

Teun A. Van Dijk Discourseanalysis of Gender Issues in the Samjin Company English Class Film

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Abstract

Gender discrimination is the difference in treatment between men and women in the fulfillment of their rights in social life. This research using qualitative descriptive method analyzes the text discourse structure contained in the Samjin Company English class film with the Slice of Life genre. It tells the story of three female employees who try to get promotions at their company in the midst of rampant gender discrimination at that time in 1995. Through the discourse analysis of Teun A Van Dijk, a model from several dimensions of analysis was found, including the text dimension, social cognition dimension and social context dimension. From the results of the study, it was found that discrimination is a very wrong thing in understanding gender equality. The director and screenwriter of this film, who likes to criticize gender issues in his work, agrees with these things.

Keywords: gender discrimination, equality gender, Van Dijk's discourse

1. Introduction

Technological developments globally make media and films play an important role in shaping people's perspectives. In Indonesia, entertainment media such as films are often used as a means of delivering messages about social issues that occur in Indonesia (Danesi, 2010). The evolution of mass communication has created a multitude of social media problems that previously seemed to evaporate into thin air. The issue of gender, which is always fascinating to discuss, is one of them. Women are frequently the aggrieved parties in terms of gender; therefore, gender discussions are always tied to the fulfillment of women's rights in social life. Since the beginning of time, there have been numerous movements demanding the abolition of gender discrimination, but recurring problems persist because the culture that develops in society frequently excludes the role of women. The presumption that women are the weaker party will eventually lead to violence against women as a result of this gender inequality. According to data from *Komnas Perempuan* alone, there were 299,911 incidents of violence against women in 2020. The emergence of outstanding films that have a feminist perspective is a sign of the emergence of a safe space in the Indonesian film industry. The presence of female directors in the film industry has also proven to provide space for diversity and freedom to work for women and minority groups (Pratista, 2008a).

Films have depicted stories ranging from gender inequality to women's heroism during its evolution. Combining high-quality narratives with increasingly sophisticated filmmaking techniques will pique the interest of a large audience and inspire them to learn from the film. Thus, we can spread the desire to eliminate all forms of gender discrimination through the medium of film. For this reason, the author is interested in researching films with a gender-related theme due to their relevance to many current events. The writer is interested in using "Samjin Company English Class," a South Korean film that discusses gender, as the primary source material for this study, among films from around the world that address the topic. This film is extremely popular and has won numerous awards, including the award for best film at the 57th Baeksang Arts Awards in 2021. This film was selected primarily because of its relevance to contemporary gender issues. This film will depict the harsh world of work, particularly for women, where they are frequently undervalued and treated arbitrarily. Throughout the 110 minutes of this film, the screenwriter and director, Lee Jong Pil, depicts the harsh realities of the working world, particularly for women. Even though the film is set in 1995, it's unfortunate that similar incidents still occur frequently today. This film wishes to convey the painful truth that the issue of gender inequality remains a frightening specter even today. The additional benefit of this film is that the screenwriter, Lee Jong Pil, not only provides us with painful facts and causes us to frown, but also provides us with

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conflict and elegant problem-solving .Because, in addition to discussing gender issues clearly, this film will also feature women as the primary protagonists in resolving conflicts (Eriyanto, 2018a).

On the basis of the preceding context, the problem can be stated as follows: First, how does the text illuminate the discourse on gender issues in the film Samjin Company English Class? Second, how does social cognition and social context influence the discourse on gender issues in the Samjin company English class film?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Film as a Means of Conveying Information

A film consists of two components: narrative elements and cinematic elements. Narrative elements relate to aspects of the film's plot or its central theme. Every narrative film must contain narrative elements, such as characters, problems, conflicts, settings, and times, among others. All of these elements comprise the narrative element overall. The primary components of a narrative are aspects of causality, elements of space and time, and elements of time and space (Pratista, 2008b). Film is a new medium for distributing entertainment to the general public, as well as for presenting stories, events, music, drama, comedies, and other technical offerings (Mc Quail, 1987).

