

# A Discourse Analysis on the Performance of 'Feminine Energy' Narratives on TikTok

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## ABSTRACT

The concept of "feminine energy" has become a prominent trend on TikTok, where creators promote calmness, gentleness, and softness as pathways to women's empowerment. While these videos position feminine energy as self-improvement, they may simultaneously reinforce traditional gender stereotypes. Despite extensive research on digital gender performance, limited scholarly attention examines how this trend specifically constructs femininity through language. This study addresses this gap by analyzing how "feminine energy" is linguistically constructed on TikTok and how audiences respond. Using Lakoff's Language and Woman's Place (1975) and Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (1992), this research examines 15 TikTok videos under hashtags #FeminineEnergy, #Feminine, and #WomanPower. Findings reveal that while many women perceive the trend as empowering, the linguistic features and visuals often reproduce traditional gender roles, creating a paradox where women's agency is celebrated through historically subordinate feminine traits.

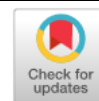
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## INTRODUCTION

Historically, femininity has been constructed through various media and cultural discourses that define how women should behave, speak, and present themselves. Traditional media such as magazines, television, and film have long promoted ideals of feminine gentleness, emotional restraint, and physical beauty. However, the rise of digital media has transformed how femininity is performed and circulated. Social media platforms enable users to actively participate in constructing feminine identities, creating what scholars term "postfeminist" discourse where empowerment often intertwines with traditional gender norms. This shift from top-down media representation to peer-generated content marks a significant change in how femininity is negotiated in contemporary society.

In recent years, TikTok has become a major platform where young women explore identity, self-expression, and lifestyle narratives. One rising trend on this platform is the concept of "feminine energy," a term without a fixed definition but commonly associated with qualities such as softness, calmness, emotional balance, elegance, and self-worth. Creators often present feminine energy as a way for women to behave, speak, and carry themselves in order to become more "elegant," attract positive treatment from others, especially men, and achieve a peaceful, fulfilled life. Because of its widespread visibility, feminine energy functions not only as a personal lifestyle preference but also as a cultural discourse that shapes contemporary understandings of femininity.

Previous research shows that social media plays an important role in constructing gendered identities. Prabawati et al. (2023), for example, highlight how TikTok enables users to blend language, visuals, sound, and performance, blurring the line between authenticity and entertainment. Other studies have explored how women build their online identity

through linguistic expression, aesthetic choices, and interpersonal cues. However, despite extensive scholarship on gender and digital self-presentation, limited academic attention has been given specifically to the feminine-energy trend and how women are represented through the language used in these videos.

To address this gap, this study examines how feminine energy is constructed through the verbal content of TikTok videos made by women, and how viewers respond to these linguistic representations. The analysis draws on two main theoretical frameworks. The first is Robin Lakoff's Women's Language theory, which proposes that women's speech often includes specific linguistic features that reflect gendered social expectations. Lakoff identifies ten features of women's language: hedges, tag questions, rising intonation on declaratives, empty adjectives, precise color terms, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, superpolite forms, avoidance of strong swear words, and emphatic stress. These features serve as a guide for analyzing how creators present themselves and construct feminine identity through language in feminine-energy-themed content.

The second framework is Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which views language as a form of social practice shaped by power and ideology. Through CDA, this study situates the creators' linguistic choices within broader social discourses, for example, discourses of attractiveness, self-discipline, or ideal womanhood, and considers how these discourses reinforce or challenge dominant gender norms.

Based on these perspectives, this research aims to (1) analyze how feminine energy is constructed through linguistic features in TikTok videos created by women, (2) examine how audiences respond to these representations through comments, and (3) evaluate whether the trend ultimately reinforces or challenges ideas about women's empowerment. By combining Lakoff's linguistic framework with Fairclough's discourse approach, this study seeks to offer a deeper understanding of how modern femininity is shaped through language on social media.

## **Literature Review**

### *Digital Femininity and Soft Empowerment*

The notion of "feminine energy" fits within broader discussions of digital femininity, where empowerment is mediated by aesthetics and emotion. Silaban, Kartikawati, and Wardana (2025) conceptualize soft empowerment as the digital valorization of gentleness, empathy, and composure qualities that represent empowerment but are often performative. Sukmana and Chairil (2024) observe that influencers like Shasa Zhanian embody this idealized softness, presenting self-restraint and patience as aspirational traits. However, such portrayals blur empowerment with conformity, showing that TikTok's emotional economy rewards performances of calm femininity.

Sihombing and Tambunan (2023) highlight similar contradictions in lifestyle videos portraying marriage and homemaking as modern success. These depictions normalize patriarchal femininity as an individual choice, echoing Sykes's (2024) observation that domesticity is "romanticized as leisure and aesthetic self-expression." Together, these studies show how postfeminist discourses celebrate "authentic femininity" while commodifying emotional and domestic labor.

### *Postfeminist Performance and Digital Choice Feminism*

The rise of choice feminism a neoliberal form emphasizing personal agency over structural critique dominates contemporary femininity online. Scott (2024) argues that social media trends like Girlcore promote "micro-labeled identities" that valorize self-optimization and aesthetic distinction. Similarly, Sandall's (2024) critical discourse analysis of #BimboTok reveals how hyper-feminine identities both reproduce and subvert gender norms, demonstrating how irony and hyperbole serve as strategies of limited resistance. These digital personas thrive within what McRobbie (2009) terms the postfeminist masquerade: empowerment performed through beauty and self-discipline.

Kowis (2025) describes "feminine energy" as a manifestation of this paradox, where women's self-development rhetoric conceals patriarchal gender coding. Poutiainen (2023) expands this critique through her idea of a "feminism of the soul," arguing that postfeminist

spirituality reframes empowerment as personal healing rather than social change. This body of literature situates TikTok's "feminine energy" trend within a neoliberal logic of emotional capitalism and individual improvement.

#### *Language, Gender, and Digital Expression*

Language is central to the construction of digital femininity. Lakoff's (1975) *Language and Woman's Place* identifies linguistic features hedges, tag questions, intensifiers, and politeness as symbolic of women's subordinate position within patriarchal structures. Lakoff's theory remains relevant for interpreting online communication, where "soft" and "affirmative" language styles circulate as markers of ideal femininity. In TikTok's "feminine energy" discourse, users employ gentle tone, indirect phrasing, and emotional emphasis that reproduce the linguistic politeness Lakoff described.

Harrington, Overall, and Maxwell (2022) extend this analysis psychologically, showing that women face feminine gender role discrepancy strain when their speech deviates from these norms. This linguistic self-regulation sustains what Scott (2024) calls the "aesthetic performance of acceptability," where women internalize language as a measure of authenticity. Sandall (2024) likewise observes that digital bimboism uses language playfully but within boundaries of social approval, demonstrating the durability of gendered speech conventions.

#### ***Theoretical Framework Applied***

This study combines three complementary approaches:

*Fairclough's (1992) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA): provides tools for examining how ideology operates through linguistic and visual structures, emphasizing the relationship between discourse, power, and social practice.*

*Lakoff's (1975) Women's Language Theory: elucidates how linguistic forms reflect and reinforce gender hierarchies, allowing the analysis of TikTok creators' use of politeness, affirmation, and emotional expression.*

*Feminist Rhetorical Analysis: focuses on persuasion, affect, and gendered representation, revealing how digital texts communicate empowerment while embedding normative ideals.*

Together, these frameworks enable a critical-multimodal reading of TikTok's "feminine energy" content, connecting linguistic practice with broader ideological structures. Thus, existing research highlights how TikTok simultaneously functions as a site of empowerment, self-presentation, and social conformity. The present study builds on these insights by examining how creators use linguistic and visual strategies to negotiate femininity within the "feminine energy" trend. Drawing from Fairclough, Lakoff, and feminist rhetorical perspectives, it explores how digital performances of softness and spirituality reflect enduring tensions between empowerment and patriarchy in the age of algorithmic media.

## METHOD

### **Instruments**

This study uses a descriptive qualitative design to explore how the idea of "feminine energy" is constructed through language and multimodal elements in TikTok videos. A qualitative design is suitable because the research focuses on meanings, interpretations, and discursive patterns instead of numerical measurement. The analysis is guided by two main frameworks: Lakoff's Women's Language theory and Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

Lakoff's theory argues that women's speech often contains linguistic characteristics shaped by social expectations of femininity. In her framework, she identifies ten features commonly associated with women's language: hedges, tag questions, rising intonation in declaratives, empty adjectives, precise color terms, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, superpolite forms, avoidance of strong swear words, and emphatic stress. These features are used in this study as a lens to examine how TikTok creators express, perform, and frame "feminine energy" through their verbal communication.

Fairclough's CDA is used to interpret how these linguistic choices carry ideological meaning. Through CDA, the analysis moves beyond the words themselves to examine the discourses that creators participate in, such as discourses of elegance, emotional control, empowerment, or attractiveness, and how these discourses relate to wider social norms and power structures. CDA also allows for the examination of how multimodal elements such as visuals, tone, and gestures work together with language to construct meaning.

