



Breaking Down Gender Stereotypes: Analyzing the Meaning of Equality in ABC Soy Sauce Advertisements

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Abstract: Social media is one of the most common tools and we can get any information we need, for example about gender equality. One of the social media hits right now is YouTube. YouTube can search for various information and even place advertisements to sell. To unlock the wrong thinking towards women's equality. This research uses Fairclough's critical discourse analysis method and Derrida's deconstruction theory. The results showed that in the ABC soy sauce advert, there is gender inequality between women and men where men must always be served. Men assume that a woman's job is only in the kitchen and taking care of housework. This ABC Soy Sauce advert plays an important role in breaking down gender stereotypes by presenting a more inclusive and balanced picture of the roles of men and women in everyday life. By dissecting the meaning behind the advert, the author highlights the importance of promoting equality and dismantling traditional gender norms. The findings suggest that the Kecap ABC advert has the potential to challenge stereotypes and promote a more inclusive society.

Keywords: Discourse analysis Fairclough; Deconstruction Derrida; Gender Equality; Advertisement

I. Introduction

Social media is now one of the most common tools people use to get news in various countries (Lee et al., 2023). From social media, we can get any information we need, one of which is about gender equality. While social media enables the rapid and widespread dissemination of factual information, it also implies that partially inaccurate or unverified information quickly spreads and reaches a wide audience (Lee et al., 2023). Total social media usage has increased consistently over the past few years. The number of social network users worldwide is expected to increase from 2.86 billion in 2017 to 4.41 billion in 2025 (Knupfer et al., 2023).

One of the social media that is currently popular is the YouTube platform where YouTube has a place to convey information in the form of images, speech, and text. YouTube is a social media used to upload videos, watch various videos, and share videos where the video can be seen by everyone. The YouTube platform also functions to disseminate information in the form of advertisements. Almost every day, unintentionally and even unconsciously, people always consume advertisements voluntarily. The subject of this study focuses on advertisements on television, namely ABC soy sauce advertisements (Helwig et al., n.d.).

Apart from being an entertainment break after a film or soap opera, advertisements have proven to be effective in influencing our views as humans on social reality. Advertising is one of the important factors in selling products for an industry (Kar et al., 2023). Furthermore, Richards (2020) explains that advertising is defined as communication mediated by an identifiable brand and intends to persuade consumers to make cognitive, affective, or behavioural changes both now and in the future (Kim, 2021).

The words and images contained in a YouTube account can be explored for meaning and truth to be understood thoroughly. Exploring the meaning and truth in a video on YouTube can be done by using the deconstruction method. The general description of deconstruction is thought to understand the contradictions that exist in the text and try to rebuild the meanings that have been attached to the text. One thing to note is that for deconstructionists the truth is always contingent or temporary (Khadafi, 2021). Thus, a text generally has no centre (or its centre is decentralized). No absolute truth can be claimed (Khadafi, 2021). Therefore, if there is a claim, it will only demonstrate the unsettling characteristics of the reality practice of a sign system (Khadafi, 2021).

Deconstruction denotes the search for the meaning of a text to the point of exposing the supposed internal contradictions and oppositions on which it is based (Guessan et al., 2023). Many advertisements have been posted on social media such as YouTube to make it more widely known to the public and try to explain what is happening or even often happens, such as one example of an advertisement that the researcher took as research data, namely regarding gender equality.

Derrida tries to make his words clear and not carry different levels of interpretation and his philosophy essentially focuses on the certainty of understanding "Our certainty" is expressed through texts, through language, and through sign systems, which are no longer seen as neutral (Kamal & Mostafa, 2023). Deconstruction aims to show that the text is at war with itself. If the space of war is imaginary but is a fragmented space: spatiality and temporality are destroyed at the same time (Kamal & Mostafa, 2023).

Derrida introduced the idea that writing is a contest of ideas of knowledge, logos, and, most importantly, the concept of deconstructing texts to determine their intended meaning. Therefore, we must "inaugurate the destruction, not the dismantling but the desedimentation, the deconstruction, of all significance sourced in logos" (Kamal & Mostafa, 2023).

The written text collectively constitutes the written discourse that is the focus of this paper contained in the text in an advertisement "ABC Supports Gender Equality in Women". In this research, the focus of the research uses a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to examine gender equality and Deconstruction Theory. Critical discourse analysis seeks to deconstruct discursive elements in discourse that naturalize implicit power relations and legitimize socio-political control, especially when social, political, and cultural dynamics produce a hegemony (DURMAZ & YOGUN, 2022).

Similarly, Wodak (2001) defines the purpose of CDA as to explore social inequalities critically and reveal the relationship between language and power. At its core, CDA involves a careful examination of the relationship between macro analyses of the wider social and political context of the text (Shume, 2020).

