



DOI: <https://doi.org/10.38035/dijemss.v6i4>
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Critical Discourse Analysis Ruth Wodak in The “Bocah-Bocah Kosong” Youtube Video

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Abstract: The entertainment industry is experiencing a notable evolution in humor, exemplified by the widely acclaimed content “Bocah-Bocah Kosong” on the YouTube WKWK Project by Genflix, which features women characterized by their oriental appearances and “Kosong” personas. This study seeks to elucidate the exploitation and manipulation prevalent within the entertainment industry through the application of Ruth Wodak’s critical discourse analysis framework. The investigation was conducted by analyzing the textual content of episodes 1 to 30 of “Bocah-Bocah Kosong,” supplemented by interviews with four members of the production team, observational methods, and a review of relevant literature. The findings of this study, within the framework of cognitive dimension analysis, indicate that the production team engaged in exploitation throughout the entire process, from planning to scripting. The examination of the socio-psychological dimensions reveals that the manipulation of innocence, ignorance, and sexuality is employed to construct the identities of the characters in “Bocah-Bocah Kosong” through diverse modes of communication. An analysis of the linguistic dimension revealed that manipulative disclaimers were employed to evoke humor and exploit themes of innocence, ignorance, and sexuality as overarching narratives, alongside the strategic use of editing to enhance the text’s impact. This manipulation is normalized by the entertainment business, which is ironic given that the owner of Genflix is a woman.

Keyword: Entertainment Industry, Critical Discourse Analysis, Ruth Wodak, Exploitation, Manipulation

INTRODUCTION

WS Rendra articulated that comedy transcends mere joke-telling; it ought to engage its audience in a profound contemplation of the intricacies of everyday life (Chaniago, 2018). Chaniago’s research indicates that there have been several criticisms directed toward

Indonesian comedy produced from the 1950s to the 1990s, characterized by humor derived from foolish actions. Film critic Eddy D. Iskandar asserted that Indonesian comedy films are merely jokes. The lack of quality in competent scripts results in a dearth of high-caliber comedic films that may stimulate the audience's critical thinking (Afrilya et al., 2021; Chaniago, 2018).

The entertainment sector, particularly through comedic performances in Indonesia, has its roots tracing back several centuries, manifesting in traditional forms such as wayang orang, ludruk, and ketoprak (Triana, 2021). Historically, comedy performances in Indonesia can be categorized into three distinct periods: the classical era spanning from 1960 to 1970, the mid-era from 1980 to 1990, and the millennium era from 2000 to the present. (Chaniago, 2018). During the classical era, the comedic landscape was notably shaped by Chaplin's distinctive approach, which prioritized the evolution of characters and the deployment of humorous expressions. During the 1980s and 1990s, comedic content began to surface that favored sophisticated humor and political satire, largely influenced by the comedians' origins from educated environments, exemplified by Warkop DKI. The evolution of comedy during the 2000s was notably swift, often highlighting situational humor; a prominent illustration of this trend is the sitcom *Bajaj Bajuri* (Triana, 2021).

Comedy shows have unique humor based on each generation, with the Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z being the most influential. Humor is essential for mental and physical health, and each generation has a unique sense of humor and way of absorbing jokes. The dominance of Millennials and Generation Z, who have grown up with technology and digitalization, has transformed lifestyles and left behind traditional cultures, leading to a shift in humor preferences. WKWK Project by Genflix is a leading organization that produces light comedy shows in Gen Z-style humor, featuring rising talents known as "Bocah-Bocah Kosong." These talents are portrayed as naive, innocent, honest, and occasionally annoying, based on their physical appeal. The show aims to generate quickly approved content by the public, focusing on enjoying watching others who appear foolish.

The author argues that the production team not only provides financial security to talent but also manipulates and exploits them in content production. Genflix's WKWK Project on YouTube uses its time to monitor the market, ensuring the growth of each material meets YouTube's media production platform demands. Media owners use the "riding the wave" strategy to maintain their content concepts. This article analyzes the YouTube content "Bocah-Bocah Kosong" using Ruth Wodak's model to uncover exploitation and manipulation within the Indonesian comedy entertainment industry. It highlights the dangers of creating false consciousness and profiting media owners by normalizing ignorance. The analysis serves as a case study for understanding the exploitation and manipulation of content in the entertainment industry.

