I am |
| 1 | They (one's words) | Someone who's done playing small |
| 1 | They (skinni life rules) | Standards |
| 1 | They (social events) | About how skinny and chic you look arriving |
| 1 | They (work events) | Performances |
| 1 | They (your cravings) | Chaos |
| 1 | This (feeling shame) | Why you're stuck |
| 1 | This (food) | Fat |
| 1 | This (the Skinni Holiday Survival Guide) | How we stay on track |
| 1 | This (uncalled for comments) | Judgmental remarks about food, workouts, or body types |
| 1 | This rule (not being allowed to | For peer-to-peer safety |

| Number of Appearances | Be-er 1 | Be-er 2 |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| | give medical recommendations) | |
| 1 | This space | Exclusively for women ages 18+ |
| 1 | To lose weight the best thing you can do | To build habits that can turn into a lifestyle |
| 1 | Too much chicken | Too much |
| 1 | Topics | Focused on weight loss, structure, food strategy, portion control, daily rituals, movement, mindset, and discipline |
| 1 | Trying to copy someone else's body | The fastest way to hate your own |
| 1 | Walking | Cardio |
| 1 | Your body | Responsive |
| 1 | Your confidence | Louder |
| 1 | Your discipline | Sad |
| 1 | Your drink | An accessory |
| 1 | Your energy | Crashing |
| 1 | Your feed | Clean |
| 1 | Your habits | A tell |
| 1 | Your hands | Energy |
| 1 | Your head | Clear |
| 1 | Your non-negotiables | Your identity |
| 1 | Your only competition | Your previous self |
| 1 | Your presence here | Protected, privileged, and purposeful |
| 1 | Your system | Too loud to hear hunger |

Table 16 Full List of Be-er 1 and Be-er 2 Participants in Clauses with Negated Characterisation

| Number of Appearances | Be-er 1 | Be-er 2 |
|-----------------------|---------|---|
| 60 | You | A gym, motivation, stuck, time to eat, a failure, more willpower, to "add things back", on a diet, "naturally bloated", being polite, "faking it", Candice, to look like her (Candice), a detox, one (a blueprint), more motivation, less food, hungry, gonna like it, to hit rock bottom to refine something, addicted to food, broken, a food plan, skinni, a better person, here to impress your cravings, supposed to be thinking about food all day, gaining weight, off track, to detox, to lift a dumbbell to lift your standards, a morning routine, more willpower, another hot girl walk, another fad, another coach, a new |

| Number of Appearances | Be-er 1 | Be-er 2 |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| | | morning routine, lazy, more discipline, hungry, a reset, to start over, the food police, allowed to try, a fly on the wall, to skip dessert, to cancel plans, to skip Thanksgiving, to reset, to restrict, to stop being aware of calories, disciplined, a food scale, to check your app, to ask permission, a calculator, to announce your discipline, on a diet, skipping, a partner |
| 10 | I | In the mood, anti-science, looking to add calories, interested in eating more than what feels right for me, a child, something sweet, drowning in my own chaos, to recover from my lifestyle, controlled by seasonal marketing, pressure |
| 10 | It (introductory) | About hiding, about bouncing back, your job to track my calories, the pizza, what, about being sweaty, what's on the table, a drink, about food, okay to be a slave to it (one's body) |
| 7 | Skinni | A sprint, extreme, about restriction, reactive, how little you eat, about trying harder, punishment |
| 4 | Being skinni | About eating less (2), about restriction, just about food |
| 4 | This (the Skinni Société) | A forum, a 7,000-person thread, a therapy group, the place to post it (information about undereating) |
| 3 | Discipline | Delay, loud, deprivation |
| 3 | "Implicit you" | A scoreboard, obsessed enough to ruin it (what's worth effort), your main character |
| 3 | It (changing one's body) | Self-starving, self-shaming, self-abandonment |
| 3 | It (reverse dieting) | My tool, for me (2) |
| 3 | This (living a skinni lifestyle) | About rituals, about shrinking, restriction |
| 2 | It (discipline) | Missing out (2) |
| 2 | It (hunger) | Real, craving |
| 2 | It (living a skinni lifestyle) | About calories, a detox |
| 2 | It (the scale going up) | Fat, your new body |
| 2 | Change | Punishment, hate |
| 2 | One food | Fat, Skinni |
| 2 | Starving | Strong, chic |
| 2 | That (living a skinni lifestyle) | Restriction, restrictive |
| 2 | The goal | To lose it (weight), Candice's clavicle |
| 2 | This (getting skinni) | Toxic, self-help |
| 2 | We | Here to decode the chaos, obsessed with food |
| 1 | Angels | Chatty |
| 1 | Balance | Permission to spiral |

| Number of Appearances | Be-er 1 | Be-er 2 |
|-----------------------|---|----------------------|
| 1 | Candy | The problem |
| 1 | Comments that shame others for their appearance, progress, or lifestyle choices | Tolerated |
| 1 | Every goal | Rooted in insecurity |
| 1 | Extreme | Sustainable |
| 1 | Fall | About pumpkin bread |
| 1 | Fall comfort | Food |
| 1 | Fall weight gain | Inevitable |
| 1 | Fireworks | Cardio |
| 1 | Following a plan | About restriction |
| 1 | Food | Moral decision |
| 1 | Fullness | Comfort |
| 1 | Getting skinni | About eating less |
| 1 | Halloween | About skipping fun |
| 1 | "Healthy" food | Calorie free |
| 1 | It (a number on a scale) | Your worth |
| 1 | It (a workout) | To be long |
| 1 | It (food) | The problem |
| 1 | It (getting skinni) | About willpower |
| 1 | It (liquid) | Calorie-free |
| 1 | It (replacing snacking with movement) | Punishment |
| 1 | It (skinni) | About what you eat |
| 1 | It (the Skinni Société) | A diet club |
| 1 | Losing weight | Hard |
| 1 | Movement | Punishment |
| 1 | No meal | Binge pass |
| 1 | Obsession | Control |
| 1 | One bite | Define me |
| 1 | One cookie | Gain weight |
| 1 | One salad | Lose it (weight) |
| 1 | Privacy | Optional |
| 1 | Reverse dieting | The move |
| 1 | Social events | About food |
| 1 | Standards | Self-hate |
| 1 | Staying Skinni | About saying no |