2.2. Gender's Reality

According to Nicholas Abercrombie, Stephen Hill, and Bryan S. Turner's Dictionary of Sociology (Chaer, 1989), gender is a culturally and socially constructed aspect of an individual's life. Helen Tierney (Effendy, 1981) explains in the Women's Studies Encyclopedia that gender is a cultural concept that differentiates between men and women in terms of their roles, behavior, mentality, and emotional characteristics that develop in society.

2.3. Causes of Gender Inequality

According to (Sumbullah, 2008), the various manifestations of gender differences that lead to injustice are as follows:

a. Marginalization

Although not all instances of women's marginalization are the result of gender inequality. However, the form of marginalization caused by gender differences is at issue here. This difference in gender is the result of several differences in type and form, location, time, and the mechanism underlying the marginalization of women.

b. Subordination

The subordination of women results from sexist attitudes towards them. The assumption that women are emotional or irrational contributes to attitudes that place women in unimportant roles. So that the position of women is perceived as unsuitable for leadership or leadership.

c. Stereotype

A stereotype is a negative label or designation of a particular group or gender. As a result of this stereotype, discrimination and other wrongdoings frequently occur. One of the forms of this stereotype, from a gender perspective. There are numerous forms of societal stereotypes that are generally associated with women. This makes it difficult, restricting, impoverishing, and harmful for women.

d. Violence

As a result of gender differences, violence is an invasion (assault) or attack on the physical, as well as the mental integration of a person's psychology, perpetrated against a specific gender, typically women. Violent acts such as rape and beatings range to more subtle forms. For example, sexual harassment (sexual harassment).

e. Workload

As the gender role of women in the larger community is to manage the household, many women shoulder a greater share of domestic responsibilities than men. In general, women are nurturing and conscientious, making them unsuitable as household heads. In this case, all household chores fall under the responsibility of women.

3. Teun A. Van Dijk's Discourse Analysis

In reviewing the script/film script, the Teun Van Dijk model is utilized in this study. Van Dijk's model is frequently referred to as "Social Perception." According to Van Dijk, discourse research is not limited to the study of texts, as

texts are the result of a creation process that must also be considered. Here, we must understand how a text is constructed in order to understand why it can be that way. Van Dijk perceives a discourse with multiple designs and levels; he divides it into three levels, but they are all interconnected and mutually supportive (Eriyanto, 2018b).

A. Macro Structure

The first level is the Macro structure, and what is considered is thematic, particularly in light of what the film Samjin Company English Class asserts. Examining the subject of a text reveals the text's macro structure, which is the text's major/general meaning. This point is described as the macro structure of a discourse by Van Dijk. From there, we can discern the steps the communicator took to resolve the issue. This conversation is not only about the subject matter, but also a particular aspect of an event. A film's subject must be apparent from its title and premise.

1). Thematic

Thematic refers to the description of the entire text or film script, as well as its basis, synopsis, or central idea. The topic describes what a screenwriter must convey within a film. The topic reveals the primary information or essence of the message that the author wishes to convey, as well as the dominant, focused, and most significant concept of a film's substance.

B. Superstructure (Schematic)

The superstructure is the following level. What is observed is that the schematic is the framework of a text, the arrangement of the text's construction and speech components. As much as possible, a film or text should have a plan or plot from the beginning. The plot illustrates how text fragments are arranged and asked to form interconnected meanings.

C. Micro Structure

The third level is the macro structure, while the micro structure is the meaning of discourse, which can be observed via four factors: semantics, syntax, stylistics, and rhetoric.

1) Semantics

The general understanding of semantics is a linguistic discipline that investigates the lexical and grammatical meanings of a language. In Van Dijk's scheme, semantics (meaning) is classified as local meanings, i.e., meanings that arise from relationships between sentences, relationships between propositions that construct particular meanings in the text structure.

2) Syntax

Syntax, a term derived from the Greek language (sun means with and tattei means put), refers to the arrangement of words into groups of words or sentences. According to Ramlan, syntax is a subfield of linguistics that examines the inner workings of discourse, sentences, clauses, and phrases.