### Data Collection

The data consist of 15 TikTok videos related to the theme of "feminine energy." Videos were selected using purposive sampling based on the following criteria:

*The video appears under the keyword "Feminine Energy" in the TikTok search bar.*

*It has at least 10,000 views to ensure relevance and visibility.*

*The creator is a woman, identified either visually or through linguistic style.*

*The verbal content explicitly discusses or promotes the concept of feminine energy.*

*The video includes thematic hashtags such as #FeminineEnergy, #Feminine, #Women, #WomanPower, #Energy, or #Attractive.*

For each video, the full verbal content was transcribed, including spoken lines and captioned text that forms part of the creator's message. Additionally, multimodal elements such as visual aesthetics, vocal tone, facial expressions, body language, and background music were noted as they contribute to the overall meaning-making process. To understand how audiences respond to these representations of femininity, the top two comments from each video were also collected. These comments function as viewer reactions that help show whether the audience supports, questions, or challenges the ideas presented in the videos.

### Data Analysis

The analysis was conducted in multiple stages to examine both linguistic and multimodal construction of feminine energy.

**Stage 1: Linguistic Analysis** The transcripts were examined using Lakoff's women's language features. Each transcript was read closely to identify the presence of hedges, tag questions, rising intonation patterns, empty adjectives, precise color terms, intensifiers, hypercorrect grammar, superpolite expressions, avoidance of strong swear words, and emphatic stress. These features help reveal how creators linguistically construct qualities associated with feminine energy such as softness, politeness, or emotional sensitivity.

**Stage 2: Multimodal Analysis** Recognizing that meaning on TikTok is constructed through multiple modes beyond language, this study also examined how visual elements, vocal tone, and gestures reinforce or complement the linguistic messages. Specifically:

**Visual aesthetics:** *The use of soft lighting, pastel colors, elegant backgrounds, beauty-related imagery (flowers, candles, silk), and the creator's appearance (clothing, makeup, hairstyle) were observed to understand how visual choices align with verbal messages about femininity.*

**Vocal tone and prosody:** *The creators' voice quality, including softness, calmness, pitch variation, and speaking pace, were noted as these paralinguistic features contribute to the performance of feminine energy and align with Lakoff's concept of rising intonation and gentle speech patterns.*

**Facial expressions and gestures:** *Gentle smiles, soft eye contact, graceful hand movements, and relaxed body posture were documented as they embody the "softness" and "elegance" that creators verbally promote.*

**Background music and sound:** *The selection of calm, soothing, or aesthetically pleasing music tracks was noted as these auditory elements create an atmosphere that reinforces the emotional tone of feminine energy.*

These multimodal observations were integrated with the linguistic analysis to provide a holistic understanding of how feminine energy is constructed as a coherent identity across verbal and non-verbal modes.



**Stage 3: Critical Discourse Analysis** The textual and multimodal patterns identified through Lakoff's framework were connected to broader discursive meanings using Fairclough's CDA. This step considered how creators draw on cultural narratives about womanhood, how they construct ideals of "elegance" or "inner peace," and how these norms relate to social expectations placed on women. CDA helps situate each linguistic and visual choice within larger structures of ideology, gender norms, and power relations. Fairclough's three-dimensional framework was applied:

***Textual analysis:** Examining the specific linguistic features and multimodal elements present in the videos.*

***Discursive practice:** Considering how these videos are produced, distributed, and consumed within TikTok's platform structure and algorithmic system.*

***Social practice:** Interpreting how the discourse relates to broader social ideologies about femininity, empowerment, and gender roles.*

**Stage 4: Audience Response Analysis** Audience comments were analyzed separately to examine how viewers engage with the content. The comments were reviewed to identify whether they expressed agreement, praise, critique, skepticism, or reinterpretation. This supports understanding of how linguistic and multimodal constructions of feminine energy are received and reproduced in the social media environment. Comments were not analyzed with Lakoff's or Fairclough's formal linguistic coding, but rather as indicators of audience stance and interpretation.

To maintain reliability, all transcripts, multimodal observations, and comments were reviewed multiple times. Analytical notes were compared across videos to ensure consistency in identifying Lakoff's features, multimodal patterns, and in applying CDA interpretations. The selection criteria, transcription process, and interpretive procedures were followed systematically to ensure clarity and transparency in the research process.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings

The findings of this study present how feminine energy is constructed through the linguistic patterns, discursive strategies, and audience responses found across the fifteen selected TikTok videos. Using Lakoff's Women's Language Theory and Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis as analytical lenses, the data reveal several dominant themes that consistently appear in creators' verbal content, such as softness, emotional regulation, self-protection, aesthetic refinement, and relational positioning. Before presenting the detailed analysis of each video, the table below summarizes the distribution of Lakoff's linguistic features identified in the dataset. Both the table and the figure provides a visual overview of how frequently the features occur, thereby establishing the linguistic patterns that inform the subsequent interpretations in the findings and discussion.

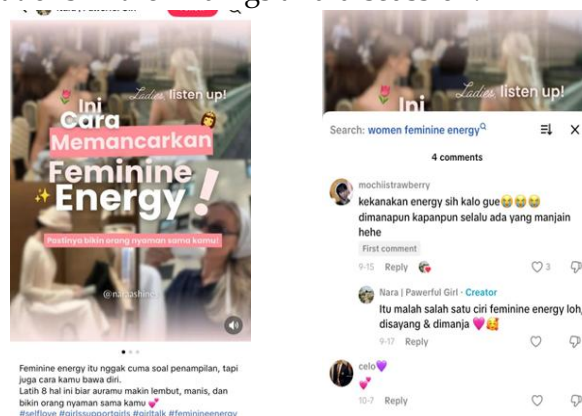


Figure 1. Example of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" content in Tiktok and viewer's comments

The creator is promoting a form of soft, childlike, and pampered femininity often associated with the "feminine energy" trend. This type of content usually highlights the appeal

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of being gentle, playful, and effortlessly lovable, encouraging women to embrace a persona that attracts nurturing behavior from others. The underlying message is that adopting a sweet, youthful demeanor brings emotional rewards, such as affection and being treated gently in relationships. Visually, the video features pastel backgrounds and gentle lighting reinforcing verbal softness.

*Theory Connection*

Table 1. Analysis of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" through Fairclough's CDA theory and Lakoff's Women's Language theory

No	Theory	Analysis
1	Fairclough's CDA	Through Fairclough's textual analysis, the discourse clusters femininity with softness and safety. At the discursive practice level, it follows TikTok's peer-advice format promoting relatable content. At the social practice level, it reflects neoliberal "soft empowerment ideology" where women cultivate traditional feminine values as self-improvement.
2	Lakoff Women's Language	It relies on empty adjectives like "soft," "cute," "safe," and "comforting," along with intensifiers such as "so" and "really" to heighten emotional impact. The tone remains super polite and gentle, focused on nurturing and self-care, and it avoids strong or harsh language. Overall, the message is delivered in a soft, delicate style that aligns with Lakoff's description of feminine speech patterns

*Comment Analysis*

In this context, "cleaning my FYP" does not mean removing unwanted content. Instead, it means the opposite: the viewer feels their For You Page is becoming better because this content is appearing. The expression suggests that the video aligns with their preferences and improves the quality of their feed. This makes the comment positive, showing appreciation toward the creator's message. They agree with the feminine, pampered, "kekanakan energy" the video displays. The comment expresses satisfaction that such content matches their identity or mood, reinforcing the social acceptance of soft, childlike femininity.

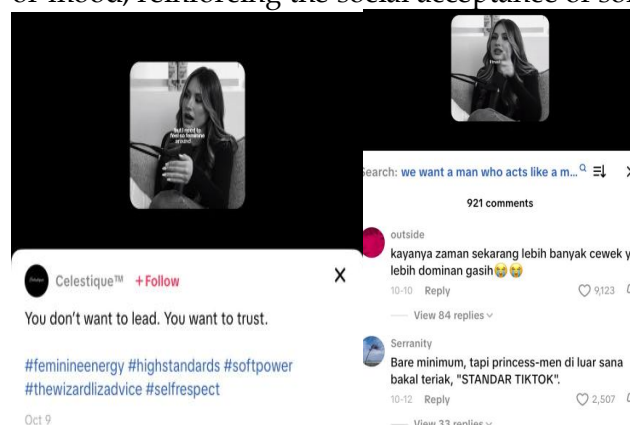


Figure 2. Example of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" content in Tiktok and viewer's comments

This video explains a highly traditional view of gender roles by framing relationships as a dynamic between dominant "masculine energy" and submissive "feminine energy". The creator describes an ideal man as strong, reliable, and naturally suited to lead, suggesting that a woman feels feminine only when she can surrender control and trust him completely. Phrases like "turn my brain off" and "follow you blindly" romanticize unequal power dynamics, presenting female dependence on male authority as desirable and necessary for happiness. Multimodally, the video's calm demeanor and polished looks provide authority to obedience appeal across multiple channels.