| Number of Appearances | Be-er 1 | Be-er 2 |
|------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| 1 | That (knowing that eating more causes weight gain) | Toxic |
| 1 | That (needing to eat less for weight loss) | Toxic |
| 1 | That (not having time to eat) | You get to inhale everything |
| 1 | That (obsessively tracking calories) | Self-control |
| 1 | That (overeating) | A mistake |
| 1 | That (wanting to change one's body) | Toxic |
| 1 | The day | Ruined unless you say it is |
| 1 | The scale | A threat |
| 1 | The skinni mindset | Perfection |
| 1 | The Skinni Société | About dieting |
| 1 | The standard | "Skinny like her" |
| 1 | These (one's non-negotiables) | Rules |
| 1 | These (skinni life rules) | Habits |
| 1 | This (changing one's body) | About being smaller to be loved |
| 1 | This (introductory) | Discipline |
| 1 | This (the Skinni Holiday Survival Guide) | A random challenge |
| 1 | This rule (not overeating) | Just about candy |
| 1 | Time | There |
| 1 | Trust | Permission |
| 1 | Wanting a model body | Toxic |
| 1 | Wanting less | Magic |
| 1 | Wanting more | Self-loathing |
| 1 | Work events | Vacations |
| 1 | Your body | A billboard |
| 1 | Your cravings | Cravings |
| 1 | Your hunger | Broken |

Table 17 Full List of Material Processes and their Related Goals

| Number of Appearances | Processes | Possible Goals |
|------------------------------|------------------|--|
| 31 | Eat | Less than normal, less (2), what they want, the hot dog, to be done, air, one cookie, one dessert bite, the cookie, the candy, one (cookie), something small, clean, and stabilizing, to feel elegant |
| 30 | Stop | Stuffing your stomach, hiding, making every bite a moral crisis, inhaling it, abusing it, talking, chasing (2), saying (4), knocking, performing, labelling, worshipping, trying, eating, scrolling, rushing, shovelling, trusting, feeling, being the main character |
| 19 | Start | Your morning with fiber, protein, and electrolytes, sounding like her (a skinni girl), talking like the woman who already lives in the body you want. labeling it what it is, eating like a woman. to do the same (to binge, complain, and spiral), doing that (portioning, walking, and reflecting) too, living like the girls you admire, embodying them (results), walking, asking your phone what to eat |
| 13 | Join | The Skinni Société (12), us |
| 13 | Walk | It (skinniness) |
| 11 | Apply | To join, to the Skinni Société (5) |
| 8 | Open | |
| 7 | Share | Your good days, her top 5 secrets to staying consistent without the stress (2), recommended supplements, a meal, wins, routines, and reminders to stay in control |
| 6 | Choose | What, the voice that keeps you sane, it (being skinni), one chic indulgence |
| 6 | Do | This (being skinni), a 20-minute walk during a call, it (staying small, sharp, and structured), workouts you hate, it (turning skinni), her skincare |
| 6 | Go | Outside, to bed, to events, to the party, on walks |
| 6 | Hold | It (one's confidence), it (eye contact), the same standard, water, the appetizer plate like a clutch, a sparkling water or tea |
| 6 | Have | The one drink, the themed drink, 3 bites of beauty, the cookie or the apple pie, dessert, one slice |
| 6 | Move | |
| 6 | Trade | Fullness, cravings, chaos, calorie math, quantity, late-night snacking |
| 5 | Carry | You (3), it (one's body), what mindset |
| 5 | Create | Calm, clarity, comfort, your dream body, new cravings |
| 5 | Gain | Weight, it (weight), what |
| 5 | Lose | Weight (2), it (weight), the plot, more weight than anyone else |
| 5 | Not eat | "Off track" food, to be good, more |
| 5 | Replace | Stress, "all or nothing", "snack break", junk energy |

| Number of Appearances | Processes | Possible Goals |
|-----------------------|--------------|---|
| 5 | Wear | Black, something tight, you, what I want |
| 4 | Add | Structure, protein, taste, 2-3k extra fall steps |
| 4 | Avoid | Asking personal questions about weight, clothing sizes, or measurements; overly personal or off-topic stories; posting content or comments that are excessively negative or unconstructive; triggering language |
| 4 | Build | The rhythm, habits that keep you slim long after the season ends, your life around your next meal |
| 4 | Control | My portions, you, the pour, the perception |
| 4 | Drink | Water, your tea, 1L of water, the champagne |
| 4 | Move on | |
| 4 | Subscribe | |
| 4 | Take | The long way to class, bites, photos |
| 4 | Teach | How to behave; the mindset that keeps weight off without tracking, forcing, or pretending, hunger doesn't matter, to sit with urges |
| 4 | Track | Your patterns, steps, portions |
| 4 | Use | The Skinni Société; some editing; it (hunger); visual structure, frequency, and internal cues |
| 3 | Build on | The last with mindset shifts and Skinni affirmations, the last with weekly challenges and rules, the last with non-negotiables that keep you grounded |
| 3 | Change | The rules, the room, this (eating more causing weight gain) |
| 3 | End | With tea, the night with tea |
| 3 | Feed | Yourself, the body (2) |
| 3 | Fix | A mood, it (one's posture), the trigger |
| 3 | Follow | The admin's guidelines, the rules |
| 3 | Let | The silence hold weight, hunger reveal something, it (one indulgence ruining one's week) |
| 3 | Not change | My standards |
| 3 | Not restrict | |
| 3 | Not share | Calorie counts, medical advice, binge videos, "what I eat in a day" chaos, or emotional eating spirals |
| 3 | Not wait | To feel better, for the mood, for motivation |
| 3 | Pivot | To Skinni sips |
| 3 | Place | Your phone |
| 3 | Protect | It (the new you), the room, your identity |
| 3 | Reset | It (the tone of a day) |
| 3 | Skip | Breakfast, the cookies, one workout |
| 3 | Show up | |
| 3 | Train | Yourself, your body, your eyes and hands |

| Number of Appearances | Processes | Possible Goals |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---|
| 3 | Treat | It (the Skinni Société) as such, them (work events), your meal |
| 2 | Anchor | It (the body), habits |
| 2 | Breed | Confidence, results |
| 2 | Count | |
| 2 | Celebrate | Individual achievements |
| 2 | Come | To stay small, sharp, and structured; raise your standard |
| 2 | Dress | |
| 2 | Fade | |
| 2 | Find | Her something, it (the new you) |
| 2 | Help | |
| 2 | Keep | The candles, it (awareness) |
| 2 | Not collapse | |
| 2 | Not count | Calories (2) |
| 2 | Not cut out | Things, it (food) all |
| 2 | Not demonize | Food, it (hunger) |
| 2 | Not do | Paper plates, meal plans |
| 2 | Not earn | Calories, rest |
| 2 | Not fix | Yourself, what you keep avoiding |
| 2 | Not gain | Weight |
| 2 | Not get | Your 60-minute workout class, to eat five |
| 2 | Not layer | Every handbag you own, every dish on our plate |
| 2 | Not make up for | Food, it (lost calories) |
| 2 | Not overeat | |
| 2 | Not perform | Drama, |
| 2 | Not post | Revealing, overly edited, or sexualized images; tips, tricks, or stories that glamorize disordered eating, over-restriction, or punishment-based habits |
| 2 | Not ruin | Your life, your progress |
| 2 | Not save | You (2) |
| 2 | Not slip | |
| 2 | Not start | The day |
| 2 | Not waste | Time, your 20s trying to "get it right". |
| 2 | Not weigh | The same, my food |
| 2 | Overeat | |
| 2 | Pour | Tea, drinks |
| 2 | Prioritize | Protein and fiber, it (rest) |

