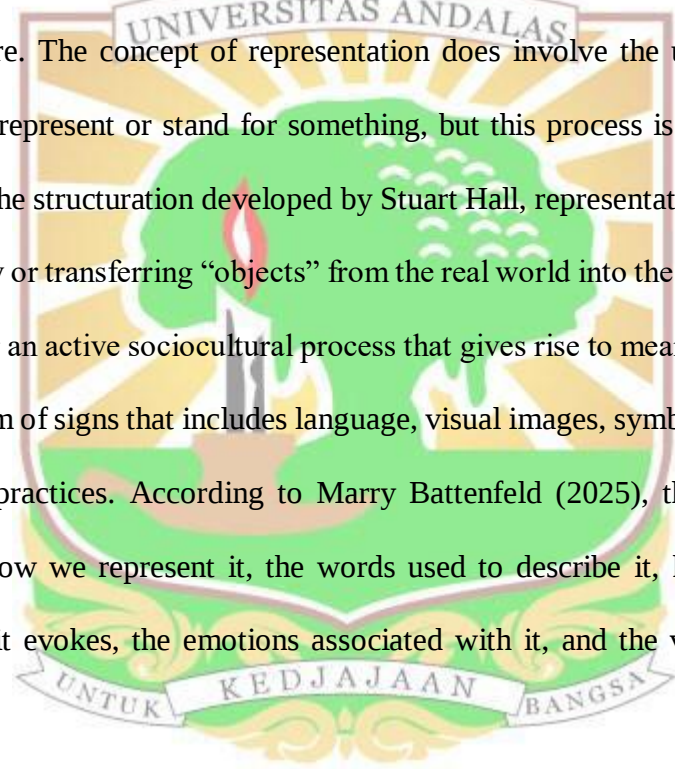


## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Research

Representation is known as the use of language to convey something so that it becomes meaningful about, or represents the world in a way that is meaningful to others. Representation is also a crucial part of the process whereby meaning can be produced or exchanged between humans within a culture. The concept of representation does involve the use of language, signs, and images that represent or stand for something, but this process is far from simple (Stuart Hall, 1997). In the structuration developed by Stuart Hall, representation is not merely an act of copying reality or transferring “objects” from the real world into the form of “images or language,” but rather an active sociocultural process that gives rise to meaning. Meaning is created through a system of signs that includes language, visual images, symbols, and socially recognized discursive practices. According to Marry Battenfeld (2025), the attribution of meaning depends on how we represent it, the words used to describe it, how the story is conveyed, the images it evokes, the emotions associated with it, and the values contained within it.



Representations in the media and cultural sphere reflect a complex process through which gender identity can be formed and even controlled by prevailing social norms. Traditionally, media portrays women as passive objects, meaning they generate feedback, and by focusing on physical appearance and favoring male characters, this can limit their expression and perceived worthiness. In their study of gender and media representation, Santoniccolo et al. (2023) highlighted that women's presence in social media is not always related to their visual form or stories, but also to who has the power to produce media, such

as editors and directors, and how public opinion can shape gender ideas. It can be concluded that how women are represented is a battle between powerful ideas and efforts to resist them, and this resistance can take the form of different content. For example, female creators generally use text, hashtags, and visual styles to present themselves in ways that transcend stereotypes, but this resistance can be difficult because social media algorithms and platforms tend to display content that is similar to what most people like, making it difficult to share different or challenging content.

Sandall (2024) in her study on Women on TikTok shows how flexible yet confusing this platform can be in terms of meaning. On the one hand, TikTok allows women to express their identities in new ways. They can use text, music, visual filters, and interact with their audience, but this space for expression is often trapped in ways of representing women that emphasize beauty, sexuality, and femininity. In addition, the TikTok platform also functions as a medium for reproducing the dominant gender ideology that binds women in a glamorous, sensual, and body oriented hyperfeminine framework.

TikTok, as a social media platform that produces short videos, has changed the way users produce and distribute visual and textual content through a combination of video, audio, visual effects, filters, captions, and interactions in the comments section, making it a new place to represent gender identity and cultural meaning. Quotes are a type of video content. They consist of text excerpts displayed or included in a post. They serve as a means of conveying messages between content creators and their audience. This reinforces visual meaning and audience interpretation. Quotes also allow for new meanings and interpretations. A study by Yu et al. (2024) shows that text elements like "quotes" that influence users and relate to how text is presented can reinforce visual meaning on social media. Sitinjak, Syaifuddin, Zein, and Suri (2025) explain that women use words related to traditional femininity, such as the words "pregnancy, mother, makeup, wife." These words, in the context

of language, have social and biological meanings regarding women's roles in society.