Exploitation in Women's Terminology

Media exploitation of women has been a long-standing issue, dating back to ancient times. From the 1970s, movie posters and mass media have exploited women's bodies and sexual appeal, causing a negative stigma (Hati et al., 2022). This exploitation is further exacerbated by reporting on sexuality, which undermines women's image in society and their roles, duties, and status in social life. The character and nature of women, often seen as irrational and emotional beings, make them easy targets for exploitation.

Bimbofication is a movement that promotes academic intelligence, politeness, career success, and financial independence as a resistance against femininity (Rosaria & Wijaya, 2023). Women like TikTok celebrity Chrissy Chlapecka use physical appeal and female sexuality to achieve their goals, such as traditional masculinity roles. Bimbofication is seen as a form of women's acceptance of their femininity and resistance against misogyny. However, the inferiority of Bimbo can be seen as a regression for women's advancement, particularly in education. This phenomenon has been used as a tool for negative labeling against the Bimbo

group, which can be commodified and used by social media to serve their interests (Rosaria & Wijaya, 2023). Social media can turn women into fillers by creating "challenge" trends and turning them into fillers.

The exploitation of women is prevalent in various media platforms, such as TikTok and YouTube, where beauty and physical sexuality are used as objects for profit. This is seen as symbolic violence against women's physical appearance, which is viewed as an object to satisfy men's fantasies and sexual imaginations (Rully et al., 2021). Research by Acyuto & Prasetyo (2023) reveals that women with a "sexy" reputation are used as objects of exploitation in YouTube content (Acyuto & Prasetyo, 2023). Beauty is often a standard for the entertainment industry, with patriarchal culture dominating various areas (Harrison, 2019). K-beauty, characterized by three paradox themes: manufactured naturalness, hyper-sexualized cuteness, and the "harmonious kaleidoscope," showcases manufactured naturalness through facial characteristics, hyper-sexualized cuteness through cute clothing styles, and innocent attitudes, indicating that the media also exploits beauty (Seo et al., 2020). This highlights the media's dominance in the entertainment sector. Women are often "designed" to appear attractive in the media, leading to market appeal as consumers. However, they may not realize their visual appeal is often used for capital owners or media companies, placing them in a marginal position (Miranti & Sudiana, 2020).

Normalization of manipulation in the media

Media owners use their power to accumulate market share and manipulate public interests to enhance consumer satisfaction and producer welfare. They control media resources and compete for public acceptance of their ideologies. Advertising, for example, uses media to create false consciousness and manipulate the minds of the audience. Nur (2020) research shows media owners can understand and exploit mass media offers to manipulate the public, as demonstrated by their ability to produce content for television (Nur, 2020).

YouTube's emergence has significantly transformed the media landscape, allowing media ownership to be decentralized and owned by anyone, whether individually or collectively (Prabowo, 2022). This change has led to media owners exploiting this opportunity to make a profit.

METHOD

In the research, the author employs a qualitative approach grounded in a critical paradigm. The methodology used is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) by Ruth Wodak (2001), which views texts (scripts) as having a history (Reisigl et al., 2009). Wodak's CDA method is known as the Discourse-Historical Method because, according to Wodak, discourse analysis must include the historical context regarding how discourse about a particular group or community is portrayed. Wodak assumes that the socio-psychological, cognitive, and linguistic dimensions in the process of text production must be taken into account (Titscher et al., 2000).

Data collection techniques were carried out through text analysis, in-depth interviews, observations, and literature studies. This research focused on the YouTube content "Bocah-Bocah Kosong" due to its quick attention and successful Golden Play Button award. The selected episodes are from Episode 1 to 30, except for Episode 24, which was removed by the WKWK Project by Genflix. The analysis includes episodes 1 to 30 as they were produced by the channel over four months. Interviews were conducted with four sources from the production team of the YouTube channel Bocah-Bocah Kosong. The study aimed to understand the popularity and engagement of the show on YouTube.