| Number of Appearances | Processes | Possible Goals |
|-----------------------|--------------|--|
| 2 | Prove | That discipline looks better than dessert, you're still her protector |
| 2 | Realign | |
| 2 | Refine | |
| 2 | Refrain from | Promoting personal social media accounts, products, or external programs; giving medical, nutritional, or fitness advice |
| 2 | Result in | A permanent ban and legal follow-up, being removed |
| 2 | Return to | Normal, routine |
| 2 | Scale | It (the number of indulgences) back to one |
| 2 | Sculpt | Identity |
| 2 | Set | The tone, a standard |
| 2 | Shrink | Your value, it (desire) |
| 2 | Strategize | |
| 2 | Wake up | |
| 2 | Work | |
| 1 | Absorb | Them (habits) |
| 1 | Alternate | Every cocktail with sparkling water + lemon |
| 1 | Attend | What fall events |
| 1 | Affirm | |
| 1 | Agree | To our (the Société's) Terms & Conditions |
| 1 | Arrive | |
| 1 | Assert | Presence |
| 1 | Begin | With toned behavior |
| 1 | Behave | Your way |
| 1 | Be left | Eating nothing |
| 1 | Break | It (eye contact) |
| 1 | Burn | It (fat) |
| 1 | Burn off | This (fat) |
| 1 | Cancel | Workouts |
| 1 | Chase | Lightness |
| 1 | Chat | |
| 1 | Clean | Our space |
| 1 | Contain | It (desire to eat dessert) |
| 1 | Contribute | |
| 1 | Correct | |
| 1 | Cut | The fake fullness |
| 1 | Consult | Professionals |

| Number of Appearances | Processes | Possible Goals |
|------------------------------|------------------|---|
| 1 | Decide | |
| 1 | Decode | It (a cue about hunger) |
| 1 | Decorate | |
| 1 | Delay | The craving |
| 1 | Design | Her appetite |
| 1 | Discourage | Unhealthy behaviors |
| 1 | Dominate | The dialogue |
| 1 | Downsize | My plates |
| 1 | Elevate | |
| 1 | Encourage | Support |
| 1 | Enlist | A buddy |
| 1 | Ensure | They are shared respectfully and without pressuring others to do the same |
| 1 | Enter | The new year |
| 1 | Expose | Who's pretending and who's practicing |
| 1 | Fail | |
| 1 | Finish | |
| 1 | Fluctuate | |
| 1 | Flush | It (sodium) |
| 1 | Get back on | Track |
| 1 | Get dressed | |
| 1 | Get away with | |
| 1 | Give | The same comfort as food |
| 1 | Give up | The food |
| 1 | Go for | Snacks, men, and conversations |
| 1 | Grow up | |
| 1 | Hide | |
| 1 | Hijacked | Your hungercues |
| 1 | Hydrate | |
| 1 | Ice roll | |
| 1 | Investigate | The craving |
| 1 | Journal | |
| 1 | Leave | Two bites |
| 1 | Live | It (being skinni) |
| 1 | Look up | |
| 1 | Maintain | |
| 1 | Make | Tea |

| Number of Appearances | Processes | Possible Goals |
|------------------------------|--------------------|---|
| 1 | Mask | It (one's hunger) |
| 1 | Match | That (reverse dieting) |
| 1 | Miss | One class |
| 1 | Moralize | It (one's hunger) |
| 1 | Mute | It (one's hunger) |
| 1 | Name | It (one's hunger) |
| 1 | Not applaud | Under-eating |
| 1 | Not avoid | The scale |
| 1 | Not ban | Pizza |
| 1 | Not binge | |
| 1 | Not chase | Soreness |
| 1 | Not come | This far |
| 1 | Not comment on | What someone else is or isn't eating |
| 1 | Not compare | |
| 1 | Not control | Food |
| 1 | Not cut off | Food groups |
| 1 | Not defy | Physics |
| 1 | Not deny | Herself |
| 1 | Not dress | |
| 1 | Not end | |
| 1 | Not end up | Bingeing |
| 1 | Not encourage | Disordered eating |
| 1 | Not entertain | What |
| 1 | Not fidget | |
| 1 | Not forward | Messages from this (the Skinni Soci  t  's) group |
| 1 | Not glorify | Overeating on vacation |
| 1 | Not "heal" | |
| 1 | Not "hibernate" | |
| 1 | Not hide | |
| 1 | Not inhale | The whole thing |
| 1 | Not leak | Messages from this (the Skinni Soci  t  's) group |
| 1 | Not let | Food own your mind |
| 1 | Not live | |
| 1 | Not lose | Weight |
| 1 | Not "maintain" | |
| 1 | Not normalize | Overeating |
| 1 | Not out-discipline | Desire |

| Number of Appearances | Processes | Possible Goals |
|-----------------------|------------------|---|
| 1 | Not outgrow | |
| 1 | Not promote | Your brand, Instagram, YouTube, side hustle, or service |
| 1 | Not punish | The body |
| 1 | Not quit | Sugar |
| 1 | Not react | |
| 1 | Not recommend | Medications, injections, hormones, or supplements |
| 1 | Not reverse diet | |
| 1 | Not rewrite | Weeks of structure |
| 1 | Not rush | |
| 1 | Not screenshot | Messages from this (the Skinni Société's) group |
| 1 | Not sedate with | Sugar |
| 1 | Not shame | Carbs |
| 1 | Not show up | |
| 1 | Not skip | |
| 1 | Not start over | |
| 1 | Not starve | |
| 1 | Not track | Others |
| 1 | Not treat | Yourself |
| 1 | Not walk | |
| 1 | Not wing | Her mornings |
| 1 | Not worship | It (hunger) |
| 1 | NuFACE | |
| 1 | Over-serve | Their plates and their personalities. |
| 1 | Panic over | Pasta |
| 1 | Pay | |
| 1 | Perform | Discipline |
| 1 | Pick up | Your bag |
| 1 | Plate | |
| 1 | Play | The lead |
| 1 | Portion | |
| 1 | Post | |
| 1 | Prevent | The dinner damage |
| 1 | Provide | A level of comfort and support that a unisex chat may not |
| 1 | Pull in | You |
| 1 | Punish | |
| 1 | Put | The phone |
| 1 | Quiet down | |