3) Stylistic

The focus of stylistic consideration is style, which is the manner in which a writer uses language to express his point. One can refer to style as a language style. There are various styles of language, including the spoken and written varieties, as well as the non-literary and literary varieties, because language style is a way of employing language in particular contexts by particular individuals and for particular purposes.

4) Retorics

Here, rhetorical strategy refers to the manner in which someone speaks or writes. For instance, by using excessive (hyperbolic) or lengthy language. The persuasive function of rhetoric is closely related to how the message is communicated to the public.

3. Methodology

This study will employ a qualitative descriptive research method based on Teun A. Van Dijk's discourse analysis technique. Qualitative descriptive analysis is a method for describing the meaning of collected data by observing and recording as many facets of the situation under study as possible in order to obtain a general and comprehensive picture of the actual situation. According to Milly and Hubberman, the purpose of this descriptive is to provide a systematic, factual, and accurate description of the relationship between the investigated phenomena and the facts (Sugiyono, 2013)

According to (Eriyanto, 2018b), critical discourse analysis is not focused on the constellation of forces that occur during the process of meaning production and reproduction. Instead, language is viewed as a representation that shapes particular subjects, discourse themes, and strategies within them. Furthermore, discourse recognizes that language is always involved in power relations, particularly in the formation of subjects and various societal representational actions. This study's data sources are divided into two categories:

Primary Data

This study will collect data through observation, with the author observing the development of text discourse in the Samjin Company English Class film.

Secondary Data

Researchers obtain secondary data from a variety of sources, including journals, books, and other studies. It is hoped that this will aid and provide researchers with guidelines and references when conducting observations.

4. Result and Discussion

The essence of van Dijk's analysis is unifying the three dimensions of discourse (text, social cognition, and social context). These three dimensions are an integral part of van Dijk's analysis and are considered concurrently (Eriyanto, 2018b)

A. Macro Structure

1). Discrimination Against Women in Workplace

JaYeong, Yoona, and Boram have worked for eight years at the Samjin company, and their proficiency with technology surpasses that of their manager. However, because they graduated from high school, they have been demoted to coffee makers rather than being promoted. Each morning, errands are assigned to higher-ranking employees. However, their skill is far superior to that of the manager. Similarly, Mrs. Kim, who quit her job after being under constant pressure from her supervisor due to her pregnancy, resigned. Women are viewed as only problematic at work due to the fact that their work productivity declines after marriage or pregnancy (Danesi, 2012).

Despite the injustices they face, they continue to work as hard as they can in their new occupation, which is English language study. Beginning a new chapter of the film is a strange occurrence involving the company's waste disposal that causes many villagers near the dump to develop skin diseases. JaYeong, who witnessed this waste disposal by accident, invites Yoona and Boora to investigate this incident.

On the way to their place of business, the company's lower-class female employees attempted to have them disregarded and demeaned because they were women. They can accomplish anything with the assistance of the ladies from Samjin's company English class. Women can also do everything, fight discrimination, and become heroes in their own stories, even if they don't do big things that can affect the company's existence (Mosse, 2015). This film proves that women can do everything and should be given equal status in social life by having them become superheroes for themselves. Jae Yeong wants to be a great researcher, while Bora wants to be a great accountant; they simply want to be treated fairly in the workplace based on their abilities.

B. Superstructure (Schematics)

1). Main Story

The plot of the 1995 film Samjin Company English class revolves around three female employees, JaYeong, Yoona, and Bora. They have worked at the company for eight years but have never been promoted. Even though they are more talented than the manager, they are limited to making coffee and running errands every day. In order to be promoted, they must earn a minimum IELTS score of 600, so they attend classes at a facility provided by their employer. Instead of focusing on their studies, they discover a problem with how their company disposes of toxic waste, and the women from Samjin's English class become heroes for the villagers by uncovering this case.