*Theory Connection*

Table 2. Analysis of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" through Fairclough's CDA theory and Lakoff's Women's Language theory

No	Theory	Analysis
1	Fairclough's CDA	Using Fairclough's Critical Discourse Theory, textually, the discourse establishes binary gender complementarity. Discursively, it rebrands patriarchal norms as modern "feminine energy." Whilst, socially, maintains traditional power hierarchies through benevolent sexism.
2	Lakoff Women's Language	The use of intensifiers such as "so feminine" and "so masculine" strengthens emotional meaning, while the avoidance of strong swear words keeps the tone clean, gentle, and emotionally expressive. The repeated phrases "I trust you. I trust your intellect. I trust your character." show emphatic stress, using repetition to create emotional force without aggression. Overall, the style remains soft, expressive, and relational

### Comment Analysis

The responses to the video show a generally critical reaction. The first comment, "*kayanya zaman sekarang lebih banyak cewek yg lebih dominan kasih,*" expresses mild disagreement by suggesting that contemporary women are often more dominant, indirectly challenging the video's traditional view of femininity. The second comment is more openly negative, calling the message "bare minimum" and mocking viewers who would label it as "*standar TikTok.*" Through sarcasm and dismissive language, this comment critiques the oversimplified expectations presented in the video. Together, these comments indicate that viewers tend to respond with skepticism rather than support toward the feminine-masculine dynamic promoted in the content.

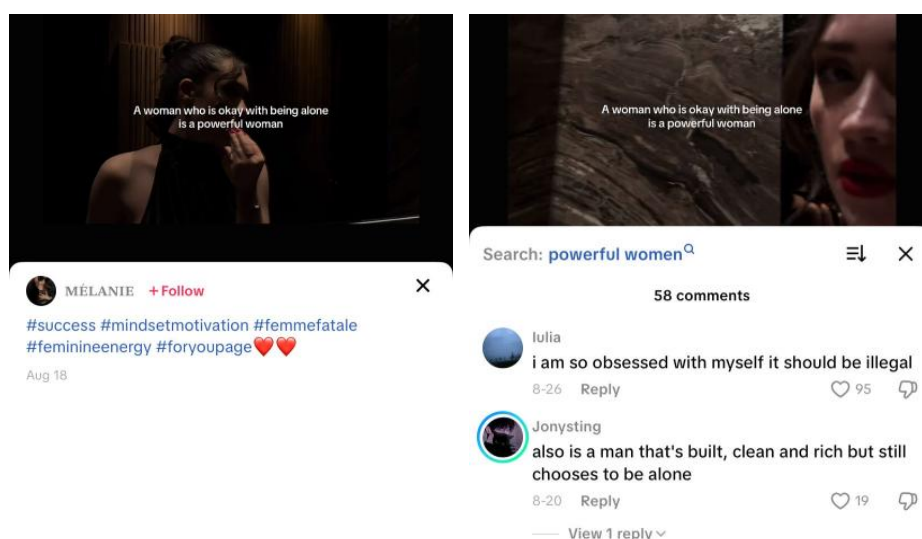


Figure 3. Example of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" content in Tiktok and viewer's comments

The creator promotes a narrative of strong, self-contained femininity that prioritizes self-love and self-sufficiency. The message suggests that personal fulfillment does not depend on relationships but instead grows from confidence and independence. Femininity here is framed as autonomous rather than defined by external validation. The video's confident body language and direct eye contact projecting delicate yet strong strength.

### Theory Connection

Table 3. Analysis of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" through Fairclough's CDA theory and Lakoff's Women's Language theory

No	Theory	Analysis
1	Fairclough's CDA	The discourse textually reclaims masculine achievement language for women. Discursively, it participates in neoliberal

feminism emphasizing individual success. Socially, it challenges relationship-dependent femininity but reproduces individualism over structural critique.

## 2 Lakoff Women's Language

Intensifiers ("so obsessed"), empty adjectives ("built," "clean"), emphatic stress, and avoidance of swearing reinforce a confident, self-directed tone that matches the message of self-admiration

### Comment Analysis

The comments "also is a man that's built, clean and rich but still chooses to be alone" and "i am so obsessed with myself it should be illegal" align positively with the creator's theme. The first mirrors the idea that choosing solitude can be a sign of strength, while the second fully embraces the self-love narrative. Both agree with and amplify the message that individual fulfillment is more important than external validation.

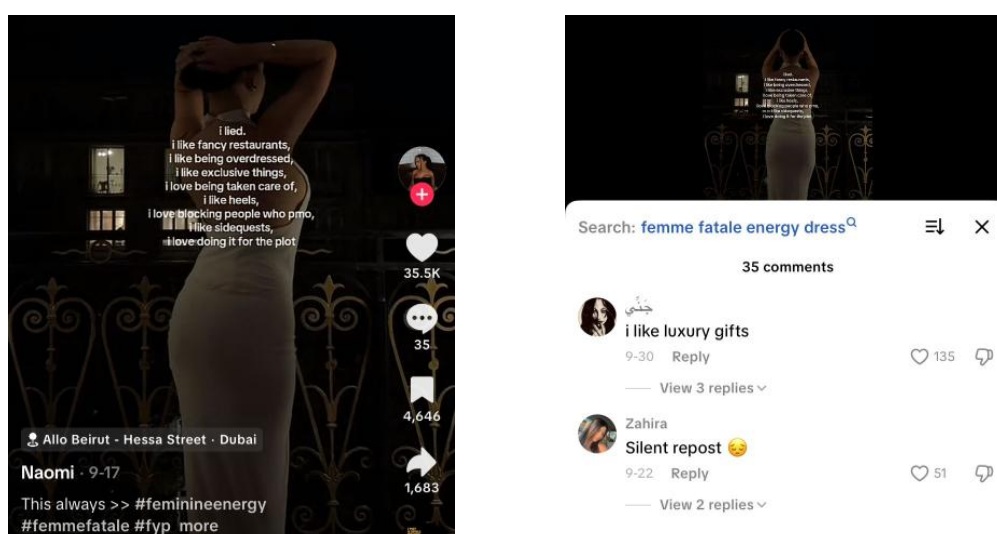


Figure 4. Example of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" content in Tiktok and viewer's comments

The creator emphasizes that feminine energy is deeply connected to self-worth and selective openness. She encourages women to protect their emotional space, suggesting that true feminine power comes from choosing carefully who has access to their softness. The content creates a narrative that femininity is valuable and must be safeguarded, framing emotional boundaries as a form of empowerment. The video's soft lighting and whispered tone create intimacy.

### Theory Connection

Table 4. Analysis of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" through Fairclough's CDA theory and Lakoff's Women's Language theory

No	Theory	Analysis
1	Fairclough's CDA	The Fairclough's CDA, explain that textually, the video commodifies feminine emotionality as scarce resource. Discursively, it hybridizes therapy culture with feminine energy frameworks. Socially, it reflects neoliberal self-management, placing burden of preventing emotional harm on individual women.



Use of hedges ("kind of," "maybe"), empty adjectives ("soft," "gentle"), and intensifiers ("so protective," "really valuable"). The nurturing tone reflects superpolite forms and avoidance of strong swear words, emphasizing emotional gentleness

### Comment Analysis

The comments "Silent repost 🥰" and "i like luxury gifts" both affirm the creator's message but in different ways. The first implies agreement in a subtle, emotionally soft manner that mirrors the feminine restraint promoted by the video. The second aligns with the idea of feminine value and selective access, suggesting that if femininity is precious, it deserves to be rewarded. Together, these comments show acceptance of the idea that femininity is both vulnerable and deserving of special treatment.

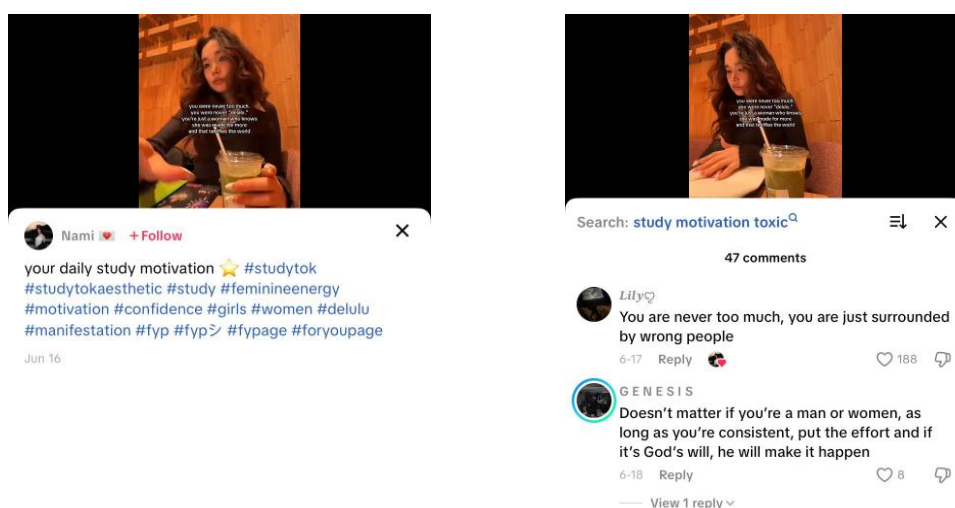


Figure 5. Example of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" content in Tiktok and viewer's comments

The video is delivering an empowerment message for women, rejecting the idea that ambitious or confident women are "too much" or "delusional." It reframes these negative labels as misunderstandings created by a society that feels threatened by women who recognize their own worth and potential. The overall message is that women are not excessive, but they are powerful, capable, and "made for more," and it is this strength that intimidates the world. The dynamic vocal variation and confident presentation in the video also reinforce the message.