| Number of Appearances | Processes | Possible Goals |
|-----------------------|--------------|--|
| 1 | Recognize | The signals |
| 1 | Reflect | What I prioritize |
| 1 | Reframe | The premise |
| 1 | Release | It (awareness) |
| 1 | Remove | Chaos |
| 1 | Renew | It (being skinni) |
| 1 | Repeat | Bloated patterns |
| 1 | Restart | |
| 1 | Retrain | Hunger |
| 1 | Reverse diet | |
| 1 | Rock | Your costume |
| 1 | Ruin | An outfit |
| 1 | Run on | Momentum |
| 1 | Satisfy | |
| 1 | Save | Me |
| 1 | Self-correct | |
| 1 | Sell | Candles + cookies |
| 1 | Serve | |
| 1 | Settle | |
| 1 | Sharpen | Metabolism |
| 1 | Shut down | |
| 1 | Sign | An NDA |
| 1 | Signal | Power |
| 1 | Silence | The spiral |
| 1 | Start over | |
| 1 | Stick with | What works for me |
| 1 | Step into | Discipline, accountability, and elegance |
| 1 | Store | Fat |
| 1 | Structure | Your meals |
| 1 | Support | |
| 1 | Swap | Comfort |
| 1 | Swear off | Carbs |
| 1 | Switch to | Ligh and chic |
| 1 | Take back | Control |
| 1 | Tap in | |
| 1 | Touch | Your glass |
| 1 | Tighten | |

| Number of Appearances | Processes | Possible Goals |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| 1 | Travel | |
| 1 | Unbutton | Her jeans |
| 1 | Upgrade | The version you live in |
| 1 | Weigh in | |
| 1 | Win | |
| 1 | Work on | Your body |

Table 18 Full List of Mental Processes and their Related Phenomena

| Number of Appearances | Processes | Phenomena |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---|
| 17 | <i>Want</i> | <i>To feel bloated, what aligns, to lose 50 pounds (2), to feel balanced and skinni, to change your body, this (changing one's body) (2), this (a drink), to feel festive, to be skinni, less (2), to arrive light, to look like Candice Swanepoel (2)</i> |
| 11 | <i>Learn</i> | <i>The difference between needing a snack and needing a life; how to eat when you're hungry; how to handle food pushers; how to pick your indulgences and stay in control; how to stay confident, disciplined, and in charge of your body through every holiday; how to make food not the main character; to manage every craving, event, and indulgence with strategy; the Skinni Halloween rules; my mindset to stay in control before, during, and after parties; the secret weapon for surviving sugar season; how to look like a snack</i> |
| 10 | <i>Know</i> | <i>My body (2); my portions (2); how to feel light, lean and clear-headed; how to stop, reset, and carry on; when she's slipping; [that] one Skinni choice is more powerful than ten dramatic excuses; the general calories; yourself</i> |
| 7 | <i>Think</i> | <i>Weight loss is about restriction, food is the problem, shame will make you disciplined, listening to your body means overeating, being "so good all day" means you're disciplined, tracking gives them control, what</i> |
| 6 | <i>Respect</i> | <i>Everyone's privacy, the admin's decisions, any decisions regarding content moderation or disputes within the group, your body, it (information about someone's weight loss), admins & moderators</i> |
| 5 | <i>See</i> | <i>It (one's arrival), smaller portions, discipline, standards, what I do every single day</i> |
| 3 | <i>Feel</i> | <i>Good, intentional, proud</i> |
| 3 | <i>Not trust</i> | <i>Your hunger (2), yourself</i> |
| 3 | <i>Listen</i> | <i>To your thoughts (2), to your words</i> |
| 3 | <i>Romanticize</i> | <i>The season, your fall, restraint</i> |
| 2 | <i>Enjoy</i> | <i>The community, the holidays</i> |
| 2 | <i>Not fear</i> | <i>Food, it (hunger)</i> |
| 1 | <i>Taste</i> | <i>Good</i> |

| Number of Appearances | Processes | Phenomena |
|------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| 1 | <i>Believe</i> | <i>It's (food) special</i> |
| 1 | <i>Care</i> | <i>If you quit</i> |
| 1 | <i>Confuse</i> | <i>Emotion for appetite</i> |
| 1 | <i>Focus on</i> | <i>Positive, encouraging discussions</i> |
| 1 | <i>Interpret</i> | <i>It (a scale)</i> |
| 1 | <i>Look at</i> | <i>The girl who's hiding</i> |
| 1 | <i>Mistake</i> | <i>Obsession for discipline</i> |
| 1 | <i>Not care</i> | <i>If you did 60 minutes or 6</i> |
| 1 | <i>Not clock</i> | <i>That you ate</i> |
| 1 | <i>Not crave</i> | <i>It (a thing that cannot make one glow, tighten, elevate, or expand)</i> |
| 1 | <i>Not hear</i> | <i>Your body's signals</i> |
| 1 | <i>Not learn</i> | <i>Just habits</i> |
| 1 | <i>Not romanticize</i> | <i>It (eating pie or a cookie)</i> |
| 1 | <i>Not think</i> | <i>Your way skinny</i> |
| 1 | <i>Plan</i> | <i>To stay</i> |
| 1 | <i>Realize</i> | <i>It (the consumption of food)</i> |
| 1 | <i>Remember</i> | <i>That (confidence)</i> |
| 1 | <i>Take</i> | <i>Their reflection</i> |
| 1 | <i>Trust</i> | <i>The cue</i> |
| 1 | <i>Visualize</i> | <i>Your arrival</i> |

Appendix 3 — Finnish Summary

Tässä pro gradu –tutkielmassa käsitellään hoikkuuden (skinniness) ympärille rakennettua identiteettiä painonpudotukseen keskittyvän yhteisön, *The Skinni Société:n*, Instagram sivulla. Tutkielman tarkoitus oli selvittää, miten erilaisia kielellisiä ja visuaalisia ominaisuuksia käytettiin hoikkuuteen keskittyvän identiteetin luomiseen sekä ylläpitoon. Kielellisten ominaisuuksien analyysissä hyödynnettiin Hallidayn funktionaalista kielioppia (Functional Grammar), jonka avulla tutkittiin ideationaalisen metafunktion (ideational metafunction) eri lauseketyyppejä ja niiden osia. Visuaalisessa analyysissä taas käytettiin Kressin ja van Leeuwenin visuaalista kielioppia (Visual Grammar) eri visuaalisten resurssien tutkintaan. Näiden lisäksi analyysin tulosten laajempien implikaatioiden pohdintaan käytettiin kriittistä diskurssianalyysia (Critical Discourse Analysis). Tämän teoreettisen rungon puitteissa pyrittiin vastamaan neljään tutkimuskysymykseen:

