

Interpretation of Symbols in Tokopedia's Advertisement "Start Family Kejar Jodoh"

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Abstract—This study aims to identify and interpret the symbols contained in Tokopedia advertisement "Start Family Kejar Jodoh". This study used a qualitative descriptive technique using the method analysis semiotic of John Fiske's and postcolonial Edward Said. The results of this study indicate that the symbols in the advertisement have an implicit meaning about the existence of power relations in Orientalism Edward Said, namely: political power in the form of mental occupation, intellectual power which considers eastern people less intellectual and civilized, cultural power in the form of cultural imitation in appearance and lifestyle, as well as moral power that the characters who symbolize the West have the right to determine what is good and not good for the East to do. This constructs the dominance of the western nation over the eastern nation which led to the concept of hegemony, namely the concept of thinking which assumes that the western nation is better than the eastern nation.

Keywords— *semiotic, postcolonial, hegemony, Tokopedia advertisement.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Advancing and developing technology has a huge impact on human life. People can do many things through the internet including searching for information, getting entertainment, and shopping. No need to go to the market or shop, one can shop from home by opening an online store application. Simply by selecting the desired item and making a transfer payment, the item will arrive at home. One application that offers shopping convenience is tokopedia.

Tokopedia is one of the online shopping centers in Indonesia that carries the business marketplace model [1]. Tokopedia application allows every individual, small shop, and big brand to open and manage online stores. To attract people to shop at Tokopedia, some advertisements are made as attractive as possible with certain themes. One of the interesting ads to watch is the advertisement for *Start Family Kejar Jodoh*. Besides giving a funny impression, there are several things that are implied in this ad. In the initial observation, this advertisement was considered interesting enough to be studied using postcolonial theory, one of which was a character in the advertisement. The use of beautiful white-skinned and black-skinned men from Eastern Indonesia gave the impression that there was something implicit in the advertisement, namely the existence of an orientalism in advertising. As stated by Said

[4], the old form of orientalism that uses discourse is no longer used or considered obsolete. Orientalism forms buildings with new styles that are present during society. If in the past Orientalism only appeared in the form of scientific books and imaginative notes, now Orientalism shifted into more modern forms, such as films, posters, news, and perhaps through the form of advertisements. Tokopedia's advertising *Start Family Kejar Jodoh* is interesting to study both in terms of audio and visuals that can be interpreted using the semiotic approach to find the meaning of symbols that can uncover various facts behind it and see it with postcolonial studies.

The rest of this paper is organized as follow: Section II describes the theoretical background. Section III describes the proposed research method. Section IV describes the research results and following by discussion. Finally, Section V concludes this work.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Fiske [2] mentioned that semiotics is a study of the signs and meanings of the sign system, the knowledge of how meaning in media texts. Signs that can be used in the program can be categorized into three levels, as follows.

- a. Reality Level, the first level of the social code includes appearance, costume, makeup, environment, behavior, speech style, body language, and expression.
- b. Level of Represents, the codes included technical codes, such as cameras, lighting, editing, music, and sound.
- c. Level of ideology, acceptance of social relations and existing ideological codes, such as individualism, race, patriarchy, class, materialism, capitalism and communism.

Faruk [3] states that postcolonial theory is a set of ideas that direct research attention to the relationship between culture and imperialism. The imperialism itself is defined as the practice, theory and attitude of a metropolitan center that controls a region far from colonialism, namely the construction of settlements in far-off regions, as one consequence that is almost always necessary. One of the substances of postcolonial theory that can be put forward as Said [4] mentioned that this theory is more related to the lawsuit against Western orientalism which has had the authority empire to display, give identity, conquer, colonize, and even oppress the East.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

This study is a qualitative descriptive study. Using descriptive data of written or oral words, symbols and observable behavior. The object of research using the Tokopedia television advertisement is *Start Family Kejar Jodoh* for 54 seconds. The data obtained through primary data (Tokopedia television advertisement video *Start Family Kejar Jodoh*) from YouTube and secondary data (data relating to postcolonial theory, obtained from library sources, literature, reports, and related documentation). In qualitative research, data analysis is usually used for descriptions and themes by using text analysis and interpreting the greater meaning of the findings [5]. The data obtained will be analyzed using Fiske's semiotic theory [2] and Said's postcolonial theory [4].