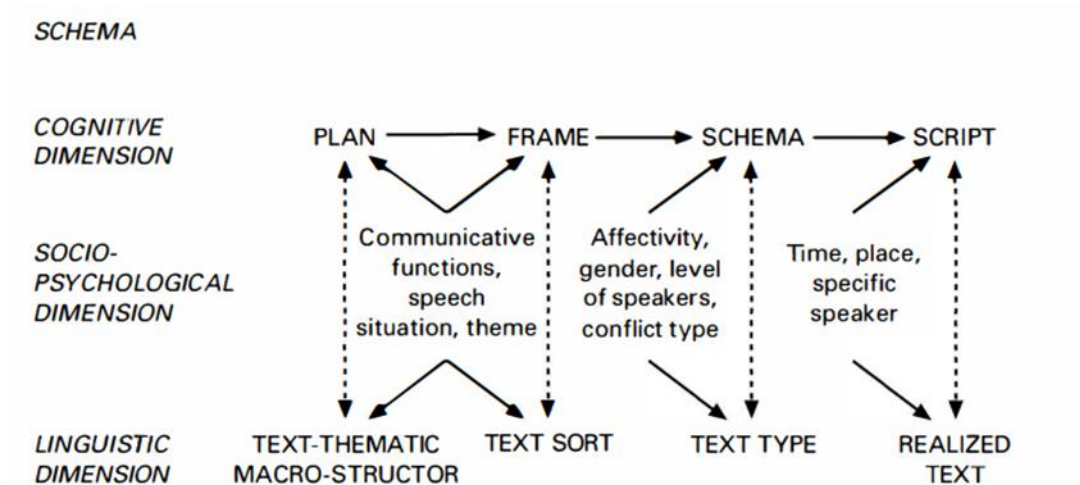


Figure 1. Ruth Wodak's CDA Model

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The WKWK Project by Genflix, in partnership with Berjaya Entertainment, has launched a YouTube program called "Bocah-Bocah Kosong," featuring young people with "hollow" characters. These characters are naive, innocent, blunt, honest, and annoying, often relying on physical appeal. The event, which gained attention, features eSports gamers Catheez, Vior, and Meyden, who are nicknamed Bocah-Bocah Kosong by social media users. The project launched the program with the slogan "the first program on earth and in the sky that unites Bocah-Bocah Kosong for us to fill."

Bocah-bocah Kosong, known for their "Kosong" character and gaming skills, are also known for their beauty and oriental appearance. Chateez, Vior, and Meyden are Chinese-born, with fair skin, slim bodies, and oriental facial features. They are chosen as talents due to their Asian appearance, aligning with the South Korean style popular in the entertainment industry. Interviews reveal that the use of Oriental women is intentional to attract the market and to capitalize on the rising popularity of "Cindo" or "Indonesian Chinese."

Innocence or Naivety in Bocah-Bocah Kosong Content

"Bocah-Bocah Kosong" portrays characters with innocence and naivety, displaying natural responses and a lack of sensitivity in discussing taboo topics. They are unaware of social, political, and legal issues, as seen in Vior's sensitive experience of sexually being aroused by an anime character and Ferdi Sambo's controversial status. Their innocence is evident in their uninhibited expressions and behaviors, making them endearing but naive.

The research shows that the early episodes of "Bocah-Bocah Kosong" showcase a natural innocence, especially in the talent Vior, who appears confused with minimal expressions and naive responses, influenced by cultural and generational differences and unknown aspects. Ahn & Lin (2019) suggest that industrial media uses naive girls to evoke affection and mitigate negative public sentiment (Ahn & Lin, 2019). Bocah-Bocah Kosong, which portrays innocent, pure, and childlike women, serves as an endearment and entertainment source for their audience.