2). Plot

a. First Half

The story's author describes the reality of the working world in 1995 in an extraordinary manner. He described how technology was evolving at the time. In this opening chapter, the author introduces the three main characters and their respective histories. The author uses the three main female characters in this film as a lens through which to view the reality of the working world at the time. They must accept discrimination and sexism as part of their daily diet. These

three women desired nothing more than an immediate promotion and an escape from their pitiful situation. The company also has a policy requiring a score of 600 on the IELTS exam for promotion. For this reason, they also attend the English class provided by their company, Samjin English.

b. Conflict

This film's conflict begins when JaYeong's superiors ask him to meet with the villagers to discuss the issue of waste disposal, which is causing many villagers to develop skin diseases. Then, out of pity, he went to the waste disposal site, where he was astounded by the rapid flow of wastewater from the drain hole. He was thereafter determined to discover this. JaYeong also met with his friends to discuss this matter, but his friends naturally declined. Of course, this is because they are only low-level employees, but they are also frequently undervalued because they are only high school-educated women. Herein lies the originality of this film; the author employs a very elegant technique to make the conflict more tangible (Tinarkubo, 2009). By discussing their aspirations, JaYeong is able to boost his friends' spirits. One day, Ja-yeong sent a sample of the wastewater he had collected to a researcher he knew in order to determine its phenol content. Upon discovering that the phenol content in the wastewater was extremely high, he attempted to identify the mastermind behind the crime. What transpired next, however, was a foregone conclusion; the company employees who smelled their actions began to take action (Hutomo & dkk, 2016).

c. Resolution

This film's resolution chapter begins when boram discovers new information, it turns out that the data on phenol levels in wastewater has been falsified the entire time, and the mastermind is an experienced employee who is also Mr. Bora's close colleague at work. He finally receives vital information from Mr. Bong, namely that the perpetrator is Billy Park CEO Di Samjin; JaYeong and Yoona also discover this after seeing Mr. Ahn at the hotel with Billy Park. They also attempted to report their findings to the media, but the company discovered their actions and fired and sued them before Mr. Bong passed away from cancer. Nonetheless, they are now expelled from the organization. The narrative does not end here.

Together with the women from Samjin's English class, they determine the primary motive. According to Billy Park, Billy Park has a relationship with the Global Company, which acquired the targeted company by purchasing shares through the targeted company. Billy's job is to lower Samjin's company's stock price so that Global Company can acquire it at a discount. In the end, they went to the chairman and attempted to thwart the acquisition by convincing the owners of small stakes to participate, and they were successful. After achieving high scores on the TOEIC exam and receiving compensation from the Samjin company for the disposal of Phenol waste, the characters are finally able to advance in the film's conclusion.

3). Storyline

a. Scene

The Samjin Company English Class film consists of 87 scenes, all of which are taken from different places and move around.

b. Sequence

The film The Samjin Company English Class consists of five scenes or sequences. The first scene, which is the beginning of the story, introduces the three main characters Jayeong, Yoona, and Bora and describes their never-ending struggle at work. The second scene depicts the three main characters doing their best at work and also learning English, as well as various forms of workplace discrimination based on gender. In the third scene, Ja-yeong observes the disposal of phenol waste and realizes that residents of Yang are afflicted with dangerous diseases. He then invites his friends to reveal this issue. This fourth scene depicts the investigation conducted by the three extraordinary women and the women in Samjin's English class to identify the mastermind behind the crime. JaYeong, Yoona, Bora, and the girls from Samjin's English class discover this and thwart the acquisition of the company they work for in the fifth and final scene of the story. In this phase, it is also described that the villagers receive promotions and monetary compensation.

c. Opening Scene

The screenwriter of this film chose a classic way to open the film by introducing the three main characters by listening to their practice in Samjin's English class.

d. Problem Solving

This film's anticlimax occurs when JaYeong, Yoona, and Bora reveal the levels of phenol in the waste, despite being expelled from the company and being held accountable by Tuan Bong. After uniting with the ladies of Samjin's English class, they report their findings to Samjin's superiors and thwart the acquisition.

e. Ending Scene

In the closing scene of this film, it is depicted that the three main characters get promoted after passing the TOEIC exam and are placed in the positions they want and get compensation for the villagers.