- 1) Mitkä olivat yleisimmät lauseketyypit ja niiden osat tutkimusmateriaalissa?
- 2) Mitkä olivat yleisimmät visuaaliset resurssit tutkimusmateriaalissa?
- 3) Miten yleisimpiä kielellisiä ominaisuuksia, visuaalisten ominaisuuksien tukemana, käytettiin hoikkuuden ympärille rakennetun identiteetin luomiseen *The Skinni Société:n* Instagram-sivulla?
- 4) Millaisia laajempia implikaatioita hoikkuuteen keskittyvän elämäntavan levittämiseksi ja tukemisella on diskurssissa?

Tutkielman johdannon jälkeen keskeiset käsitteet määriteltiin ennen teoreettiseen taustaan siirtymistä, alkaen identiteetistä. Identiteetti on yksilöllinen ja sosiaalinen ilmiö, jonka kautta ihmiset määrittävät keitä he ovat ja miten he toimivat (Vignoles, Schwartz, and Luyckx 2011, 2). Identiteetti rakentuu usein ihmissuhteiden kautta (van Leeuwen 2021, 6) ja vaatii muiden ihmisten tunnistuksen tullakseen hyväksytyksi (van Leeuwen 2021, 19). Identiteetti voi lisäksi olla jaettu usean ihmisen kesken, milloin on kyse ryhmäidentiteetistä (Spears 2011, 203). Elämäntyyli-identiteetit (*lifestyle identities*) ovat ryhmäidentiteettejä, jotka pohjautuvat jaettuun arvoihin, aktiviteetteihin ja ulkonäköön vaikuttaviin tekijöihin, jotka pohjautuvat vapaa-ajan toimintaan sekä vaihtuviin sosiaalisiin trendeihin (van Leeuwen 2021, 20). *The Skinni Société:n* (vastedes *The Société*) hoikkuuden ympärille rakentama identiteetti on elämäntyyli-identiteetti, jota he haluavat levittää ja ylläpitää.

Länsimaisessa kulttuurissa hoikkuus on ideaalin vartalon määritelmä (Thompson et al. 1999). Nykyään varsinkin sosiaalinen media on työkalu, jonka kautta ajatusta hoikkuudesta ideaalina levitetään (Kvardova et al. 2025, 2001). Hoikkuuteen yhdistetään monia positiivisia ominaisuuksia, kuten moraalisuus ja terveys. Hoikkuus on myös varsinkin naisilta oletettu ja vaadittu ominaisuus yhteiskunnallisen hyväksynnän tavoittamiseksi (Fahs 2017, 185-186). Hoikkuuden saavuttamista ja ylläpitoa varten ihmiset tekevät ulkonäkötyötä (*appearance-work*), mikä voi ilmetä esimerkiksi dieetillä olemisena (Riley, Evans, and Robson 2022, 2-3). Ulkonäkötyö ja painonpudotus ovat tapoja tuntee merkityksellisyyttä muodonmuutoksen sekä vartalollisen kontrollin kautta (Riley, Evans, and Robson 2022, 49). Suoranaisen painonpudotuksen lisäksi niin sanottu fitspo (*fitness inspiration*) -sisältö on trendannut viime vuosina. Tällainen sisältö keskittyy näennäisesti terveellisiin elämäntapoihin ja fitness-elämäntyyliin, mutta samanaikaisesti usein ylläpitää hoikkuuden ideaalia (Riley, Evans, and Robson 2022, 6-7). Vaatimus hoikkuudesta, painonpudotus ja fitspo-elämäntyyli voivat myös johtaa syömishäiriöihin, kuten anoreksiaan. Sosiaalisen median vaikutuksesta varsinkin nuoret ovat vaarassa sairastua syömishäiriöihin (Abdoli et al. 2024, 15), minkä takia mahdollisesti syömishäiriöihin johtavan sisällön tutkiminen on tärkeää.

Identiteetin ja hoikkuuden lisäksi myös *The Société* esiteltiin tarkemmin. *The Société* on eksklusiivisesti naisille tarkoitettu painonpudotusyhteisö, jonka toiminta yhteisön oman kuvauksen perusteella keskittyy olemaan järjestelmällistä ja kurinalaista ilman rajoitteita, häiriintynyttä syömistä tai nälkiintymistä (The Skinni Société n.d.). *The Société:n* Instagram sivu, jossa he jakavat hoikkaan elämäntyyliin keskittyviä postauksia, on julkinen sivu, mutta sen lisäksi naiset voivat hakea maksullista jäsenyyttä. Jäsenet jaetaan 250 henkilön ryhmiin, joissa he saavat tukea ja neuvoja painonpudotukseen. Jäsenyyden lisäksi *The Société* myy muita painonpudotuksessa auttavia tuotteita. *The Société:n* nimessä esiintyvä sana *Skinni* on tyylytelty version englannin kielen sanasta *skinny* (hoikka tai laiha), jonka käytön tarkoituksena on erottaa kyseinen yhteisö ja sen toiminta hoikkuuteen liitetystä negatiivisista konnotaatioista (Schmidt 2025b). Tästä huolimatta *The Société* postauksiensa kautta ylläpitää yhteiskunnassa yleisiä hoikkuuteen liitettyjä ideaaleja, mikä ilmeni analyysin ja pohdinnan aikana.