Deconstruction is the idea of understanding the contradictions in a text and trying to rebuild the meanings inherent in the text. Deconstruction thinking does not accept a text as constantly conforming to its meaning. The word deconstruction when seen from the verb in English from the word deconstruct. The word deconstruct in the Macmilan (2006) English Dictionary means: "to examine a piece of writing to show that it can be understood in different ways by each person who reads it". Barker (2014) explained deconstruction means the examination of a piece of writing to show that it can be understood differently by each person

Who reads it. Deconstructing means to take away, and change, to discover and show the assumptions that lie behind a text.

This research tries to explain the meaning of deconstruction from the purpose of deconstruction is to find flaws, injustices, lies, and others that are not wanted by society. According to Derrida, every text has hidden meanings behind it. Through deconstruction theory, it can be seen that the text is no longer a complete order but an open arena of struggle. The research will open a view of gender equality seen in a video advert on YouTube. Several words are captured as material to analyze the data on the advertisement. Previous research on the assessment of advertising videos focused on gender inequality, and the role of husbands (Zuhriya et al., n.d.).

Research conducted previously in the form of deconstruction studies on the education system that has not been renewed, deconstruction studies of feminine values in a film, abuse of authority in criminal law based on deconstruction of meaning, research conducted by current researchers examines gender equality in an advertisement on social media in the form of YouTube. This study will discuss gender inequality that occurs in a wife and housewife who works outside the home. This research is analysed using critical discourse analysis theory and deconstruction theory.

Fairclough (1995) views critical discourse as focusing attention on social institutions rather than just ordinary conversations. His framework integrates the micro dimension and the macro dimension with a focus on social institutions as the highest level axis, namely social events and actions. In line with previous opinions, Flowerdew & Jhon (2018) say critical discourse studies is an interdisciplinary approach to language that aims to advance our understanding of how discourse figures in social processes, social structures, and social change. Critical discourse draws heavily on social theories and seeks to develop a critically contextualized linguistic approach that identifies issues of ideology, power, and inequality as central to our study.

The development of an analytical framework to study the interrelationship between language, power, and ideology is called critical discourse analysis. Fairclough (1995) mentioned critical discourse analysis is considered as an integration between, viz: text analysis, analysis of the process of text production and text consumption, and socio-cultural analysis of the discursive event as a whole. This critical goal in discourse analysis is to distinguish critical discourse analysis from the dominant non-critical descriptive trend in discourse analysis. In the former discourse analysis pays less attention to explaining how discursive practices are socially shaped or their social effects. There is a critical alternative that nationalizes the implicit propositions of the ideological character contained in the discourse. That is, the implicit propositions necessary to infer coherent relations between sentences but also about the social relations underlying interactional practices. Fairclough emphasizes that discourse in its reproduction will have a dominating relationship.

II. Review of Literatures

Research on critical discourse analysis has been widely studied, but researchers here raise and dig deeper into the meaning of advertisements in a product regarding gender equality. Deconstruction studies are a way of reading critically to be able to capture meaning differently for the person reading it and at the same time be able to show the assumptions that lie behind a text. Research Melinda (2021) discusses the meaning of deconstruction which explains that there is an ideology contained in an advertising text. Furthermore, research has also been carried out discussing research on the podcast "We are stupid or stupid schools" which also explains that

schools that have not used an education system that has not been renewed so that Kak Seto founded homeschooling (Melinda, 2021).

In this study, the author criticizes the education system that has not been renewed so that many children cannot be reached. Research conducted (Anggraeny, 2020). Discusses the abuse of authority based on the deconstruction of meaning. Abuse of authority results in damage to state finances being seen as an absolute part of Criminal Law and state financial losses occur. Through Jacques Derrida's perspective, the binary opposition is marginalized, an opposition is made to exist. Not to dominate the other, but to share a view. In this case, the separation between state administrative law and criminal law has led to the problem of corruption not being resolved. The research *Femininity and Women's Resistance: Deconstruction of Meaning in Sara Mills' Critical Discourse in the Film 'Mother'* by (Zuhriya et al., n.d.) Discusses the deconstruction of the meaning of femininity and women's resistance in the film 'Mother'.

Deconstruction of feminine values and the meaning of women's resistance in the film "Mother" which positions women as objects. At this level, there is objectification of women through the main character played by Hye Ja, although there are other trends that also position women as subjects in the storyline. The emergence of physical and emotional aspects of femininity reinforces the objectification of women in the film. However, there is a dissection of the value of femininity and resistance in the film due to the complex emotional dynamics of the main character. The existence of the media as an industry and the power of the message makes the practice of media commodification dependent on its owner, so it is possible that the image of the female character in the film is used to represent a form of media power over the commodification of the message conveyed.