The Foolishness in the Content of Bocah-Bocah Kosong

The content analysis of Bocah-Bocah Kosong reveals that the talent displayed stupidity, which is supported by the moderator and sources. Ignorance is attributed to a lack of general knowledge appropriate for one's age, duties, and position, as explained (Abia et al., 2023). Ignorance is also evident in the talent's use of non-credible sources like TikTok FYP, incorrect conclusions, and unreasonable responses. Talent also explains why they were unavailable on

multiple occasions. Educational content is also evident through the use of coarse curses by the moderator, speakers, and talent.

In the first episode, the talent learned about politics from TikTok FYP but struggled to name political figures. They also showed ignorance in general knowledge, such as confusing clotheswashers with dishwashers. In the second episode, they made incorrect conclusions, such as thinking sex makes reproduction healthy and touching someone's penis is a sign of love. In the third episode, they had unreasonable responses to drug discussions, such as suggesting healthy drugs and using a proxy for a thesis. They often responded with "I don't know" or "I don't understand" even after explanations in the fourth and fifth episodes. The moderator and speaker validated the talent's ignorance by using the jargon "Bocah-Bocah Kosong for Us to Fill," introducing the talent with "Here are the Bocah-Bocah Kosong, or rather, the foolish ones!" They tested the talent's intelligence by asking questions about their emptiness, such as "This shows how Kosong or smart you are" and "testing friends to see if they are filled." The talent was criticized for being foolish, dumb, and wasted, and the moderator and speaker questioned their comfort with their emptiness and the fact that there are still people more stupid than them.

Validation of stupidity is achieved through compliments like "not too stupid," "suddenly smart," and "wow, suddenly talkative." It's also validated by explaining the wrong conclusion, highlighting the need for caution when dealing with people who are red-handed. The text discusses a conversation where the moderator and speakers are mocked for their emptiness, comparing it to a horror movie. The moderator is mocked for being born premature and lacking a brain, while the speakers are mocked for their lack of knowledge and focus. The conversation is described as being heavy and filled with negativity, with the speaker expressing their own feelings of being empty. The conversation also highlights the negative effects of being empty, such as the speaker's small head and the speaker's lack of hope. The text concludes by expressing a fear of becoming empty like the moderator and the speakers.

Some statements validate stupidity by criticizing the talent's foolish responses, such as comparing the students to Bocah-Bocah Kosong, stating they lack references, and comparing their chatting to being empty. They also criticize the ministry for not educating these students, claiming they lack knowledge and are mocked for being empty. The statement suggests that there are empty spirits, and the ministry should educate these students, even though they are empty-headed. The message is that there are empty spirits, not just Bocah-Bocah Kosong. In several episodes, the talent explains their foolishness, such as Chateez feeling unappreciated by his parents and facing demands for perfect grades, leading to lazy study habits and cheating. Vior becomes empty due to contracting a virus during pregnancy due to his mother's frequent raw food consumption. Vior protests in Episode 28 about the guest star's guessing and lack of connection, stating that they need a script and brief to succeed. This information aligns with the interview with the source, which revealed that the talent needed a script and brief.

The content of Bocah-Bocah Kosong reveals an emptiness in terms of ignorance, with interviewees and moderators often expressing annoyance, sarcasm, and negative statements. The talent's responses need to align with shared knowledge, context, and common sense. The talent expressed reasons for their absence, but there was no support from the production team. The content contains coarse language that needs to be more educational, and the production team's support is lacking.

Beauty and Sexuality in Bocah-Bocah Kosong

The Bocah-Bocah Kosong analysis reveals that the moderator praises talent's beauty, but also engages in sexual content, including physical contact, slang terms, and suggestive expressions. This humor resembles Stand-up Comedy shows in England, disregarding survivors of sexual violence and human trafficking, and includes images of genitals without censorship (Carter, 2019). In content episodes, the source praises a talent's beauty, then uses it as an excuse

for sexual humor and physical contact. Examples include prolonged handshakes, gestures, and touching the talent's chin, head, and thigh. Sexual humor is verbal, using suggestive language and facial expressions. Discussions about sexual activities, reproductive organs, and body parts are common. Sexual humor in the text includes inappropriate sentences, such as "How about we all look at it together?", which refers to a discussion about the female reproductive organ, clitoris, and inappropriate terms like "raped," "pedophile," and "I sell them" without considering empathy for survivors of sexual violence and human trafficking. The use of the term "virgin" is also a joke.

