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Masculinity in Traditional Medicine Advertisements for Men's Strength on Mass Media: Multimodality Analysis

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Abstract: This research studies particular factors relating to masculinity construction in traditional medicine advertisements for men's strength on mass media. The multimodality theory used in the research was Systemic Functional Linguistics by Halliday (2004) explaining language metafunction into ideational, interpersonal, and textual. Analyzing advertisements structure used the theory by Cheong (2004). Meanwhile, analyzing the masculinity construction used the theory by Connell (1987) on hegemonic masculinity. The model of multimodality analysis used was the model developed by the combination of multimodality theories by (Anstey & Bull, 2010) and Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996-2006). The data of the research were traditional medicine advertisements for men's strength collected from H. Suhendar Medical Klinik and published on daily newspaper in various regions in Indonesia. The research aims at (1) analyzing the advertisement structure and metafunction conveyed in the advertisement of H. Suhendar Medical Clinic and (2) revealing masculinity construction implied in the advertisement of H. Suhendar Medical Clinic. The result shows (1) there are complete advertisement structure and metadiscourse consisting of Announcement, Enhancer, Participant, Demand, Setting, and Call and Visit Information, (2) the multimodality analysis result on H. Suhendar Medical Clinic has constructed the definition of masculinity namely great men must have long big, hard, and last longer vitality in order to be loved by the wives and may keep harmonious family.

Keywords: Multimodality Metafunction, Masculinity, Advertisement

1. INTRODUCTION

Masculinity is one of the topics that is often discussed on studies relating to gender discourse. Masculinity is a stereotype of men contested with feminism as women's stereotype. Masculinity and femininity are two opposite polars and form a straight line in which each point describes the degree of manliness (masculinity) or womanliness (femininity). A man having identical characteristic to masculinity stereotype is regarded a masculine man, if the characteristic is much more it is called a supermasculine man if less it is called a less masculine or feminine man. (Darwin: 1999).

The masculinity construction in each individual may differ and is heavily influenced by its social and cultural background. In other words masculinity is not a concept with single category dimension. The concept can be varied among the society, social class, and level of civilization. This suggests that masculinity is a social construction which may be defined differently by each member of society. By realizing that masculinity is a multidimensional concept, there are some spaces for us to deconstruct and reconstruct the concept.

The masculinity construction is getting more interesting when produced and spread through media. Piliang (in Ibrahim and Suranto, 1998) considers mass media as an arena of 'sign struggle'. Media are the arena of position struggling, between the positions of 'seeing' (active) and 'being seen' (passive). It is the 'sign' that is being struggled reflecting particular image. In this image, the value of masculinity is more dominant than the femininity placed in marginal position. It means that there has been struggling 'sign hegemony, particularly 'gender hegemony' on mass media.

An interesting phenomenon happening lately in Indonesia society is the spread of commercial advertisements regarding masculinity issue, namely traditional medicine advertisement relating to medical treatment for men's strength. These advertisements spread through various printed media which may take even a whole page of newspaper both printed and online versions. The traditional