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Results

This research attempts to identify and interpret the symbols contained in Tokopedia advertisement "Start Family Kejar Jodoh". The results of this study indicate that the symbols in the advertisement have an implicit meaning about the existence of power relations in Orientalism. The results of the research are displayed in table form according to the research problems that have been set. (see in Table I)

TABLE I DESCRIPTION OF INTERPRETATION OF SYMBOLS IN TOKOPEDIA'S ADVERTISEMENT "START FAMILY KEJAR JODOH"

No	Aspect	Point
1	Reality and Representation Advertising Analysis (John Fiske's semiotic theory [2])	Scene 1-8
2	Advertising postcolonial Analysis (Said's postcolonial theory [4])	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political Power • Intellectual Power (Scenes 1, 2, 4 and 7) • Cultural Power (Scenes 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8) • Moral Power • The concept of hegemony

B. Discussion

This sub-section presents the discussion.

Reality and Representation Advertising Analysis

Scene 1

Tokopedia's slogan appeared "Semua dimulai tokopedia" on the main screen's cellphone screen and two of his friends who sat casually while enjoying fried foods, tea, and playing guitar on the terrace of the house with a beach view. The three men have the physical appearance of a typical Melanesian, namely black, small stature, and curly hair, like the characteristics of eastern Indonesians. They wear T-shirts and shorts. All three look like slackers who spend time just sitting back, playing guitar, and playing cellphones. The main character complained about the

contents of Tokopedia's slogan to his two friends, "Katanya samua? Semua ini tak ada yang kenal Kaka Sabrina?"



Scene 2

Sabrina was dancing on the beach accompanied by reggae music by three men who played guitar, jimbe, and ukulele. The three men have a black physical appearance using clothes that symbolize rasta, red, yellow, and green. Sabrina is described as having a pretty face, white skin, sharp nose, blond hair, and has a proportional body shape. When viewed from its characteristics, this woman is not like a native Indonesian woman who generally has brown skin, black hair, and short. Sabrina was identified as a female Caucasian or European. Sabrina's clothes are white flower-patterned sleeveless dresses. A sentence appears "Nikah dengan kaka Sabrina".

The main character's friend realizes the main character's reverie, but the main character is angry and says, "Tarada hasilnya!", while showing an image on the cellphone screen that shows search results cannot be found. The main character's friend answers, "Tidak semua yang kau cari cara dapatnya cuma satu kali." Take a cellphone and do a search "Beli pomade!"



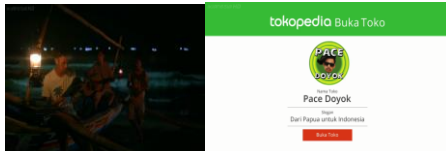
Scene 3

After buying and using pomade, the main character feels confident and handsome because he can change his curly hairstyle into a variety of contemporary hairstyles, such as the middle cleavage, mandarin mohawk, punk mohawk, and side swept shaggy. While the main character's style says words "Hei keren juga ni, bisa jadi bisnis!". Narrator: "Beli buku cara bikin pomade." During this scene, the camera focuses on the male main character, the face is taken by zooming in. The music scene in the scene uses a typical song like rock n roll which makes the atmosphere full of enthusiasm.



Scene 4

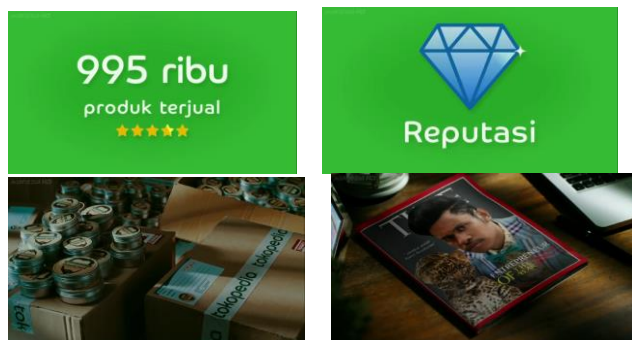
The main character is reading the pomade-making book he got from Tokopedia. Although the atmosphere of the beach is dark, he still eagerly reads while the two main character friends look engrossed in playing the guitar while singing next to the main character. They wear T-shirts and shorts. In this scene, the character succeeded in making a pomade and opening a shop in Tokopedia named Pace Doyok with a slogan from Papua for Indonesia. The name Pace Doyok is a play on the name of one of the hair growing oil entrepreneurs from Malaysia, Wak Doyok. Narator: "Buka toko"



Scene 5

Scene 5 shows a description of business progress that is owned by the main male figure. The display of the words 995 thousand products were sold with the appearance of 5 star symbols, indicating that the Pace Doyok store had grown rapidly to be able to sell almost a number of products through Tokopedia. This can be seen in the figure that Pace Doyok's products are in cardboard boxes that are ready to be marketed through the Tokopedia application. The rapid growth of the main character pomade made him a brilliant and very well-known person who appeared in one of the well-known Entrepreneur of the Year 2017 magazine posing with a leopard in Burberry's turquoise pattern suit, brand of one of England's classy fashion houses. complete with a bow tie. The main character also looks more cool with an undercut haircut.

