A Multimodal Analysis of Disney Princess Memes Revealing Woman Stereotype in Society

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Abstrak

Stereotype wanita di masyarakat dapat ditemukan dalam interaksi sosial melalui meme yang beredar di online platform, sosial media. Meme Disney Princess yang dibuat masyarakat lalu dimuat dalam Pinterest banyak yang mengandung perubahan sifat dari karakter Princess yang dibuat oleh Disney. Perubahan karakter Disney Princess dari yang semula terpengaruh oleh stereotype terhadap wanita dimasa kini. Oleh karena itu, studi ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis gambaran stereotype masyarakat terhadap wanita dimasa kini. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dan menerapkan teori multimodal (Kress and Leeuwen 2006) untuk analisis. Hasilnya menunjukan bahwa dalam karakter Disney stereotype terhadap wanita berubah seiring berjalannya waktu. Dalam meme Disney Princess wanita masa kini diangap sebagai individu yang dapat memiliki pilihannya sendiri, tidak selalu berlaku lemah lembut, dan memiliki sifat tegas.

Kata Kunci: Stereotipe wanita, Humor, Disney Princess Memes, Multimodal analisis, Internet memes

Abstract

Memes circulating on online platforms and social media reveal societal stereotypes of women. Many of the Disney Princess memes created by the public and posted on Pinterest contain changes in the nature of the Princess characters created by Disney. Stereotypes of women today influence the transformation of the Disney Princess's character in internet memes. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the stereotypical portrayal of women in today's society. This research uses qualitative methods and applies multimodal theory (Kress and Leeuwen 2006) for analysis. The results show that, in Disney characters, the stereotype of women changes over time. Disney Princess memes portray women as independent individuals, not always gentle, and possessing assertive traits.

Keywords: Women stereotype, Humor, Disney Princess Memes, Multimodal Approach, Internet Memes

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past few years, online mediums have enabled people to construct their own identities. With the advent of the internet, society believes that hate and subversive action will increase. But achieving equality and freedom for all genders is also feasible. Drakett et al (2018) a feminist study has discovered that cases of online sexism and harassment are frequently interpreted as "acceptable" by portraying them as a type of humor. Meanwhile, Milner (2013), Internet memes, because of their interactive traits, possess the capacity to serve as a platform for influencing transformation.

Dawkins (1976) was the first researcher whom introduce meme. He stated that a meme have the concept of gene, in the term of self-replicating and communication. In other word meme describe as an idea, behavior, or style that spreads online in a culture from person to person. Nowadays, memes have become a significant and influential communication in digital society. Memes have engaged millions attention with their unique blend of images, text, and humor, crossing language borders and appealing to broad audiences. These humorous and frequently ironic productions have become widespread on online platforms, social media, and even in regular discussions. Whenever see meme, some individuals may laugh, while others may not. However, they may experience other phenomena, like as sarcasm, release, or a relief emotion. Additionally, the meme topics and messages conveyed are not always presented in an explicit manner. Certain memes require readers to interpret the implicit meaning in order to completely understand the message. As a result, certain scholars have examined the interaction between visuals and text in order to convey the underlying implicit meaning of memes.

The first study by Moussa, Benmessaoud, and Douai (2020) examined the use of Internet memes in a boycott campaign that took place in 2018. The campaign specifically targeted three large multinational brands that are closely linked to the dominating sphere of power in Morocco. The study employs multimodal critical discourse analysis to examine the discursive choices made in the creation of memes that were shared throughout the

boycott. It also explores the connections between satirical comedy and online participatory culture. The results indicate that under repressive environments, these actions go beyond being creative and digitally facilitated "individualized" or "self-expressive" behaviors. These actions hold strategic importance in a prolonged ideological battle for fairness and equality in society and the economy.

The second study, Mahfouz (2021) the focus was on analyzing the portrayal of gender identity in memes by examining the interaction between textual and visual elements. The data was gathered from the Pinterest website by doing a search using the keywords "men vs. women memes." The search specifically targeted memes pertaining to health and relationships. Utilizing Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996, 2006) Theory of Visual Grammar as well as Critical Discourse Analysis, the researcher examined the visual and textual components of the chosen memes. The study emphasizes the function of memes as a contemporary means of communication that facilitates the widespread distribution of cultural representation and ideological content through viral means.

The third study, Nugroho (2023), analyzed multimodal element on gender representation in English and Indonesia memes. The researcher focused on investigated the similarity and the differences of gender representation in English and Indonesian memes. The study utilized the descriptive-qualitative technique and multimodal analysis to examine the interplay between pictures, texts, and meaning. The findings demonstrated that both the textual content and visual elements in memes have a substantial impact on shaping the implicit messages related to gender portrayal. Furthermore, it showed that men and women are depicted in a comparable manner in both English and Indonesian memes.