Cognitive Analysis in the Content of Bocah-Bocah Kosong

The production team plans to capitalize on the trending term "Bocah-Bocah Kosong" by featuring Chinese talents Vior, Chateez, and Meyden, who already have a fanbase. They also chose "Cindo" as a trending term, based on market demand. The team uses a "riding the wave" strategy to plan their theme, ensuring a successful and profitable production. The production team used the term "Bocah-Bocah Kosong" to frame the theme, referencing the talent as "Empty" and highlighting their naivety (Mardiana et al., 2022). The term "bocah" is a pejorative term, reflecting a decline in meaning and low quality (Maulida, 2021). The term "Bocah" is associated with identity contestation, while "Kosong" refers to the property and zero in numbers (Ramadan & Mulyati, 2020). The team deliberately followed the market to gain support from labeling each talent as "Bocah-Bocah Kosong." They also created an opening song describing the talents and edited to emphasize their foolishness. At the Schema stage, the team used strategies like previews, disclaimers, and natural reactions from the talents, while briefing only the moderator and resource person. This manipulation aimed to indoctrinate the talent as an empty vessel.

The WKWK Project speaker selection process prioritizes ethics and knowledge to bridge cultural gaps. Budget availability influences production, with 4 episodes recorded to reduce costs. Emphasizing "emptiness," talent knowledge tests, and "emptypedia," content upload sequences maintain viewer flow. Episode 24 was removed due to adverse reactions. The production team exploits ignorance through show names, openings, and indoctrinating talent as Kosong vessels, similar to Aslati & Silawati's research that portrays women as second-class citizens, foolish, weak, and incapable of making decisions (Aslati & Silawati, 2018).

Socio-Psychological Analysis in the Content of Bocah-Bocah Kosong

The production team used a communicative function to develop characters like Vior, Chateez, and Meyden, showcasing their naive, blunt, and wild nature. The show "Bocah-Bocah Kosong" showcased their innocence through cultural clashes and lack of knowledge, highlighting their naivety as planned by the team. Gender influences the framing scheme in the entertainment industry, with the selection of beautiful and talented women becoming the standard. This is evident in countries like (Serttaş et al., 2023) and Pakistan (Raza & Abdul Hamid, 2023). Audiences prefer women in the entertainment industry, and orientalism portrays them as ready to serve, vulnerable, and controllable. This Western stereotype of Asia and the East as exotic sexual fantasy is referred to as the Chinese Doll (Lee, 2018)(Seo et al., 2020).

The source described the talent as beautiful and fragrant, aligning with the production team's framing scheme. However, the source used this to engage in sexual humor with physical contact, such as holding a long handshake, hugging, and pinching the talent's thigh. This behavior did not make the talent comfortable, but the production team highlighted it, indicating potential sexual exploitation.

The speaker's level impacts the interaction between talent and source, with moderators adjusting their approach to the situation. For instance, sexual jokes and discussions related to Gen Z can change expressions and intonations. The selection of resource persons based on their knowledge or ethics also influences talent attitudes. Conflict arises from differences in thoughts

and feelings, with talent using harsh words. Children can imitate profanity from YouTube videos, and Indonesian YouTubers use it to attract viewers, ensuring psychological well-being during shooting.

Linguistic Analysis in the Content of Bocah-Bocah Kosong

The production team uses a thematic macro structure text to convey plans and objectives, aiming to make the unusual ordinary. Each episode's description box includes a sentence like "Bocah-Bocah Kosong is the First Program on Earth & in the Sky that Unites Kosong Children for Us to Fill."

The term "First Program" suggests that the production team aims to present their innovative ideology within the entertainment sector.

The opening of each video features the following song: "In the Bocah-Bocah Kosong, there are Chateez, there are Meyden, also Vior, all Kosong (editing the head to indicate it is empty)."