Keskeisten termien määrittelyn jälkeen tutkielmassa esiteltiin tarkemmin analyysissä käytetyt teoreettiset näkökulmat. Funktionaalinen kielioppi on Michael Hallidayn kehittämä

semioottinen teoria, jonka mukaan kieli on merkityksien (*meanings*) luomiseen käytettävä resurssi (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 3). Tässä tutkielmassa keskityttiin tutkimaan kielen ideationaalista metafunktiota, joka on yksi funktionaalisen kieliopin osa-alueista. Kyseisen metafunktion avulla kielen käyttäjät luovat ja tulkitsevat esineiden, ympäristöjen ja abstraktien ideoiden merkityksiä (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 30). Sen avulla kielen käyttäjien on mahdollista ymmärtää maailmaa, jossa he elävät (*ibid.*). Ideationaalinen metafunktio ilmenee kuuden erilaisen lauseketyypin kautta, jotka kaikki kuvaavat ideointia omalla tavallaan. Nämä lauseketyypit ovat Relationaalinen, Materiaalinen, Mentaalinen, Verbaalinen, Käytöksellinen ja Eksistentiaalinen. Jokaisella näistä lauseketyypeistä on myös omat osansa, josta ne muodostuvat. Osiin kuuluvat Prosessi (*Process*), joka kuvaa tapahtuvaa aktiviteettia tai toimea, ja Osanottaja (*Participant*), joka on joko prosessin tekijä tai se keneen prosessi vaikuttaa (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 213). Osanottajia voi lauseketyypistä riippuen olla joko yksi tai kaksi, mutta Prosesseja on aina yksi jokaisessa lausekkeessa.

Relationaaliset lausekkeet (*Relational clauses*) muodostuvat kahdesta osanottajasta, Olija 1 ja Olija 2 (*Be-er 1 ja Be-er 2*), ja niitä käytetään jonkin asian luonnehtimiseen tai tunnistamiseen. Prosessin kautta Olija 1:tä kuvataan Olija 2:n avulla. Materiaaliset lausekkeet (*Material clauses*) taas kuvaavat ulkoisessa maailmassa tapahtuvia asioita ja toimintoja.

Niissä osanottajana toimiva Toimija (*Actor*) tekee jonkin Prosessin kuvaaman toimen, joka mahdollisesti kohdistetaan toiseen valinnaiseen Osanottajaan, Tavoitteeseen (*Goal*). Sisäisiä tunteita, ajatuksia tai kokemuksia kuvaavat Mentaaliset lausekkeet (*Mental clauses*) koostuvat Osanottajista Tuntija (*Senser*) ja Ilmiö (*Phenomenon*). Ilmiö on Tuntijan Prosessin kautta tuntema tai kokema asia. Verbaaliset lausekkeet (*Verbal clauses*) ilmaisevat jonkun sanoneen jotain. Niissä Sanoja (*Sayer*) Prosessin kautta sanoo jonkin asian valinnaiselle Vastaanottajalle (*Receiver*). Käytöksellisiä lausekkeita (*Behavioural clauses*) käytetään kuvaamaan tyypillisesti ihmisille kuuluvia fysiologisia ja psykologisia prosesseja. Prosessin tekijänä näissä lausekkeissa on Käyttäytyjä (*Behaver*).

Eksistentiaalisia lausekkeita (*Existential clauses*) hyödynnetään kuvaamaan sitä, että jokin asia on olemassa tai tapahtumassa. Niissä on yksi Osanottaja, Olemassaolija (*Existent*).

Tutkimalla näiden eri lauseketyyppien ja niiden osien käyttöä tutkielman tarkoitus oli nähdä millaista ideointia *The Société* välittää kielenkäyttönsä kautta.

Visuaalinen kielioppi on myös semioottinen teoria, mutta kielen sijaan se keskittyy visuaaliseen viestintään. Tässä tutkielmassa keskityttiin kolmeen visuaalisen

kieliopin piirteeseen, joiden varassa analyysi tehtiin. Ensimmäinen piirre oli Kontakti (*Contact*), jonka saralla kuvat voidaan jakaa joko Vaatimuksiin (*Demands*) tai Tarjouksiin (*Offers*). Kuva on Vaatimus, jos siinä esitetty Osallistuja (*Participant*) jakaa katsekontaktin kuvan Katsojan (*Viewer*) kanssa, ja Tarjous, jos katsekontaktia ei ole (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 104-105). Toinen piirre oli Sosiaalinen etäisyys (*Social Distance*), joka ilmaistaan sen kautta, kuinka suuri osa Osallistujasta näkyy kuvaruudussa. Etäisyys voi olla joko Henkilökohtainen (*Personal*), Sosiaalinen (*Social*) tai Epähenkilökohtainen (*Impersonal*). Henkilökohtaisissa kuvissa Osallistujasta näkyy kasvojen lisäksi ylävartalo, Sosiaalisissa kuvissa Osallistuja esitetään polvista ylöspäin ja Epähenkilökohtaisissa kuvissa koko vartalo on näkyvässä (Kress and van Leeuwen 2021, 109). Viimeinen piirre oli Valta (*Power*), joka ilmenee kuvakulman kautta. Jos Osallistuja on kuvattu matalasta kulmasta, on kuvassa Osallistujavalta (*Participant Power*). Jos hänet on kuvattu korkeasta kulmasta, on kyseessä Katsojavalta (*Viewer Power*). Kuvassa on Yhtäläinen valta (*Equal Power*), mikäli osallistuja on kuvattu katsojan silmien tasolta. Kuten lauseketyyppien tapauksessa, tutkimalla näiden eri piirteiden käyttöä voi saada tarkemman kuvan *The Société:n* viestinnästä.

Kriittinen diskurssianalyysi taas on tapa tutkia kielen ja vallan suhdetta. Kieli on yksi tapa ylläpitää jo olemassa olevia valtarakenteita ja yhteiskunnallisia normeja, kuten hoikkuuden idealisointia, minkä takia diskurssianalyysi oli sopiva valinta pohdinnan tueksi. Yleisen diskurssianalyysin lisäksi tutkielmassa hyödynnettiin Multimodaalista diskurssianalyysiä (MCDA) ja Feminististä diskurssianalyysiä (FCDA). MCDA korostaa sitä, että kirjoitettu kieli ei ole ainoa semanttinen resurssi, jonka kautta voidaan luoda merkityksiä (Ledin and Machin 2018, 62). Sen sijaan MCDA:n mukaan useat resurssit toimivat yhdessä luoden merkityksiä, joita voi tulkita vain, jos ottaa huomioon eri resurssien suhteet toisiinsa ja niiden luoman kokonaiskuvan (Ledin and Machin 2018, 64). Tämä näkökulma oli tärkeä pitää mielessä ottaen huomioon tutkielman multimodaalinen tutkimusaineisto. FCDA taas keskittyy kielen kautta ilmeneviin valtasuhteisiin ja normeihin, jotka vaikuttavat erityisesti naisiin (Lazar 2018, 372). Koska hoikkuus on useammin naisilta oletettu ominaisuus, tarjoaa FCDA tarkemman tavan analysoida kyseistä ilmiötä *The Société:n* viestinnässä. Näitä molempia analyttisiä suuntia hyödynnettiin purkamaan hoikkuuden ympärille rakennetun elämäntapaidentiteetin ilmenemistä ja sen seuraamuksia laajemmassa diskurssissa.