III. Research Methods

In this study, the researchers used the critical discourse analysis approach by Norman Fairclough. Researchers chose this because this approach can systematically describe the facts and characteristics of the data. A critical discourse approach also aims to understand discourse as a form of social practice (Putra & Triyono, 2018). This research data is in the form of advertisement videos taken from YouTube and transcribed. Researchers listened carefully and concluded that there were words related to gender inequality. Data analysis is carried out with the stages of identifying, describing data, classifying data, and drawing conclusions. In addition to using critical discourse analysis theory, researchers also use deconstruction theory in analyzing it.

Pawito (in Achfandy 2020) discourse analysis is a way of studying discourse in which messages are contained both textually and contextually (Azizah & Triyono, 2021). Discourse analysis is assembled to be applied in the discipline as a tool for tracing the relationship between form and function in verbal communication (Azizah & Triyono, 2021). Critical discourse analysis is a methodology within the critical paradigm, the media is not a free and neutral channel. The media has been assigned and used by certain groups to dominate non-dominant groups (Cenderamata & Darmayanti, 2019). This research uses Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis theory. In theory, Fairclough theorizes about the concept of discourse that tries to join several traditions, namely linguistics, interpretation traditions, and sociology.

Fairclough offers a discourse model that contains three dimensions, namely textual (microstructure) analyzed linguistically, namely vocabulary, semantics, and syntax (Fairclough, 1995). Discourse practice is a dimension related to the process of text production and text consumption (Zalfa Naurah et al., 2023). Fairclough offers a three-dimensional model that

represents three domains to be analyzed, namely texts (speech, writing, visual images, or a combination of the three), discursive practices that include text production and consumption, and social practices (Stjernswärd & Glasdam, 2022).

The theory of deconstruction was developed by Derrida. Derrida's thought is known as 'deconstruction'. Deconstruction concerns the contamination or "bastardization" of binary oppositions, pairs of opposite meanings. According to McQuillan, deconstruction takes two stages. First, the binary opposition must be reversed, for example, man/woman to woman/man, and then it is shown that the entire meaning of the text has been dictated by the binary opposition. By reversing the opposition, a kind of balance is created. Secondly, once reversed, the entire system of thought dictated by the binary opposition must be removed, so that the terms in the binary opposition are interpreted without binary thinking anymore (Nuriarta & Ari, 2023).

IV. Discussion

This section presents the results of the research using Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis and Jaques Derrida's deconstruction theory. The results are presented in the form of descriptions and discussions.

41. in-Textual Analysis

In-textual analysis was conducted to explain the meaning conveyed by the ABC soy sauce advertising video. Like the quoted conversation:

Only 1 in 3 husbands in Indonesia are willing to help their wives in the kitchen. This can lead to arguments at home.

The transcripts show that the few husbands who are willing to help their wives in the kitchen show that there is gender inequality between husbands and wives. There are many examples, such as chefs who work in a hotel or restaurant working in the kitchen. The chef profession is mostly held by men. This is a real example that can be used as material to reflect that cooking work in the kitchen is not only done by women.

The message that is always conveyed by ABC soy sauce in its broadcast shows that the ABC soy sauce advert is a representation of one of the good soy sauces and has its enjoyment for each consumer. This message gives meaning to consumers, especially mothers who like to cook in the kitchen as shown in the picture. Mothers will be selective in choosing raw materials in processing every meal including soy sauce. ABC soya sauce already has its name in the community.



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AaJf6qpayDk>

Figure 1

The picture also clearly shows the words *Supporting equality in the kitchen, on Women's Equality Day*. The words in the video show that ABC Soy Sauce also supports gender

equality in society. Work in the kitchen, especially cooking, is not only done by women, especially mothers. Researchers also transcribed the video and quoted words that lead to gender equality inequality as below:

Husband: *"Why do I have a wife if I have to cook myself?"*



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AaJf6qpayDk>

Figure 2

The sentence shows that a husband's reluctance towards his wife who thinks that the wife's job is in the kitchen, namely cooking and doing other housework. In fact, the task of cooking and doing other housework is not only done by the wife, the husband should be able to help his wife in cooking and doing other housework. According to the husband, cooking is a wife's job that must be done by the wife. If husbands and wives both work, husbands should better understand their duties and obligations. The husband knows that his wife also works outside to help her husband so that all the needs in the household can be fulfilled properly. However, it is clear from the advert that the husband is very selfish. The picture also shows the husband being rude to his wife and kicking a nearby chair. This is a form of indirect violence committed by the husband against his wife.