Figure 2. Editing the exploitation of stupidity
(Source: <https://www.youtube.com/@wkwkprojectid>)

This editing already shows the production team's exploitation of the talent and indoctrinates the talent to behave foolishly. In fact, fundamentally, every human being has the right to enhance their capacity, including in academics. Additionally, the production team also made a disclaimer that:

The production team manipulates the Bocah-Bocah Kosong show, claiming it is for fun and not to offend or belittle individuals or institutions. They hide any displeasing behavior behind jokes, aiming to make the audience believe the show's stupidity is normal.

In its framing, the production team conducted a selection (sort) of verbal messages such as:

"Are we going to check if the Kosong spots have been filled?"

"I want to test with friends if they have been filled?" This is a cue card from the crew.

Then, it was edited to "empty meter."

The schema of this text is a form of exploiting ignorance carried out by the production team.



Figure 3. Editing Exploitation of Ignorance
(Source: <https://www.youtube.com/@wkwkprojectid>)

The production team uses beautiful talents who wear revealing clothes and frequently make sexual jokes to normalize content. They highlight these elements in the content of several episodes, as evidenced by the edits made by the team:

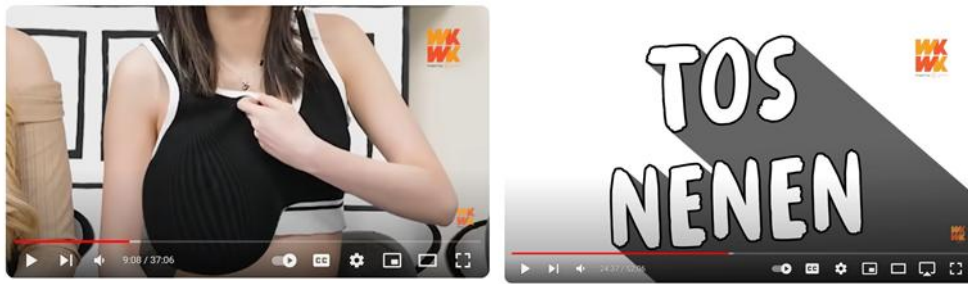


Figure 4. Editing eksploitasi seksualitas
(Source: <https://www.youtube.com/@wkwkprojectid>)

The production team excessively showcases unusual acts of sexual exploitation by the talent, similar to research by Toyyib et al. (2023), where content analysis on social media treats women as objects and exposes them in an exploitative manne (Toyyib et al., 2023). Manipulation occurs when talents receive criticism for their behavior and attire, with videos deliberately left to achieve high engagement. The production team tells the talent that they cannot control everyone, similar to Prabowo's (2022) research that media owners manipulate employees to maximize their roles (Prabowo, 2022). Although criticism can be addressed during the production process, the team deliberately left the criticism on YouTube to serve as a discussion space, potentially reaching a larger audience and ensuring a smooth content production process.

Irony in the Content of “Bocah-Bocah Kosong”

The show "Bocah-Bocah Kosong" exploits women's inferiority, manipulates naivety, and tolerates stereotypes through sexual humor. The parent company overseeing the show, a woman known for independence and success, should monitor the content produced by Genflix's WKWK Project to empower women better. Genflix allows the talent of Bocah-Bocah Kosong to be trapped in a false consciousness, unaware of the media's exploitation of their potential. This irony occurs within the world of capitalism, where profit becomes a significant factor. The production team overlooks the narrative that women should be empowered, despite the owner of the company supporting the WKWK Project being a successful empowered woman in education and career.

CONCLUSION

An analysis of "Bocah-Bocah Kosong" portrays innocence and foolishness, with themes of beauty and sexuality. The production team manipulates talent and audience through cognitive, socio-psychological, and linguistic dimensions to maximize profit. They shape characters based on innocence, ignorance, and sexuality, considering gender, speaker level, and video screening context. Linguistic analysis reveals manipulation through disclaimers to normalize humor and exploit ignorance and sexuality. Despite talent dissatisfaction, the team maintains the 'Kosong' character portrayal, contradicting the entertainment industry's image of independence and success.

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