### Theory Connection

Table 5. Analysis of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" through Fairclough's CDA theory and Lakoff's Women's Language theory

No	Theory	Analysis
1	Fairclough's CDA	Using Fairclough's Critical Discourse Theory, as in textually, it employs negation and reframing strategies. Discursively, it participates in feminist empowerment discourse using motivational speaking conventions. Socially, it challenges patriarchal constraint of women's ambition but remains individualistic.
2	Lakoff Women's Language	Uses intensifiers like "never too much," "never delulu," and "made for more" to heighten emotional impact and convey motivation. The emphatic stress in these strong declarative phrases reinforces certainty and empowerment. Throughout

the message, the avoidance of strong swear words keeps the tone expressive yet non-aggressive, maintaining a soft, encouraging style typical of women's language

### Comment Analysis

The comments response displays mostly positive sentiment, but with different orientations. The first comment strongly supports the video's empowerment message by reaffirming that women are not "too much," echoing the transcript's claim that society, not the woman, is the problem. Meanwhile, the second comment offers a neutral-positive perspective by shifting the focus to universal effort and divine will, subtly steering away from the video's woman-specific empowerment narrative. Together, the comments show a mix of direct support and general motivational reinterpretation of the video's message.

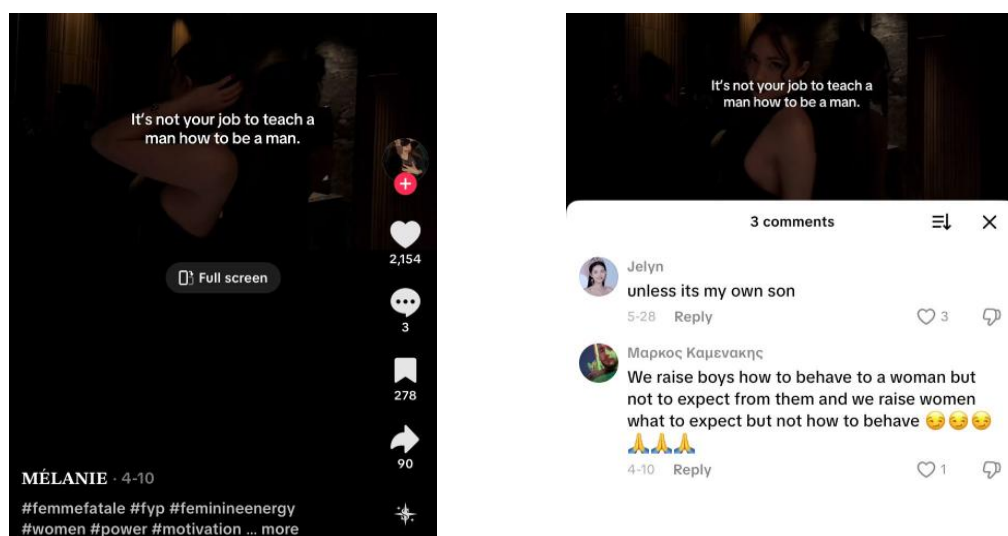


Figure 6. Example of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" content in Tiktok and viewer's comments

The creator discusses double standards in socialization, highlighting how boys and girls are raised with different expectations about relationships. The message suggests that society teaches women to expect care while teaching men to give it, creating an imbalance. This positions the creator as critiquing gender norms and encouraging reflection on systemic patterns.

### Theory Connection

Table 6. Analysis of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" through Fairclough's CDA theory and Lakoff's Women's Language theory

No	Theory	Analysis
1	Fairclough's CDA	The discourse exposes textually, it exposes socially constructed gender roles. Discursively, it invites viewers to question norms while maintaining socially cautious critique. Socially, it reconstructs gender ideologies and highlights inequality.
2	Lakoff Women's Language	Use of tag-question-like tones, intensifiers ("so true"), and superpolite, reflective phrasing; avoidance of strong language indicates a feminine, socially cautious critique

### Comment Analysis

The comments "We raise boys how to behave to a woman but not to expect from them..." and "unless its my own son" show engagement and partial agreement. The first expands the critique of gender norms, aligning with the creator's discourse. The second adds nuance, agreeing with the societal double standard but applying it selectively. Both interact positively with the creator's message while personalizing the interpretation.

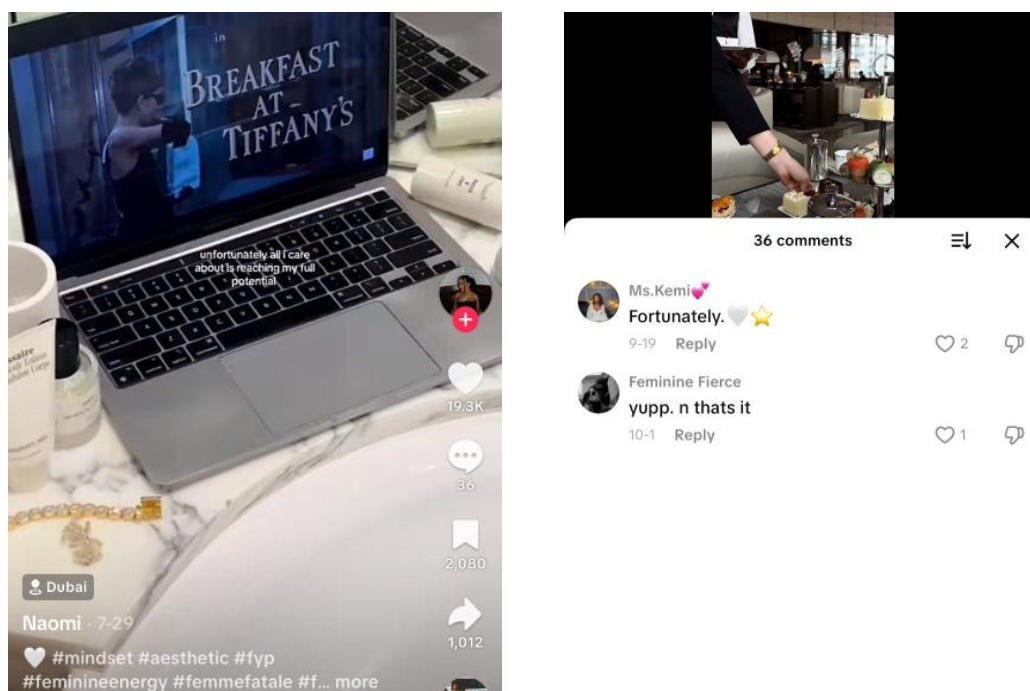


Figure 7. Example of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" content in Tiktok and viewer's comments

The creator uses a sequence of photos and a voice-over to convey a message about trust, honesty, and emotional pain in a relationship. The speaker describes trusting someone deeply, sensing something was wrong, and being repeatedly denied the truth, only to later discover they were indeed lied to. The emotional hurt from the manipulation outweighs the wrongdoing itself, leading to the realization that honesty is the most basic form of respect. Overall, the video highlights how betrayal damages one's self-trust and stresses the importance of courage and honesty in any relationship.

#### Theory Connection

Table 7. Analysis of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" through Fairclough's CDA theory and Lakoff's Women's Language theory

No	Theory	Analysis
1	Fairclough's CDA	Textually, the discourse highlights vulnerability and broken trust. Discursively, it positions her intuition as dismissed, mirroring patterns where women's emotional honesty isn't reciprocated. Socially, it frames betrayal as violation of self-trust and basic respect.
2	Lakoff Women's Language	The statement expresses agency, ambition, and self-focus. This shows how Lakoff's theory contemporary challenges women's often use assertive, empowered language rather than hedged or deferential forms

#### Comment Analysis

Both comments express positive agreement with the creator's message about focusing on personal growth. The first comment reframes the creator's statement by replacing "unfortunately" with "fortunately," suggesting that prioritizing one's full potential is something empowering and worth celebrating, reinforced by supportive emojis. The second comment, "yupp. n thats it," shows straightforward affirmation, indicating that the commenter fully agrees and sees the statement as complete and valid. Together, the comments positively reinforce the idea that dedicating oneself to personal potential is a strong and admirable choice