Pohjustuksen jälkeen tutkielman aineisto ja metodologia kuvailtiin ennen analyysin tuloksiin siirtymistä. Kuten mainittu, tutkielman aineisto on

peräisin *The Skinni Société:n* Instagram-sivulta, ja se on luonteeltaan multimodaalista. Heidän postauksissaan on tyypillisesti kuvamateriaalia hoikista naisista, jonka lisänä on kielellistä, hoikkaan elämäntyyliin keskittyvää tekstiä (ks. Liite 1). Tutkimusaineisto kerättiin kolmen päivän aikana marraskuussa 2025. Aineiston muodostavat postaukset tehtiin aikavälillä 22. toukokuuta-12. marraskuuta 2025. Kaikkia *The Société:n* postauksia ei otettu mukaan analyysiin joko epäolennaisuuden tai teknisten tai ajallisten rajoitusten takia. Analyysin ulkopuolelle jätetyt postaukset sisälsivät videopohjaisia postauksia, reseptejä, kuvakollaaseja tai peittelemättömiä mainoksia. Myöskään kuvatekstejä tai hashtageja ei analysoitu, vaan kielellinen analyysi keskittyi postatuissa kuvissa olevaan tekstimateriaaliin. Lopullinen tutkimusaineisto koostui 36:sta Instagram postauksesta, joissa oli yhteensä 297 erillistä kuvaa.

Tutkimuksen metodologia seurasi digitaalisen etnografian periaatteita, mikä tarkoitti aineistoon syvästi tutustumista immersiiivisen keräysprosessin kautta. Kielellistä analyysiä varten teoreettiseen kehykseen sopivat lausekkeet tunnistettiin ja eroteltiin aineistosta erilliseen dokumenttiin. Lausekkeita löydettiin yhteensä 1390 kappaletta, joista jokaiselle annettiin oma nimike analyysin selkeyttämiseksi. Tämän jälkeen lausekkeet luokiteltiin kuuteen ideationaaliseen lauseketyyppiin ja niiden osat (Prosessit ja Osanottajat) tunnistettiin. Prosessien luokittelun aikana kieltomuotoiset Prosessit erotettiin kieltomuodottomista, koska kieltomuoto muuttaa Prosessin merkitystä merkittävästi, mikä todettiin huomioonotettavaksi asiaksi analyysiä varten. Lauseketyyppien ja osien luokittelun jälkeen ne analysoitiin funktionaalisen kieliopin mukaan.

Visuaalisen analyysin metodologia toimi samalla tavalla. Kuvamateriaalista etsittiin jokainen yksittäinen kuvaus naisesta, minkä perusteella analysoitavia kuvia oli lopulta 325. Kuten lausekkeille, kuville annettiin myös omat nimikkeet. Tämän jälkeen kuvat analysoitiin visuaalisen kieliopin mukaan kolmen piirteen (Kontakti, Sosiaalinen etäisyys ja Valta) kannalta. Sosiaalisen etäisyyden analyysissä luotiin uusi kategoria, Todella henkilökohtainen (*Highly Personal*), erottamaan kärjistetyn läheltä otetut kuvat Henkilökohtaisista kuvista. Kielellisten ja visuaalisten piirteiden analyysin jälkeen tuloksia avattiin kriittisen diskurssianalyysin avulla. Metodologiaosion lopussa harkittiin myös tutkielman teknisiä ja eettisiä rajoitteita. Teknisiä rajoitteita olivat muun muassa tutkielman rajallinen koko, pelkästään yhden tutkijan osallistuminen sekä videomateriaalin jättäminen analyysin ulkopuolelle. Mahdolliset eettiset kysymykset

koskivat *The Société:n* suostumusta, mutta julkisena toimijana heidän julkaisemansa aineisto todettiin hyväksyttäväksi tutkielmassa käyttöä varten.

Seuraavaksi analyysin tulokset käytiin läpi alkaen kielellisestä analyysistä ja siirtyen sitten visuaaliseen analyysiin. Kielellisessä analyysissä todettiin, että yleisimmät lauseketyypit aineistossa olivat Relationaaliset (46,5 %), Materiaaliset (41,6 %) ja Mentaaliset (6,8 %) lausekkeet. Muut lauseketyypit olivat huomattavasti harvinaisempia: Käytökselliset (2,8 %), Verbaaliset (2,2 %) ja Eksistentiaaliset (0,1 %) lausekkeet. Epätavallista oli, että Relationaaliset lausekkeet olivat yleisimpiä, sillä kirjallisessa tekstissä Materiaaliset lausekkeet ovat tyypillisesti useimmin käytettyjä (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013, 215). Neljä harvinaisinta lauseketyppiä olivat kuitenkin epätavallisen harvalukuisia, sillä yleensä ne muodostavat yhteensä noin 25 % kirjallisesta tekstistä (ibid.). Yleensä Verbaaliset lausekkeet ovat myös Käytöksellisempiä yleisempiä (ibid.), mikä ei ilmennyt tutkielman aineistossa.

Relationaalisten lausekkeiden yleisimpien Prosessien analyysin tulokset käytiin läpi kahdessa erässä: kieltomuodottomat ja kieltomuotoiset. Yleisimmät kieltomuodottomat Prosessit olivat *be, need, stay, keep*, = (yhtäläisyysmerkki) ja *make*. Kieltomuodottomissa lausekkeissa yleisimmät Olija 1 -Osanottajat olivat *you*, "implicit you" (imperatiivilausekkeissa esiintyvä oletettu tekijä, joka kuvaa lukijaa), *I, The Skinni Société* ja *living a Skinni lifestyle*. Näitä kuvailtiin rakenteeseen, kurinalaisuuteen, johdonmukaisuuteen, muodonmuutokseen ja hoikkaan elämäntyyliin viittaavien Olija 2 -Osanottajien kautta. Kieltomuotoisista Prosesseista taas yleisimmät olivat *not be, not need, not make* ja *not mean*. Näissä lausekkeissa useimmin esiintyvät Olija 1 -Osanottajat olivat *you, I, it (introductory), Skinni* ja *The Skinni Société*. Niitä kuvailtiin Olija 2 -Osanottajien kautta, jotka keskittyivät luomaan etäisyyttä hoikkuuden negatiivisista konnotaatioista, rajoitteista ja dieeteistä. Lisäksi ne viittasivat turhista tavoista ja ominaisuuksista luopumiseen, jotta lukija voisi keskittyä hoikkaan elämäntyyliin.