Narator: "Jualan pomade"
 "Dapat reputasi"
 "Jadi juragan pomade"
 "Lalu lamar Sabrina!"



Scene 6

The physical appearance that was performed was the main male figure who was a black Melanesian race man wearing glasses and a vintage-style dress that combined a T-shirt with the words and symbols i love you with a brown scarf on the neck, toad strap and throwing a yellow suit on his shoulder. In addition, the main character also wears a gold bracelet in the right hand. The setting shows Sabrina's

house and the scene takes place on the doorstep of the house. Sabrina, who is a beautiful woman with a European face, wears a white flower-patterned dress. Her blonde hair is tied very gracefully. The setting shows Sabrina's house and the scene takes place at the door of the house. Sabrina wore a flowery white dress. Her expression showed anger, she did not like the main character who came to propose and immediately closed the door. The main character looks very disappointed and sad, symbolized by the heart on the shirt split apart.



Scene 7

This scene illustrates the disappointment of the main character who was sad because even though he was rich but was still rejected by Sabrina. He wondered what caused him to be rejected "Kok masih gagal?" Finally the question was answered, when he raised his hand the two friends next to him fainted and finally the main character realized that his body smelled because he rarely bathed (narator: "Bayar air!"). The display of water flowing from the shower shows that the water bill problem has been resolved through tokopedia.

Narator: "Berjuang untuk yang kamu inginkan dimulai dari tokopedia, semua dimulai dari tokopedia"



Scene 8

The main character is wearing a green suit with a yellow shirt and bow tie. He wore sunglasses and stood beside the car. He was on date with Sabrina who was wearing a white knee-length floral dress. They both look happy. Behind them were three black men who could be inferred from the same race as the main male character playing a musical instrument as the background sound. They hold their respective musical instruments, namely guitar, jimbe, and

ukulele. The clothes they use are green, yellow, and red which signal the Rasta symbol.

Advertising Postcolonial Analysis

The storyline of the Tokopedia television advertisement *Starts Family Kejar Jodoh* puts foreign women in this advertisement more dominant and more powerful than Indonesian men. For the sake of getting love from the woman, the man is willing to do anything. Willing to change his original identity by doing various forms of imitation of western culture ranging from hairstyles, how to dress, and even lifestyle. The position of the Indonesian people represented by indigenous male actors in this advertisement seemed lower than the western nation represented by foreign women showing the existence of postcolonial ideology in this advertisement. In addition, the title of the advertisement that uses English code switching also shows the intentions that suggest that the use of foreign languages and all forms of things that are related to the western world are better and have a higher sense of value than the original Indonesian culture. Referring to the postcolonial theory (orientalism) according to Said [4], this advertisement contained a power relation in orientalism. Said in [4] said there were four power relations that lived in orientalism, namely: political, intellectual, cultural, and moral. The description of the research results is as follows.

a. Political Power

The purpose of political power is to rebuild western imperialism and colonialism towards the east. In this context, what is meant by imperialism and colonialism is not in physical form, but "colonization" in forms that are not realized by the east. For example, placing the eastern nation as a 'mockery' of westerners wrapped in comedy. This advertisement can be said to be successful in building western power and destroying "mental" east. In this advertisement indirectly shows the existence of a mental form of colonization. The main male character was infatuated to the woman and willing to do anything to get her. This shows that there is implicitly a form of worship of the western world. The orientation of male main character's thoughts as if making the west as a form of worship. Everything from the west is better and must be achieved.

b. Intellectual Power

The depiction of scenes 1, 2, 4 and 7 is a form of ridicule for the Indonesian people. In scenes 1 and 2 there were three black people sitting casually on a house terrace. This illustrator seems to imply that this Eastern nation is lazy people who can only spend time just talking, singing, and surfing in cyberspace and fantasizing about the beautiful things in his life. The main character also seems to be technology stuttering and too innocent and stupid in addressing information. He believed from the slogan "*Semua Berawal dari Tokopedia*" everything can be obtained easily even though to get something needs effort.