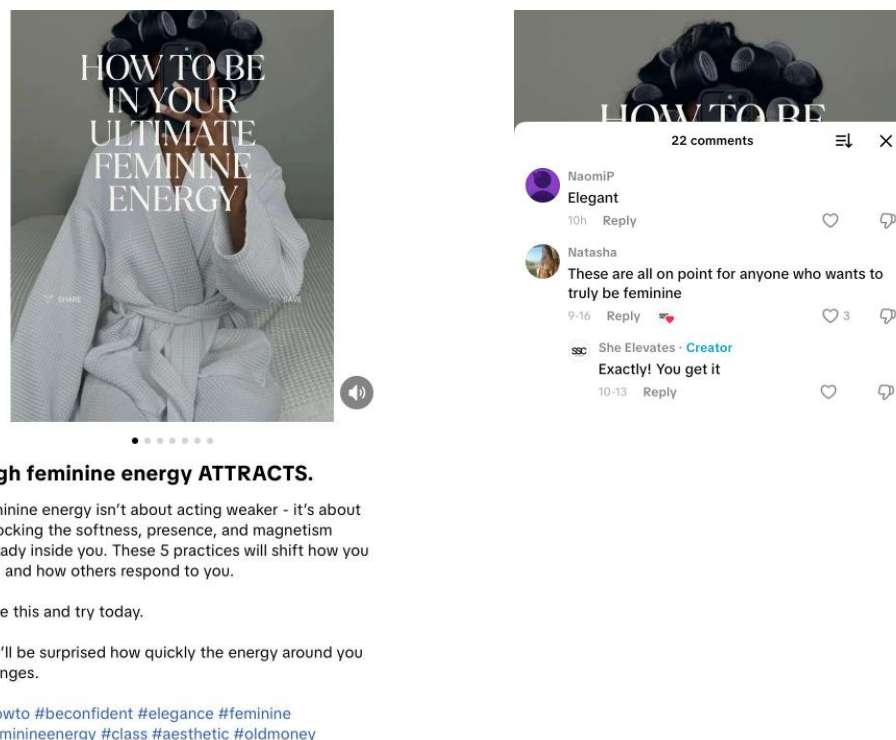


Figure 8. Example of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" content in Tiktok and viewer's comments

The creator teaches women how to strengthen their "feminine energy" through five tips that portray femininity as calm, soft, magnetic, spiritual, and graceful. Each slide encourages traits commonly associated with femininity gentleness, emotional connection, receptiveness, and polished self-presentation. The overall goal is self-improvement, helping women feel more confident and empowered. Femininity is framed not as weakness, but as a different kind of strength that can positively influence one's life and relationships. The video elegant visuals reinforce verbal messages.

#### Theory Connection

Table 8. Analysis of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" through Fairclough's CDA theory and Lakoff's Women's Language theory

No	Theory	Analysis
1	Fairclough's CDA	The slides create a discourse that uses traits like gentleness, composure, grace, and emotional openness to describe femininity. These traits are textually, like gentleness and grace define ideal femininity. Discursively, these traits are positioned as authentic feminine identity, normalizing them. Socially, it defines "proper" feminine behavior and pushes conformity to this standard, quietly upholding conventional gender stereotypes despite empowerment framing
2	Lakoff Women's Language	Reflects through empty adjectives like gentle, warm, and



beautiful, creating an emotional, aesthetic tone. She uses intensifiers such as deeply, truly, and effortlessly to amplify feeling, while maintaining a superpolite, indirect tone that offers advice softly. The message avoids harsh words entirely, keeping the style calm and soothing, and promotes a receptive, non-assertive stance, which aligns with Lakoff's idea of socialized feminine speech. The emphasis on sensory detail (flowers, candles, silk) and emotional/spiritual themes further reinforces traditionally feminine linguistic patterns

### Comment Analysis

Positive acceptance with the creator's message is evident in both comments. "Elegant," the first comment, shows appreciation and presents the information as elegant. The second comment, "These are all on point," makes it clear that the advice is correct and helpful. In general, both respondents agree with and support the creator's views on femininity.

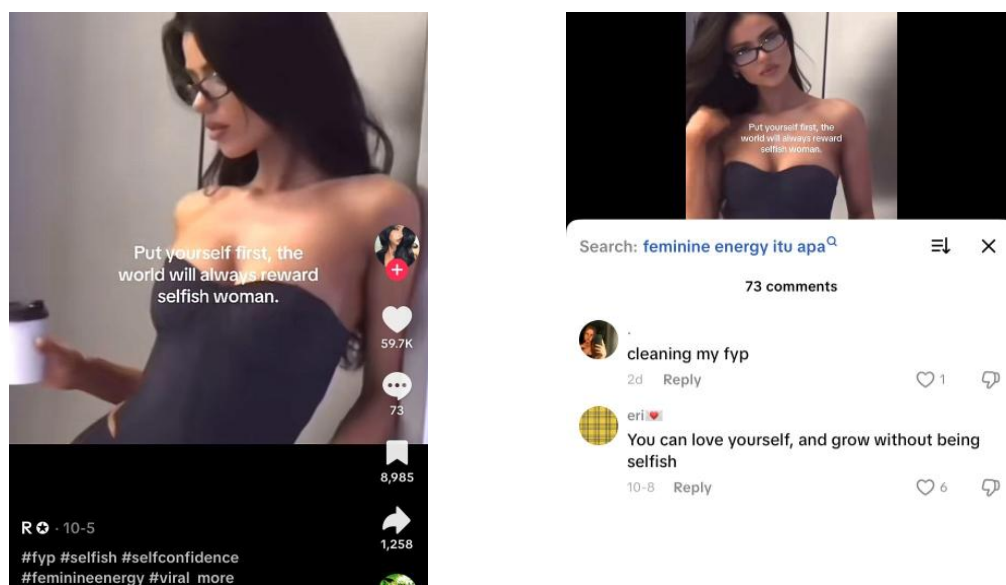


Figure 9. Example of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" content in Tiktok and viewer's comments

The creator encourages women to adopt a mindset of emotional detachment and self-prioritization, rejecting the belief that external relationships, especially romantic ones, should define their happiness. The video promotes a narrative that peace, stability, and growth come from inward focus rather than emotional dependency.

### Theory Connection

Table 9. Analysis of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" through Fairclough's CDA theory and Lakoff's Women's Language theory

No	Theory	Analysis
1	Fairclough's CDA	The discourse textually supports neoliberal empowerment ideology. Discursively, it reconstructs femininity as rational and self-regulated rather than dependent. Socially, it positions emotional independence as resistance to gendered expectations.
2	Lakoff Women's Language	Empty adjectives ("peaceful," "calm"), intensifiers, hedges, and hypercorrect grammar create a soft but assertive tone that

matches the message of self-protection and inner control

### Comment Analysis

The comments "You can love yourself, and grow without being selfish" and "cleaning my fyp" both express positive alignment. They reinforce the idea that self-focused femininity is not selfish but healthy, and they show appreciation for the content by indicating it matches their preferred identity and mindset. The interaction validates the creator's message of emotional autonomy.

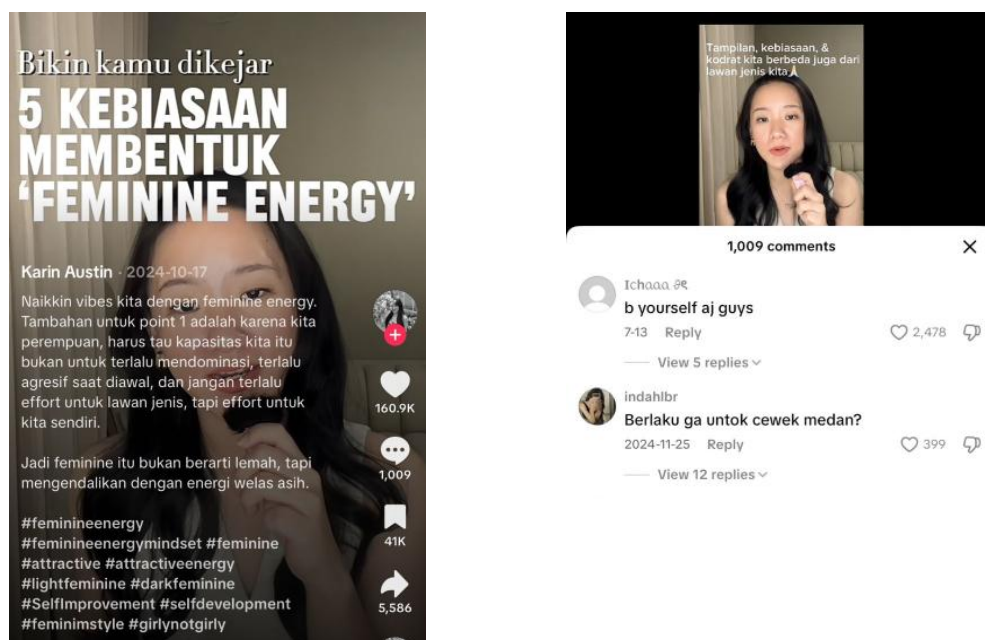


Figure 10. Example of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" content in Tiktok and viewer's comments

The video discusses how to embrace traits and behaviors that are typically associated with women in order to build feminine energy. The author places a strong emphasis on accepting oneself as a woman, striking a balance between strength and softness, making thoughtful decisions, and taking care of oneself and others. Using accessories, experimenting with makeup to enhance personal expression, and following skincare and haircare routines are all practical approaches. In general, the video depicts feminine energy as a blend of self-care, kindness, refinement, and deliberate presentation that gives women a sense of self-worth and beauty.

### Theory Connection

Table 10. Analysis of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" through Fairclough's CDA theory and Lakoff's Women's Language theory

No	Theory	Analysis
1	Fairclough's CDA	The video constructs a discourse that associates textually, as in its associates femininity with self-care and refinement. Discursively, it frames these traits as natural and desirable while treating them as requiring active nurturing. Socially, it normalizes gendered norms valuing women for beauty and refinement, presenting performative practices as liberating
2	Lakoff Women's Language	Empty adjectives ("soft," "gentle," "refined"), intensifiers ("really," "very"), hedges ("kita bisa pilih loh"), and polite, indirect phrasing create a nurturing and persuasive tone that

emphasizes self-care, femininity, and intentional personal presentation

### Comment Analysis

The first comment, *"b yourself aja guys,"* is positive, supporting the video's message about embracing feminine energy and self-confidence. The second comment, *"berlaku ngga untuk cewe medan?"* is neutral, showing curiosity about whether the advice applies in a specific context. Together, the comments reflect both agreement and audience engagement with the content.