Yleisimmät Materiaalisten lausekkeiden Toimijat olivat "implicit you", *you, I, we, she, they, it* ja *Skinni girls*. Näistä "implicit you" oli erityisen usein käytetty, mikä johtui siitä, että suuri osa Materiaalisista lausekkeista oli imperatiivimuotoisia. Materiaalisista Prosesseista yleisimpiä olivat *eat, stop, start, join, walk, apply, open, share, choose, do*,

go, hold, have, move ja *trade*. Huomattavasti muita useammin esiintyviä Prosesseja olivat *eat, stop* ja *start*. Yleisimmät Tavoitteet keskittyivät temaattisten kokonaisuuksien ympärille. Näitä olivat ruoka ja syömistavat, liikunta, *The Société:n* jäseneksi liittyminen, positiivisten kokemusten jakaminen sekä hoikan elämäntyylin mukaisten valintojen tekeminen. Mentaalisissa lausekkeissa yleisimmät Tuntijat olivat *you, I*, “implicit you”, *she* ja *your body*, jotka kaikki oletusten mukaan viittavat joko ihmiseen tai ihmisen osaan. Prosesseista useimmiten esiintyivät *want, learn, know, think, respect* ja *see*. Suurin osa Mentaalisista Prosesseista kuvasi joko haluamista, kognitiota tai havainnointia. Yleisimmät Ilmiöt keskittyivät temaattisesti painonpudotukseen, muodonmuutokseen, kurinalaisuuden ja standardien saavuttamiseen sekä hoikkaan elämäntyyliin. Loput, huomattavasti vähemmän yleiset, lauseketyypit sisälsivät samankaltaisia aihepiirejä kuin muutkin.

Visuaalisen analyysin tuloksissa todettiin, että Kontaktin suhteen kuvat jakautuivat melkein puoliksi Tarjouksiin (50,8 %) ja Vaatimuksiin (49,2 %). Sosiaalisen etäisyyden kannalta suurin osa kuvista oli Henkilökohtaisia (48,6 %). Yleisimmästä harvinaisimpaan järjestettynä muut kuvat olivat Sosiaalisia (29,5 %), Epähenkilökohtaisia (14,8 %) ja Todella henkilökohtaisia (7,1 %). Vallan näkökulmasta Yhtäläinen valta (46,2 %) oli kuvissa yleisin. Seuraavaksi yleisin oli Osallistujavalta (32,9 %), ja harvinaisin oli Katsojavalta (20,9 %). Kielellisen ja visuaalisen analyysin tulosten purkamisen jälkeen niitä pohdittiin tarkemmin laajemman diskurssin kannalta.

Pohdinnassa todettiin, että kielellisiä ja visuaalisia ominaisuuksia käytettiin hoikkuuden ympärille rakentuvan identiteetin luomiseen monin tavoin. Yksi tapa oli luoda joukkoon kuulumisen tunne, mikä ilmeni esimerkiksi pronomien käytön, Tarjouksien, Henkilökohtaisen ja Todella Henkilökohtaisen Sosiaalisen etäisyyden sekä Yhtäläisen vallan kautta. Identiteettiä rakennettiin myös *The Société:n* neuvojan roolia vahvistamalla. Tämä saavutettiin muun muassa imperatiivisten lausekkeiden, ohjeistavien Prosessien ja Osallistujavallan avulla. Lisäksi hoikka identiteetti luotiin määrittämällä, mitä se sisältää. Relationaaliset lausekkeet olivat suurin ja yleisin tapa määrittellä hoikan identiteetin luonne sekä mitä siihen ei kuulu. Muita määrittelytapoja olivat hoikkaan elämäntyyliin viittaavat lauseketyyppien osat, kuten Olija 2:t, Tavoitteet ja Ilmiöt, jotka temaattisesti kuvasivat hoikkuuteen sisältyviä osa-alueita.

Rakennettu hoikka identiteetti oli kuvaukseltaan esitetty terveellisenä, moraalisenä ja merkityksellisenä elämäntapana. Esimerkiksi hoikkuus esitettiin *The Société:n* Instagram sivulla tavoittelun arvoisena ominaisuutena, ratkaisuna sen seuraajien vartaloihin ja elämäntyyleihin liittyvään tyytymättömyyden tunteeseen sekä osana rakenteellista, eleganttia ja johdonmukaista elämää. Vaikka *The Société* halusi erottaa itsensä hoikkuuteen liitetyistä negatiivisista konnotaatioista, sen viestintä tuki silti yhteiskunnallisia käsityksiä hoikkuudesta ideaalina ulkomuotona ja ominaisuutena. Hoikkuuden esittäminen vaatimuksena moraalille ja terveelle elämäntyyliä ylläpitää jo olemassa olevia yhteiskunnallisia käsityksiä hoikkuudesta. *The Société:n* idea siitä, että *Skinni* olisi vähemmän negatiivinen vaihtoehto normaalille käsitykselle hoikkuudesta (*skinny*) ei lopulta ilmennyt heidän viestintänsä kautta merkittävällä tavalla.

Laajemman diskurssin kannalta todettiin, että *The Société:n* auktoriteettirooli neuvojana on tapa käyttää valtaa, vaikuttaa heidän seuraajiinsa ja kontrolloida heitä. Tämä saattaa johtaa siihen, että seuraajat sisäistävät *The Société:n* ylläpitämät ajatukset hoikkuudesta ideaalina ja alkavat säädöstellä itseään saavuttaakseen hoikan vartalon esimerkiksi painonpudotuksen tai muun ulkonäkötyön kautta. Nämä sisäistetyt ajatukset ja toimet voivat vuorostaan johtaa painonpudotukseen epäterveellisin tavoin tai jopa syömishäiriöiden kehittymiseen. Erityisen alttiita näille negatiivisille seuraamuksille ovat nuoret, jotka ottavat vaikutteita sosiaalisesta mediasta vastaan muita herkemmin. Lisäksi vaikutukset koskevat todennäköisemmin naisia, sillä *The Société* on naisille tarkoitettu yhteisö ja hoikkuus on yleisesti enemmän oletettua naisilta. Vaatimus hoikkuudesta rajoittaa naisten elämää, sillä hoikan vartalon saavuttaminen ja ylläpito vie aikaa sekä resursseja, mikä johtaa epätasa-arvoisempaan yhteiskuntaan. Kaiken kaikkiaan hoikkuuden pitäminen ja esittäminen ainoana ideaalina saattaa johtaa haitallisiin ilmiöihin, kuten syömishäiriöihin, ja rajoittaa enemmän tiettyjen ihmisryhmien, erityisesti nuorten naisten, elämää.