Although several studies that emphasize on in memes have been conducted. Research in the gender representation in Disney princess memes are rare. Through Disney Princess media, girls are exposed to a multitude of strong and persistent gender stereotypes and role messages (Golden and Jacoby 2018). In recent years Disney tried to create characters that reject traditional gender norms. One of their effort was made the most of Disney Princesses continue to reflect many archaic ideals of femininity.

FEMALE STEREOTYPE IN DISNEY PRINCESS.

1. Role
    Role is a socially defined pattern of behavior that is typically dictated by a person's standing in a particular community. Male Disney characters hold positions of power more frequently than their female counterparts(Golden and Jacoby 2018; Siregar, Gurning, and Santoso 2019). In the event of an argument, male characters and voices remain dominant(Fought and Eisenhauer 2016). The female character discovers 20% less

dialogue than the male character. Their legitimate princesses, like as Cinderella and Snow White, probably worked as unpaid Scullery maids in the family. This perspective holds that women are the ones who are dominated, and that the use of stereotypical language against them is a result of their inferiority.

2. Traits
    A trait is the term for a set of acts. In practically every Disney film depicting the Disney princess movie plot, the female protagonists are in risk and the male protagonists arrive to protect them. (Ji 2021; Sharik 2022). It is obvious that Disney still adheres to the conventional love story of the prince saving the princess. Moreover, the majority of Disney Princesses idealize gracefulness. They are respectful and composed.

3. Behavior
    Disney created the stereotype that women should move passively. Their beautiful body movements, which included twirling, ballroom dancing, and hand posing, contribute to the development of their characters. While speaking, the official Disney Princesses tend to speak in a mellow tone. Princess characters rarely get the opportunity to speak loudly or fiercely. With access to Disney Princess costumes, Disney encourages that princesses should wear beautiful dresses that match their tiaras. (Golden and Jacoby 2018).

The gender global landscape used the potential of internet to altered over the decades (Haines, Deaux, and Lofaro 2016). It modifies the standing of women in society. As the opportunity structures accessible to women expand and as women assume new positions and responsibilities, it is possible that people's perceptions of the traits of women will change to reflect these new realities. Social Role Theory of Eagly and Wood in (Van Lange, Paul A.M Krunglanski, Arie W. Higgins 2011) provides a Changes in social distribution provide a theoretical basis for forecasting that stereotypes would alter as a result. The phenomenon of changing occupational roles and inferred trait traits, which supports the notion that gender stereotypes are based on the roles women and men are assumed to hold. Thus, gender stereotypes will have evolved in the direction of less distinction, as a result of recorded shifts in the roles, traits, and behavior preferences of women and men.

According to Meme as agent of change in society, it open possibility to board role. It could be part harsh, sarcasm, achieve equality or freedom expression. Through this research multimodal approach by Kress and Leeuwen (2006) used to analyze the contribution of meme to the construction on the implicate meaning regrading woman stereotypes. From this issue, following research question is proposed: How do the multimodal elements in the meme reveals the potrayals of woman stereotype in society through Disney princess memes?

METHOD

This study utilized qualitative approaches to investigate and comprehend the settings supporting female gender Stereotype in society. The subject of the study were Disney princess memes, which containing text caption. Data in this study were collected from observation. The researcher observed the data from social media Pinterest. The acquired data were subsequently processed using a multimodal approach. The multimodal approach (Kress and Leeuwen 2006) emphasizes that all modes of communication, both verbal and nonverbal, contribute significantly to the construction of meaning. Since language is the source of meaning, multimodal analysis encompasses the study of any kind of communication that draws two or more semiotic sources or modes of transmission to accomplish its communicative goal. Thus, the theory of multimodality used to undertake the analysis, incorporating representational meaning, Compositional Meaning, and textual meaning. Then, the outcome data were linked in relation to the three gender stereotype aspects: Role, Trait, and Behavior

RESULT

Images 1

Representational Meaning

The depiction of the connection circumstance was developed through narrative discourse. There are two contestants portrayed: one man and one Disney princess. The guy is the actor in this transactional process. His expression and grip on the princess' hands show his desire to persuade her. However, the Disney princess, who is the target, distances herself from the man. The representational meanings of reaction process are transactional process and non-transactional process. The male focuses his gaze on the Disney Princess during the transactional process. The princess then initiated a non-transactional process. Her eye line extends out of the frame, and she is making a mocking face by sticking out her tongue. Displaying one's tongue might indicate disapproval.

Compositional Meaning

This meme conforms to the structure specified. The male character on the left is a Given, implying that the audience is already acquainted with him or that he has a familiar background, thus bringing intimacy information to the spectator. In contrast, the princess on the right is a new character who is unfamiliar to the audience and must be considered. Creating a sense of separation between two texts by framing them with white space and color Thus, the listener is aware of the authorship of the text.