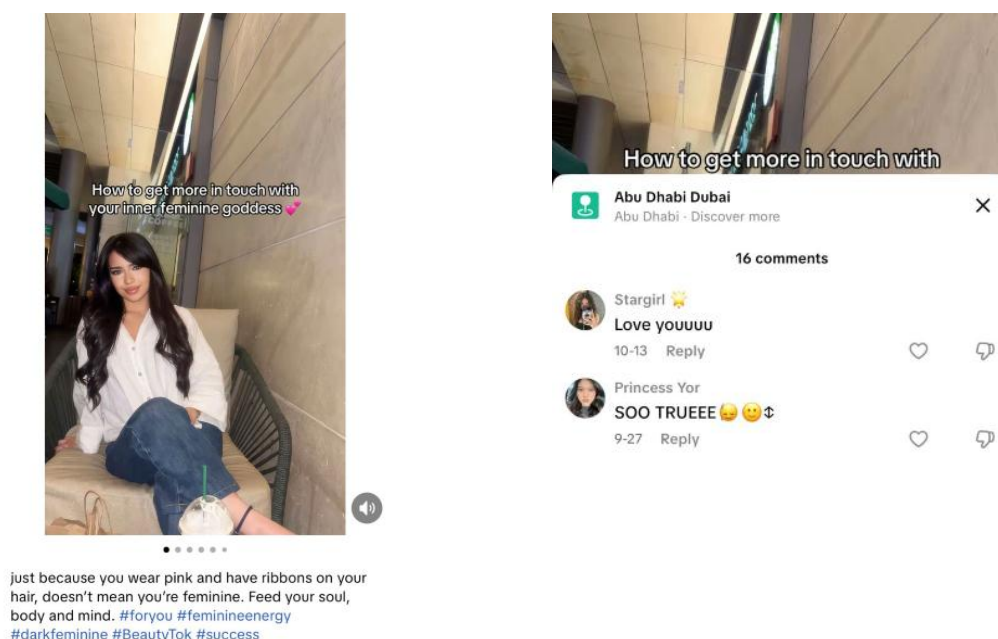


Figure 11. Example of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" content in Tiktok and viewer's comments

The creator promotes a lifestyle of "true femininity" built on softness, elegance, self-care, sensuality, and emotional expression. To look naturally feminine, she advises women to slow down, move elegantly, create a signature scent, and follow a high-maintenance self-care regimen. Additionally, romanticizing everyday life, dressing in feminine attire, engaging in sensuous activities (such as heel or belly dance), and being kind and courteous are all aspects of femininity. Boundaries, health, and "princess days" are presented as crucial components of refined femininity. In general, the author portrays femininity as a refined way of life focused on tenderness, grace, luxury, and personal development.

### Theory Connection

Table 11. Analysis of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" through Fairclough's CDA theory and Lakoff's Women's Language theory

No	Theory	Analysis
1	Fairclough's CDA	The discourse textually, defines femininity as curated lifestyle centered on luxury and refinement. Discursively, it normalizes the idea that "real" femininity requires active practice through appearance and behavior. Socially, it implies femininity is achieved through discipline and consumption routines
2	Lakoff Women's Language	Use soft aesthetic adjectives (beautiful, feminine, graceful), emotional intensifiers, and gentle, indirect instructions. The

tone avoids harshness and instead emphasizes softness, care, and elegance. The focus on beauty, sensory details, and emotional expression reinforces traditional feminine norms, aligning closely with Lakoff's idea that women are socialized to speak in nurturing, aesthetic, and polite ways

### Comment Analysis

Though in slightly different tones, both responses are obviously positive and supportive of the creator's message. With words like "Love youuu" expresses passionate enthusiasm and thankfulness, indicating complete support. In the meantime, the second comment uses exaggerated spelling and emoticons to indicate enthusiasm and validation while expressing strong affirmation with "SOO TRUEEE." Thus, the creator's views on femininity are emotionally supported and firmly agreed with by both commenters.

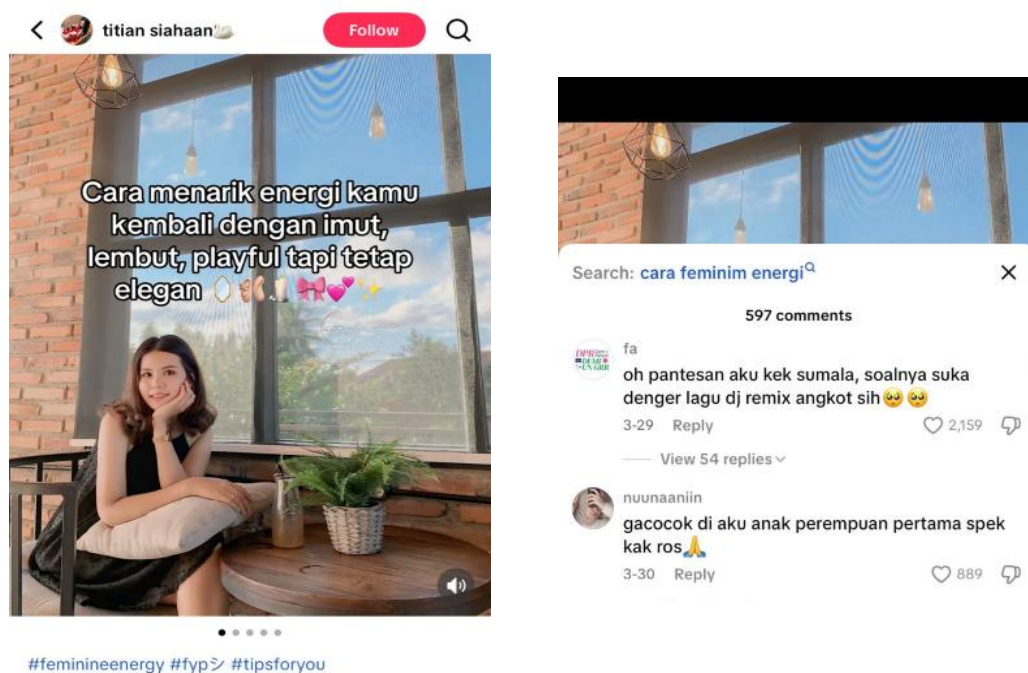


Figure 12. Example of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" content in Tiktok and viewer's comments

The video teaches women how to activate feminine energy through cute, gentle, and playful daily habits. It emphasizes soft self-care routines, consuming "romantic" or dreamy media, moving gracefully, and using sweet, playful communication. The creator frames femininity as something performative and socially constructed, encouraging women to express themselves in aesthetic, emotional, and charming ways that enhance a soft, "princess-like" persona.

### Theory Connection

Table 12. Analysis of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" through Fairclough's CDA theory and Lakoff's Women's Language theory

No	Theory	Analysis
1	Fairclough's CDA	The video constructs a discourse that frames femininity as performative, soft, and socially desirable, linking a woman's value to cute behaviors, aesthetic routines, and gentle emotional expression. Textually, it frames femininity as performative and socially desirable. Discursively, it links women's value to cute behaviors and aesthetic routines. Socially, it normalizes constructed ideals of womanhood



blending empowerment with conformity.

## 2 Lakoff Women's Language

Empty adjectives ("cute," "sweet," "princess-like"), intensifiers ("very," "so"), hedges/softening phrases ("sedikit manja," "pura-pura"), and polite, playful communication create a gentle, nurturing, and socially appealing tone. The language emphasizes soft emotional expression, indirect influence, attentiveness, and aesthetic awareness, reflecting the features Lakoff associates with women's language and reinforcing a constructed ideal of "girly" femininity. words create a polished, self-soothing tone typical of feminine self-help discourse

### Comment Analysis

The first comment, "ohh pantas aku kek sumala, soalnya suka dengar lagi DJ remix angkot sih, 🙄🙄" is showing a playful critique rather than support. By contrasting the video's soft, aesthetic idea of feminine energy with loud DJ remix *angkot* music, the commenter subtly mocks how unrealistic or narrow the femininity standard is. The emojis add ironic exaggeration, making the tone light but satirical, suggesting indirect disagreement with the content. The second comment, "ngga cocok di aku anak perempuan pertama spek kak ros, 🧡" is negative, indicating that the content or style doesn't fit the commenter personally. Together, the comments show a mix of approval and disagreement from the audience.