C. Micro Structure

1). Semantic

a. Context

The context determines the direction of the view. The setting can also be used to determine the significance of an event. By analyzing the presented context, we can determine the concealed intentions to be expressed (Eriyanto, 2008). Based on this definition, the film Samjin English Company Class sought from the outset to depict the reality of the discriminatory world of work. In this instance, the setting of the film "Samjin Company English Class" conveys the notion that the workplace is a hostile environment for women due to discrimination and unequal rights.

Scene 10 of this film depicts the setting:

Yoona shared the story of Miss Kim, who was a great employee, but whose work life was disrupted when she became pregnant. Ultimately, Miss Kim resigned due to pressure from her boss, who believed that her training was in vain because she is now pregnant. Yoona further stated that Miss Kim is their future, who will be discarded after marriage and pregnancy because she will no longer be as productive at work.

b. Details

Details constitute a second component of semantics. The film Samjin Company English Class emphasizes detail and length to create a certain image for the three main characters. JaYeong is portrayed as a woman who always wants to know many things and is courageous, as shown when she dares to reveal the case of her company's factory waste, while Yoona is portrayed as a woman. The realistic but caring character is depicted in a scene where he always provides solutions, despite often discouraging his friends, whereas Boram, a timid character with lofty ambitions, is described as having extraordinary accounting skills and always being resourceful in finding solutions.

c. Meanings

In addition, intent is discussed in this section. Similar to the detail element is the intent element. As shown in scene 67, the element of intent to view information that benefits communicators will be described explicitly and clearly:

JaYeong was disheartened after he was expelled from the company for attempting to identify the mastermind behind the disposal of Phenol waste. He walked out of the company with a listless expression and said his friends had gone too far because they only wanted to learn the language. England for promotion, but forgot about other matters, JaYeong once assisted Yoona when her supervisor was harassing her. Jayeong brought Boram to the hospital after he fell off the fence, so he won't give up because if someone sharpens a sword, it must be used to cut something.

2). Syntax

a. Koherence

Coherence is the congruence of a text's words and sentences. Coherence is a discourse element that is used to determine whether or not someone is using a discourse or issue to explain a fact or event.

Scene 51 of the film Samjin Company depicts an English class:

JaYeong visits the home of one of the villagers impacted by the waste and meets a young girl who explains that her father requires immediate surgery but she lacks the funds and can do nothing about it.

b. Denials

Denial is a type of discourse that describes how a text conceals the meaning it intends to convey implicitly, as implied in scene 53:

In the car After JaYeong and Mr. Cho visited the villagers, Mr. Cho informed JaYeong that their efforts had been fruitful, but JaYeong denied it and stated that the Phenol waste problem had not been resolved.

3). Stylistic

a. Lexicon

Lexicon refers to a person's choice of words in order to express particular attitudes and ideologies shown in the sixty-fifth scene:

JaYeong is exiled from the room because his attempts to submit his findings to the media are unsuccessful. Mr. Ahn then arrives and forbids Mr. Cho from speaking with JaYeong because he may do other crazy things.

4). Rhetoric

a. Graphic

It is a component of analyzing what one observes from film dialogue and film scripts. In contrast, scene 27 of the film emphasizes the desire of the three main characters to realize their dreams.

JaYeong, Yoona, and Boram are gathered somewhere, and JaYeong declares aloud that he doesn't just want to be a coffee maker, cleaning and filing documents every day; he also wants to conduct research on whether FCB epoxy adhesive is superior to Phenol, and Boram wants to change the accounting system to prevent fraudulent receipts.

b. Metaphore

Metaphors are spices or figurative language used in a film to make it more interesting and understandable; however, this film does use figurative language in scene 67:

When sharpening a sword, JaYeong tells his friends, one must cut something.