In scene 4, there was a ridicule for the Indonesian people. This can be seen in the depiction of the nighttime atmosphere on the beach. The background looks very dark with dimly lit petromax lights. This seems to ridicule the

Indonesian people who are considered still primitive and not yet developed because there are still areas that have not used electricity as lighting. In addition, the two main characters who were also present were also shown singing while playing guitar. This shows again that Indonesians prefer to spend time playing rather than learning or doing other activities that are more useful.

In scenes 7 and 8, it seems very clear a ridicule for the male main character. Despite being a wealthy person, his love is still rejected because of body odor. The male main character who is a Melanesian characterized by black skin and curly hair, is described as a dirty and dirty person. It also seems to confirm that white people (Mediterranean Caucasoid) are better than those who are black.

c. Cultural Power

Cultural power in this advertisement indicates that the east starts 'taking' western aesthetics or begins to experience westernization. Many cultural powers appear in this ad. Almost in every scene raises the existence of western cultural power. This can be seen in scenes 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8.

In scene 2 shows the figure of Sabrina dancing with three people with reggae music background. Reggae music is not Indonesian original music. This music is one of the music popularized by Bob Marley. Besides that, the clothes used by music players are symbols of the rastafarians, such as clothes, hats, and musical instruments that use a combination of green, yellow and red.

In scenes 4 and 5, the main male characters change their hair styles in various styles. The hairstyle that is widely used in this scene is the Mohawk style. Mohawk hairstyle comes from America and is often associated with resident hair in the Mohawk valley in the northern part of New York City [6]. This haircut is often used as an icon of the punk community in the world. In scenes 5, 6, and 9 things that appear in addition to the use of westernized hair styles can also be analyzed from the dress style of the male main character. This shows a cultural imitation.

d. Moral Power

The purpose of moral power is the west to determine what is good and not good to do by the east. This is evident in how the main female characters rule men indirectly. This shows that as an eastern nation it takes hard effort to be able to align themselves with the western nations. The native male actor is willing to do many things in order to get a woman. He must be able to change his poor life first into a great and wealthy person who can only get the woman. This proves that the western nation has a higher degree than the eastern nation.

e. The concept of hegemony

In the Tokopedia advertisement, "Start Family Kejar Jodoh" also contains the strength and coercion of the western nation towards the east. This coercion can be seen from the efforts of the main male character who is willing to change his identity to become a westernized human being ranging from how to dress, hair style, and changes in social status that make the main character become a hedonist and

worship western culture. The conception of gender in orientalism in indigenous figures (male main characters and supporting role figures) in this advertisement also appears in the way of dress. They wore T-shirts and shorts which suggested as a middle to lower class society. In fact, after the main character has moved a high social status, still the way to dress is still very classy. The combination of the color of clothing and the hairstyle that was forced to resemble western culture became a mockery. That, the main character still has a low taste in dress, cannot mix and match good fashion with the hairdo. This shows that even though the main character's social status has gone up, the bad habits remain in him.

In addition, the conception of white people also appears in this ad. Said stated that human skin is not only a reality, but also an idea [7]. It involves a position that can be based on the "white" and "non-white" world views. Not only that, being a white human being means being a human who has to speak in a certain way, behave with certain rules, and even do certain things to ignore other things. This can be seen from how the main character is willing to take various actions and efforts to get a woman to his idol. He was willing to do many things, such as changing identity to change into a western human.

There are things that show that the east is always made an object by the west. This can be seen from the fact that the male main character unconsciously has become the object of consumerism from the results of western culture. He began to use western cultural products and lived with a hedonic mindset.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the advertisement analysis, Tokopedia *Start Family Kejar Jodoh* uses a semiotic and postcolonial approach, this advertisement shows the domination of the western nation over the eastern nation, which led to the concept of hegemony, the concept of thinking which assumes that the western nation is better than the eastern nation.

In this advertisement indirectly shows the existence of political, intellectual, cultural and moral forms of colonization. The main male character seems was infatuated to the woman and willing to do anything to get the woman. This shows that indirectly there is a form of worship of the western world. The orientation of male main character's thoughts as if making the west as a form of worship. Everything from the west is better and must be achieved. The main male figure who is willing to change his identity to become a westernized human. Starting from how to dress, hair style, to changes in social status that makes the main character to be a human who seems hedonistic and worshipping western culture.

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