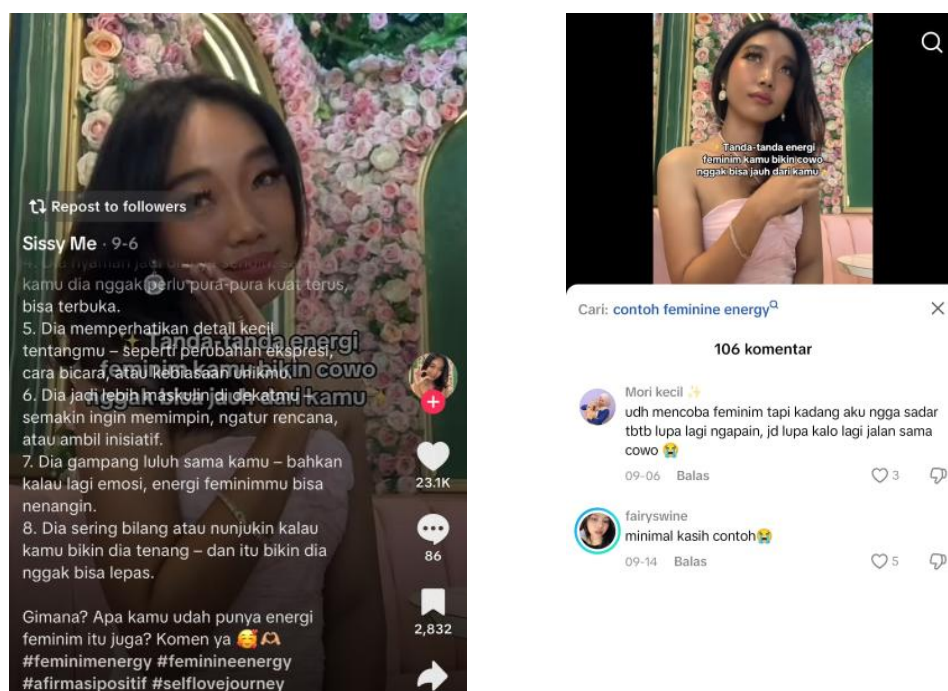


Figure 13. Example of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" content in Tiktok and viewer's comments

The video explains how a woman's feminine energy, softness, warmth, and emotional presence, can positively influence a man's behavior. It highlights that gentle, nurturing traits attract masculine energy, making men more protective, attentive, emotionally open, and attached. By showing how feminine energy can soothe and create closeness, the creator encourages women to value their gentle qualities as a source of emotional influence and relational connection.

*Theory Connection*

Table 13. Analysis of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" through Fairclough's CDA theory and Lakoff's Women's Language theory

No	Theory	Analysis
1	Fairclough's CDA	The video constructs a discourse that links women's value to their feminine energy, presenting softness, warmth, and emotional presence as tools to influence men. It frames as textually, it links women's value to feminine energy as tool for influencing men. Discursively, it frames men as naturally responsive to these traits. Socially, it reinforces traditional gender roles and heteronormative dynamics, normalizing essentialist masculinity and femininity ideas.
2	Lakoff Women's Language	Empty adjectives ("hangat," "tenang"), intensifiers ("gampang luluh," "nggak bisa lepas"), polite and indirect phrasing, and relationship-centered language create a soft, emotionally expressive tone. The style emphasizes emotional sensitivity, closeness, and nurturing influence, reflecting Lakoff's features of women's language while reinforcing the idea that femininity traits guide men's protective and affectionate behavior

### Comment Analysis

The first comment "*udah mencoba feminim tapi kadang aku ngga sadar tbth lupa ngapain, jd lupa kalo lagi jalan sama cowo 🤔*" expresses a negative emotional tone, not toward the creator, but toward the commenter's own struggle. She agrees with the femininity message but feels she cannot consistently perform it, showing insecurity and self-critique. Meanwhile, the second comment "*minimal kasih contoh 🤔*" has a neutral to mildly negative tone, indicating dissatisfaction or a desire for clearer guidance. It does not reject the message but critiques the content for lacking practical examples.

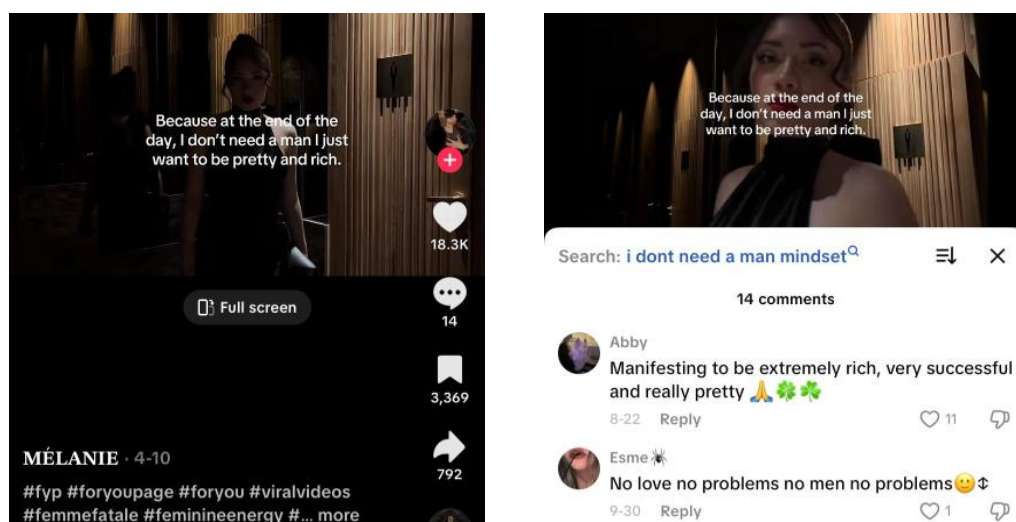


Figure 14. Example of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" content in Tiktok and viewer's comments

The creator frames feminine energy as something that thrives in independence and self-prioritization. The message promotes detachment from unhealthy romantic expectations, suggesting that women can live more peacefully when they prioritize personal growth over male validation. This centers femininity as self-contained rather than relational.

### Theory Connection

Table 14. Analysis of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" through Fairclough's CDA theory and Lakoff's Women's Language theory

No	Theory	Analysis
1	Fairclough's CDA	The discourse reflects a shift from traditional feminine dependency toward individualized empowerment. Textually, it reflects shift from dependency toward individualized empowerment. Discursively, it constructs identity where women reclaim agency by rejecting normative pressures. Socially, it challenges traditional feminine dependency but maintains neoliberal individualism
2	Lakoff Women's Language	Use of intensifiers ("extremely," "really"), empty adjectives ("pretty," "successful"), hypercorrect grammar, and avoidance of strong swear words create a polished, self-soothing tone typical of feminine self-help discourse

### Comment Analysis

The comments "Manifesting to be extremely rich, very successful and really pretty" and "No love no problems no men no problems" are positive responses that extend the creator's message. Both reinforce the discourse of independence: one expresses aspirations for self-focused success, while the other rejects romantic stress entirely. They align with the creator's framing of feminine peace as something achieved through self-investment and detachment from men.

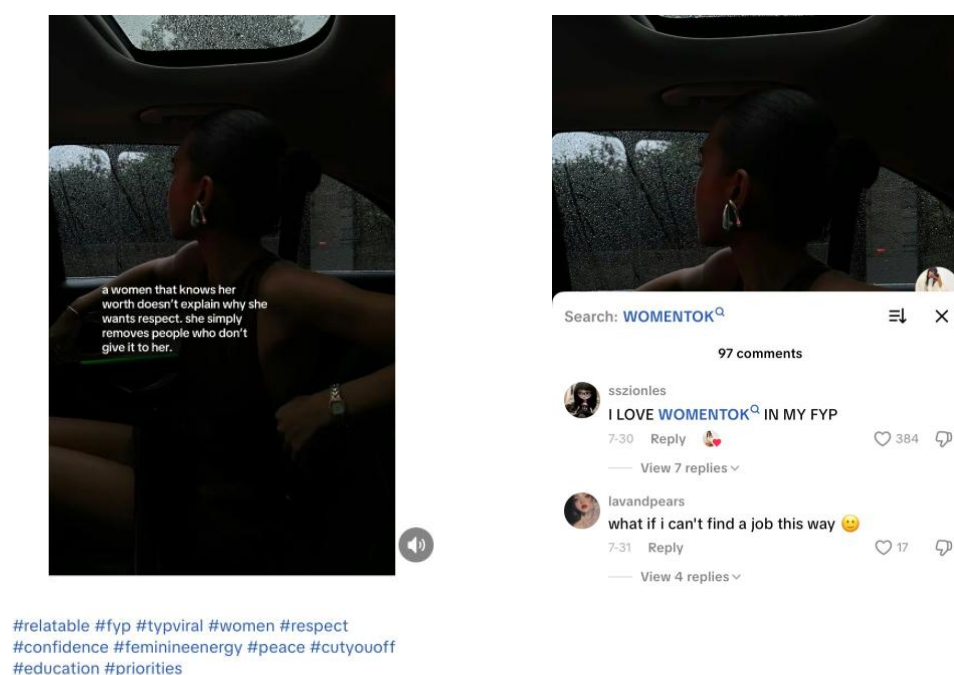


Figure 14. Example of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" content in Tiktok and viewer's comments

The creator promotes a mindset of self-worth and emotional boundary-setting. The video suggests that a woman who truly knows her value does not argue for respect; instead, she withdraws from anyone who fails to treat her properly. The message encourages women to view detachment and selective distancing as signs of maturity and emotional intelligence.