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Husband: *"My responsibility is to work, you are in the kitchen, that's your nature".*

The next sentence also explains that the husband only thinks that his responsibility is to work outside the home. The husband also knows that his wife works outside the home. The husband also said that it is the nature of a wife to cook. In any religious teaching, the nature of a woman or wife is to give birth and breastfeed. Cooking is not the nature of a woman or wife. The husband can only comment as he pleases without knowing the nature of his wife.

Men: *This kind of condition must stop. We as husbands should be able to cook because husband and wife should have their responsibilities in the kitchen, right?*

In the quoted sentence, it is concluded that the situation as in the advertisement must be stopped immediately because it will lead to disharmony in domestic life. As a husband, he must

be able to help his wife do household chores such as cooking in the kitchen. The work is not only done by the wife but the husband also helps.

4.2 Discursive Analysis

In this analysis, Interpretation is used to analyze the process, namely interpreting the text itself and how the text is consumed and interpreted by the reader (Stjernswärd & Glasdam, 2022). In the ABC soy sauce advertisement, the reader or audience initially sees the ABC soy sauce advertisement as an ordinary advertisement but after listening to it until the end, it can be concluded that the audience can see the other side of a husband who thinks that the husband's job is to work outside and the wife's job is to cook and take care of other housework.

4.3 Social Practice Analysis

At this stage of analysis, the explanation is oriented to describe discourse as part of social practice and show the discourse's determination of social structures and its reproductive effects on these structures, whether the effect is to stabilize or change the structure. The social structure that is the focus of analysis is power relations. The social processes and practices that are the focus are the processes and practices of social struggle (Stjernswärd & Glasdam, 2022). The focus of social practice analysis in this study is the gender inequality between husbands and wives. The husband considers that the wife's job is to cook, serve the husband and family, and do other housework. In this advert, the power lies with the husband who feels that he is the one who has the right to determine everything, including cooking, which must and must be done by the wife.

4.4 Deconstruction of Advertising Meanings

The deconstruction method is an act of the subject to question, dismantle an object composed of various elements (Noris, 2003: 5). The dismantling carried out is a radical act because it dares to destroy what has been neatly arranged, considered the most correct (Siregar, 2019). As in the period before the launch of Women's Emancipation pioneered by R.A. Kartini, women had duties only in the house, especially in the kitchen. Women only do housework such as cooking, serving husbands and children, and cleaning the house. After the Emancipation of Women, there began to be many changes in women. Many Indonesian women have sat and held important positions in the Indonesian government. But it cannot be denied that there are still women who are experiencing what was like before the Emancipation of Women women still get pressure from husbands who want their wives not only to work outside the home and be able to do work that the nature of women according to the husband. The nature of women is to conceive, menstruate, give birth, and breastfeed.

Deconstruction is known as reversal. The meaning of the words in the ABC soya sauce advert is explained. The meaning presented is that using cooking will make household relationships lead to happiness and peace because cooking is expected by the husband. The deconstruction of this meaning is based on the question, is it true that if the wife is diligent in cooking, it will make the household life happy? In reality, cooking does not necessarily lead to happiness in a household. Many examples can be seen, husbands and wives who understand each other and respect each other even though the wife does not carry out her duties properly can present an atmosphere of harmonious and certainly happy home life.

The analysis conducted using critical discourse analysis theory proposed by Norman Fairclough explains textual analysis in the text means that the conversation in the advertising video means that the meaning contained in the video is explained in detail, discursive analysis explains that researchers try to interpret what is conveyed by the advertisement to the public/adult audience, and social practice analysis shows that the husband shows more power to

the wife so that the wife must continue to do her duties at home such as cooking for her husband and other housework. Meanwhile, in deconstruction theory, researchers try to explain what is not seen in the video ad and explain what has been embedded for a long time is resurrected because of the husband's ego. Between the two theories explain each other from their respective views and provide a clear understanding.

V. Conclusion

The critical discourse analysis in the ABC soy sauce advertisement shows that the advertisement video conversation explains the understanding that is not all known by the public/advertisers, the researcher elaborates the interpretation that the advertisement wants to convey, and the power lies with the husband who is more concerned with the ego. The Kecap ABC advert plays an important role in breaking down gender stereotypes by presenting a more inclusive and balanced picture of the roles of men and women in everyday life. This study examines how the advert depicts men and women, their roles, and the power dynamics between genders. By dissecting the meaning behind the advert, the author highlights the importance of promoting equality and dismantling traditional gender norms. The findings suggest that the Kecap ABC advert has the potential to challenge stereotypes and promote a more inclusive society. The analysis emphasizes the need for advertisers to pay attention to the messages they convey and contribute to more equal and diverse gender representations in the media. The deconstruction theory analysis results in a reversal understanding that gives the reader a new understanding.

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