Social Cognition in Samjin Company English Class Movie

The advantage of Teun A. Van Dijk's discourse analysis is that it not only focuses on the text but also incorporates social cognition, namely the screenwriter's perspective, in this case Lee Jong Pil. In his career as a screenwriter and director, Lee Jong Pil has produced three films, two of which criticize the rights of women in social life. As in his previous films *Sound Of The Flower*, which depicts the struggle of the first female singer in the Joseon era, and *Samjin Company English Class*, which examines the significance of gender equality in the workplace and in society, the film directed by Lee Jong Pil is distinguished by its frequent use of bold and elegant dialogue and by its portrayal of women as the protagonists of the ITU story. Films directed by Lee Jong Pil also always dare to portray something different from the stereotypes that develop in society. One example, in the film *The Sound of Flower*, Lee Jong Pil, opposes the stereotype that women cannot be singers, because at that time, women only had to be good servants to their husbands and raise children. Even now, Lee Jong Pil has countered the stereotype that has developed since ancient times by making the main character in the film a gentle woman but in her heart there is a desire to become a great singer. The same thing is also described by Lee Jong Pil in the film *Samjin Company English Class*, the three main characters are presented with three different characters, Ja Yeong with her rational and conscientious character, Yoona with her brave character, and Bora with her character who is a little shy but has the ability the strong one. Through these three characters, Lee Jong Pil brings the audience to enjoy the elegant resistance of these three women in the midst of limitations. In the end, this film was not only made by chance, but director Lee Jong Pil did often insert social issues, especially gender in his films

Social Context in Samjin Company English Class Movie

In the social context, the external factors that influenced the production of the film are discussed, or, in a sense, the social circumstances that prompted the production of this film. In this instance, the central themes of this film are gender discrimination, marginalization, and the significance of gender equality. Even though the film is set in 1995, the events depicted in it continue to occur in the present day, where women are frequently underestimated despite having the same or even greater abilities than men. Films directed by Lee Jong Pil also always dare to portray something different from the stereotypes that develop in society. One example, in the film *The Sound of Flower*, Lee Jong Pil, opposes the stereotype that women cannot be singers, because at that time, women only had to be good servants to their husbands and raise children. Even now, Lee Jong Pil has countered the stereotype that has developed since ancient times by making the main character in the film a gentle woman but in her heart there is a desire to become a great singer. The same thing is also described by Lee Jong Pil in the film *Samjin Company English Class*, the three main characters are presented with three different characters, Ja Yeong with her rational and conscientious character, Yoona with her brave character, and Bora with her character who is a little shy but has the ability. the strong one. Through these three characters, Lee Jong Pil brings the audience to enjoy the elegant resistance of these three women in the midst of

limitations. In the end, this film was not only made by chance, but director Lee Jong Pil did often insert social issues, especially gender in his films (Danesi, 2012).

5. Conclusion

Based on the research presented above, it is possible to draw the following conclusions: First, the gender discourse presented in this film is so fresh and relevant because it hits the mark and is still relevant today, where gender discrimination, particularly in the workplace, is still prevalent. This film's emphasis on gender equality, where women can also be the heroes of their own stories, must be emphasized. Second, the social sensitivity of the screenwriter, which makes this film replete with creative touches that seem to affect all levels of society, where women must be given equal rights in social life and all forms of gender discrimination and marginalization must be eradicated immediately from the face of the earth. Therefore, this is certainly very sad because the stereotypes that develop in society support this to happen, for one small example, in the work environment, married women will tend to find it difficult to get a job in the office, even though they have the ability, but the assumption that married women will be less productive will make many companies think twice before making a decision. In terms of gender, although it is difficult, we must admit that discrimination still often occurs in social life. Women are also certainly reliable or even better than men, so let them all compete in a healthy way. In the end, there is one conclusion, that things that are ingrained are indeed difficult to change, but if they continue to be tried and removed little by little from the face of the earth. That way, the number of violence against women can also be reduced, because there is mutual respect between genders, and by providing equal opportunities for everyone will make the world of work and the world as a whole a better place to live for everyone.

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