### Theory Connection

Table 15. Analysis of the hashtag "FeminineEnergy" through Fairclough's CDA theory and Lakoff's Women's Language theory

No	Theory	Analysis
1	Fairclough's CDA	The discourse textually, presents empowerment as individual responsibility. Discursively, it reconstructs femininity as firm and autonomous. Socially, it reflects neoliberal self-management challenging traditional accommodation expectations but placing burden on women.
2	Lakoff Women's Language	The use of hypercorrect grammar and a calm, polite tone aligns with Lakoff's idea of feminine linguistic style. Intensifiers like "simply" and the absence of strong swear words create a soft yet assertive message that supports the theme of quiet strength

### Comment Analysis

The first comment "I LOVE WOMENTOK IN MY FYP" shows positive agreement, praising the appearance of empowering women-centered content. The second comment "what if i can't find a job this way 😊" introduces a gentle concern using a softened question and an emoji, reflecting Lakoff's features such as hedging and politeness. Together, the comments show both support and mild doubt, but overall they engage positively with the creator's message about self-worth and boundaries.

### Discussion

#### Overall Messages Communicated by Creators

Across all fifteen videos, creators consistently portray feminine energy as an ideal framework for women's thinking, behavior, and emotional management. Despite stylistic variations, the content shares a common orientation: femininity as something women must actively cultivate internally and externally.

Emotional strength emerges as a dominant theme. Creators highlight calmness, intuition, gentleness, patience, and emotional awareness not as weaknesses but as personal power qualities enabling women to remain grounded and confident. Emotional softness becomes a source of control rather than vulnerability.

Self-protection and boundaries recur frequently. Many messages encourage women not to "chase," "argue," or engage with situations disturbing their peace. Feminine energy becomes a strategy for self-preservation where women maintain dignity by regulating reactions and prioritizing mental states. This positions inner calm as a tool for navigating relationships and preventing emotional harm.

Videos also connect femininity to lifestyle choices. Softness links with beauty routines, self-care activities, and personal habits symbolizing peaceful, organized life. This blending transforms feminine energy into holistic identity covering appearance, behavior, and daily practices. Additionally, creators portray femininity as peaceful orientation toward the world, suggesting conflict avoidance, gentle speech, and quiet emotional management. Femininity is imagined as harmony rather than confrontation, encouraging women to create peace for themselves and their surroundings.

Overall, creators construct feminine energy as a comprehensive guide influencing how women act, speak, and view themselves a model of womanhood that is emotional, aesthetic, moral, and behavioral.

#### Feminine Energy in Relation to Fairclough's CDA

Fairclough's CDA reveals how language actively shapes viewers' understanding of femininity beyond mere description. At the textual level, creators employ short, direct statements: "stay soft," "choose peace," "be gentle with yourself" appearing repeatedly. These instructions create impressions that feminine energy is straightforward, universal, and



accessible. Frequent emotional and symbolic vocabulary "soft," "peaceful," "aligned," "energy," "flow" forms specific linguistic patterns giving feminine energy recognizable identity.

At the discursive practice level, videos operate within TikTok's platform structure. Creators combine gentle tones, soft lighting, relaxed expressions, and aesthetic visuals reinforcing verbal messages. Content repetition across creators shows how the platform encourages circulating certain femininity ideas. The trend format makes feminine energy appear as shared cultural script rather than individual opinion.

At the social practice level, these representations participate in broader gender discussions. Feminine energy discourse draws on traditional ideas about women being calm, patient, emotionally nurturing. However, creators reinterpret these traits through modern lenses, framing them as empowering rather than restrictive. Instead of presenting softness as limitation, videos position it as preferred relational mode. This hybrid discourse maintains familiar gender expectations while framing them as personal development and inner strength.

Fairclough's CDA demonstrates that feminine energy on TikTok is not neutral but constructed identity shaped by platform trends, repeated linguistic choices, and cultural womanhood ideas. It encourages specific femininity versions while subtly reinforcing social norms about women's behavior.

#### *Feminine Energy and Lakoff's Women's Language Features*

Lakoff's Women's Language Theory offers another lens for understanding how femininity is performed in the videos. All ten features from Lakoff's theory appear across the dataset, indicating that the creators consistently use language forms traditionally associated with women's speech. These features contribute to the construction of a soft, gentle, and emotionally expressive identity.

Table 16. Summary of the Presence in Lakoff's theory Women's Language Features

No	Lakoff's Women's Language Features	Found	Explanation
1	Hedges	✓	Used to sound gentle ("maybe," "kind of")
2	Intensifiers	✓	To express strong emotion ("so soft," "really peaceful")
3	Tag Questions	✓	Creates a soft tone ("Right?" "Okay?")
4	Empty Adjectives	✓	Words like "cute," "pretty," "lovely"
5	Politeness	✓	Calm, Gentle speech
6	Hypercorrect Grammar	✓	Clear, Polished pronunciation
7	Rising Intonation	✓	Gives a soft, non-threatening effect
8	Avoidance of Strong Swear Words	✓	Videos avoid harsh language to maintain soft persona
9	Superpolite Forms	✓	"Could you", "Would you mind", "Do you mind"
10	Speaking in Italics (Emphasis)	✓	Emphasized tone for dramatic effect

While Lakoff originally described these features as signs of women's linguistic insecurity, the feminine-energy context uses them differently. Here, the features play a role in performing softness rather than revealing weakness. Polite forms and hedges help create a calming atmosphere. Intensifiers and empty adjectives contribute to an aesthetic, emotionally rich style. Rising intonation and tag questions make the statements feel friendly and empathetic rather than demanding.

Thus, instead of signaling powerlessness, these features become part of a deliberate performance of femininity. They help shape a linguistic identity that aligns with the emotional

and visual tone of the feminine-energy trend. The creators use language not only to inform but also to embody the style they are promoting.

#### *Audience Responses in the Comment Sections*

The audience comments show that viewers interpret feminine energy content in multiple ways. Many viewers express positive reactions, describing the videos as calming, motivating, or helpful for their personal development. These commenters often relate the content to their own experiences, suggesting that feminine energy makes them feel more secure, more self-aware, or more emotionally stable.

However, the comments also reveal a sense of uncertainty among some viewers. There are expressions of confusion, such as people asking whether they are “feminine enough” or whether they are applying the advice correctly. These reactions suggest that while the videos can inspire empowerment, they can also create pressure by promoting a fixed standard of how a woman should act or feel.

Alongside these reactions, there are also neutral and humorous comments. Some viewers tag friends, joke about their own behavior, or respond lightly without engaging deeply with the content. These responses show that not all audiences treat the videos as guidance; for some, the content functions mainly as entertainment. The mixture of supportive, anxious, and humorous reactions demonstrates that feminine energy content resonates differently with different viewers. For some, it becomes a tool for self-growth; for others, it becomes a reminder of expectations they feel they cannot meet.

#### *Final Interpretation in Relation to the Research Aims*

Findings directly address the three research aims. First, feminine energy is constructed through linguistic choices emphasizing calmness, politeness, emotional expression, and gentle instruction. These features, aligning with Lakoff's theory, create consistent soft yet controlled femininity images.

Second, audience responses show non-uniform content reception. Some find empowerment and reassurance, while others experience insecurity or confusion. This variety highlights how feminine energy discourses function differently depending on viewers' emotional and personal contexts.

Finally, the trend both challenges and reinforces women's empowerment ideas. It challenges traditional stereotypes by redefining softness as strength and presenting emotional intelligence as valuable skill. Simultaneously, it reinforces older expectations by suggesting women should remain calm, gentle, and controlled to be considered feminine. The trend creates appealing empowerment versions still tied to specific gender norms.

Ultimately, feminine energy on TikTok operates as modern femininity reimagining: one encouraging self-growth and emotional awareness yet carrying traces of traditional expectations about women's behavior and identity.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study examines how TikTok creators construct “feminine energy” through language and how audiences engage with these representations, showing it as a paradoxical discourse that is simultaneously empowering and constraining, modern yet traditional. Using Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis and Lakoff's Women's Language Theory to analyze fifteen videos, the findings reveal that creators strategically employ features such as empty adjectives, hedges, intensifiers, superpolite forms, and avoidance of harsh language to reframe traditionally “soft” feminine speech as a source of power, where gentleness becomes control and emotional expressiveness becomes a valued skill. At the textual level, recurring vocabulary around softness, calmness, and elegance constructs a coherent femininity ideal; at the discursive practice level, TikTok's replicative culture presents feminine energy as shared wisdom rather than ideology; and at the social practice level, the discourse both challenges and reproduces gender norms by promoting autonomy and emotional intelligence while reinforcing expectations of softness, calmness, and aesthetic refinement. Audience responses are divided, with some viewers feeling validated and empowered, while others experience

anxiety or confusion about meeting narrow standards of femininity. Critically, the trend reflects neoliberal feminism by framing empowerment as individual self-improvement—through beauty practices, emotional regulation, and boundary-setting—rather than structural change, offering strategies to navigate patriarchy without dismantling it. Overall, feminine energy on TikTok illustrates the complexity of digital femininity: it democratizes gender discourse and enables community-building, yet hybridizes progressive and traditional ideologies, often excluding loud, assertive, or gender non-conforming women, highlighting that true liberation requires not only redefining femininity but reimagining the gender system itself.

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*A Discourse Analysis on the Performance of 'Feminine Energy' Narratives on TikTok*

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