Textual Meaning

The images represent two separated texts that build communication between the characters. The first dialog belongs to the man's character. He said, "I'm not like others..." This is a low modality used to persuade the princess that he is different from others. By looking at the second dialog, "Here we go again," which belongs to the princess dialog, it could be implied that this conversation is in the context of a male and female romantic relationship.

Images 2

Representational Meaning

This narrative discourse is a reaction transaction, with the princess as the reactor. The princess is directing her scornful look at an unseen object. Her body language also suggests a reaction. She makes a gesture of scorn by making the loser hand signal, implying that she views her communicator as a loser.

Compositional Meaning

Regarding informational value, an ideal-real structure is utilized. The character in the top image (ideal) is projecting a rebellious attitude with a gesture of mockery and a loser hand signal. In the case of female

emancipation, the text "Fact over feelings don't let emotion fuck with your intelligence" is idealized in the lower half (actual) to capture the audience's attention. The shine in the scarf and clothing gives the character prominence. The glimmering objects add a sense of light and optimism to the otherwise dismal and desolate images. The farming devices of shape discontinuity, sparkling scarf, and outfit indicate that the princess is distinct from the background suffering.

Textual Meaning

The text "Fact over feelings; don't let emotion fuck with your intelligence" is part of rhetorical criticism in the context of feminist criticism. That text evaluates and persuades women of the importance of acting based on facts rather than using emotions. In the word choice, it used the swearing word "fuck" to express the feeling of being confident, bolder, and louder in expressing her voice.

Images 3

Representational Meaning

This narrative portrayal depicts a lady as a commanding, strong individual. It consists of a non-transactional reaction process. The reactor in this poster is the princess, who is directing her gaze towards the book. Her hand reaction to incidents that endanger her establishes her as a dominant character who exerts control over the situations around her. The occurrence of a male character in the left corner with a looking-down gaze signals the male figure as male submission.

Compositional Meaning

In terms of informational value, the Princess character on the left suggests that the audience is already familiar with her, given the new framework. Meanwhile, the audience is unfamiliar with the text "Not today." In addition, illuminating a character with a light beam against the backdrop color, which is more likely to be shadowing, accentuates the character. A color-framing mechanism is used to generate contrast in meaning.

Textual Meaning

"Not today," is written in large font size. It evaluates social behavior toward women. This simple and short text portrays the sense of firm refusal.

DISCUSSION

This section will link the result analysis presented with previous theories about stereotype of female in Disney princess. Analysis example will prove that stereotype of woman. The research resulted that humor in this meme used for sarcasm and relieve emotion. The amusing visual of Memes carrying several massage of female stereotype in the society.

The initial change appears in the form of role. If the Disney princess portrayed by (Fought and Eisenhauer 2016; Golden and Jacoby 2018; Siregar et al. 2019) is an inferior individual who prioritizes the desires of others, this meme demonstrates that women are capable of making their own decisions and living their own lives. In images 1 and 2, we can determine whether or not women are willing to advocate for themselves. In addition, the presence of color framing with a positive connotation that is distinct from each image's background can be regarded as evidence that women have explored stages that bring optimism. Specifically, in image 3, when Princess Snow White, a former waitress, declines to serve the household in favor of pursuing her own goals. With this, women can be considered successful in deciding their life and social roles.

Moreover, the change in the form of traits also appears, the stereotype that women are unable to defend themselves due to their inherent weakness is disproved. If in (Ji 2021; Sharik 2022) Disney princesses are still portrayed as weak characters who rely on their princes in times of need. The third meme illustrates women's ability to defend themselves. Specifically, the appearance of a male character with a downward gaze indicates that he does not actively safeguard women in this scene.

Lastly, changes also occur in women's behavior, as evidenced by the fact that women do not always exhibit a refined demeanor and talk gently(Golden and Jacoby 2018); rather, women nowadays are more outspoken. In pictures 1 and 2, the princesses' facial expressions mock their interlocutors. specifically, the text contained in the images, In picture 1, the princess's reaction dialogue reveals that she was already aware of the truth, as seen by her sarcastic face and answer. Then, in the second image, there is an expletive that runs counter to the previously established stereotype.

CONCLUSION

As a case study, it is conceivable to conclude that the female stereotype can alter over time based on three components of gender stereotypes. This meme was

intended to be sarcastic and humorous. In the case of feminism, it was also a method of criticizing society. The humorous picture of memes communicating diverse messages about societal gender prejudices. There are varying aspects of the feminine stereotype. The initial transformation takes the form of a role. Individual roles that prioritize the desires of others give way to women who are able to make their own decisions and live their own lives. This demonstrates women's success in determining their lives and societal positions. Also, features are altering, which contradicts the notion that women are fundamentally weak and unable to protect themselves. The fact that women do not always have a polished manner and talk gently demonstrates that their conduct evolves. Instead, women nowadays are more assertive.

SUGGESTION

On the basis of this research, further research can be conducted to investigate the text contained in meme captions in greater depth. The use of Haliday's systemic functional linguistics (SFL) theory is suggested.

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