Thus, the representation of women on the TikTok platform creates new perceptions. Therefore, researchers want to analyze how norms, behaviors, issues, and values related to the relationship between young people and the general public create new perceptions, especially in texts created by content creators and comments made by audiences. Using a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach, this study focuses on deconstructing ideologies, gender stereotypes, and power relations or connections embedded in discursive practices on social media. Another desired finding is to identify the linguistic strategies employed that shape the social construction of women on this multimodal platform. Thus, this study provides insight into how social media not only reflects but also shapes new perceptions of gender identity.

This study makes an important contribution to the study of gender representation, specifically on the TikTok platform. Unlike previous studies, which generally focused only on visual aspects or the performativity of women's bodies, this study focuses on the analysis of quotes extracted from video content as the primary discursive unit. Using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), this study demonstrates that these short texts specifically, the quotes significantly construct and normalize representations of women that are subordinate, moralistic, and subject to male social control. Furthermore, this study expands on Norman Fairclough's application of CDA to the context of algorithm driven social media by combining discursive and social practices with the logic of TikTok's content distribution.

## 1.2 Research Questions

This study is grounded in three complementary theoretical perspectives, Stuart Hall's Theory of Representation (1997), Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (1995, 2010), and Sara Mills' feminist discourse approach (1995). Hall argues that representation is a process through which language constructs meaning rather than merely reflecting reality. Fairclough's CDA explains how discourse functions as a social practice that reproduces

ideology and unequal power relations through textual, discursive, and social dimensions. To complement this perspective, Sara Mills emphasizes that discourse also positions individuals differently as subjects and objects, particularly in relation to gender. Her approach examines who is given the authority to speak, who becomes the object of representation, and how discourse privileges certain perspectives while marginalizing others. Based on these two foundations, the research formulates the following questions:

1. What are the the public perception of women representation by account @itsjaygomez on TikTok?

2. How does the quotes @itsjaygomez in TikTok reflect and can strengthen gender ideology towards women?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Research**

Based on the research background, this study was conducted to critically examine the representation of women in TikTok content that focuses solely on short text specifically, quotes taken from video content. In the context of digital media, language plays a crucial role in shaping social meanings, values, and power relations. TikTok, as a platform driven by algorithms and audience engagement, facilitates the rapid spread of simplified and repetitive messages, thereby normalizing certain gender ideologies.

The purpose of this study was related to the research questions. Therefore, the objectives of this study are:

1. This study will reveal how public perceptions of women can be shaped through the quotes found in the content posted by @itsjaygomez.

2. This study will describe how the language used on TikTok can create a reflection that reinforces gender ideology towards women in the content posted by @itsjaygomez.

#### **1.4 Focus of the Research**

This study focused on the theory of representation developed by Stuart Hall (1997) about how women construct their identities and represent themselves on the TikTok platform through the TikTok account @itsjaygomez, by combining visual and textual elements (a short text contained in the video). And as the main analytical framework (main analytical method), this study uses Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine how women are represented in TikTok content. CDA is very relevant because it views language not only as a neutral medium of communication, but as a social practice that is closely related to power, ideology, and domination, so that by using CDA, discourse is understood as a place where social meaning is produced, reproduced, and debated.

#### **1.5 Methods of the Research**

This study analyzed document content to find specific features using qualitative methods. Ary et al (2002) state that content and document analysis is a research method used to analyze written or visual items with the aim of identifying the specific characteristics of those items. Therefore, this type of analysis is very suitable for this study, as it analyzes visual (images and videos) and textual elements.

Purposive sampling is a data collection technique commonly used in qualitative research. It allows researchers to intentionally select data based on the research objectives and focus. This method focuses on the importance of data quality over the amount of data. This makes it especially useful for studies that focus on understanding and interpreting information. In critical discourse analysis studies, sampling helps researchers identify texts that contain specific ideologies, representations, and power relations. Therefore, data is selected based on specific purposes and criteria, not randomly. This approach is considered valid for social and cultural research (Creswell, 2014).

The selected data must have the potential to reveal social practices hidden behind the texts. Fairclough (1995) stated that not all texts have the same ideological value. Therefore, researchers need to select texts that explicitly contain social representations and meanings. The quality of research does not depend on the quantity of data but rather on how the selected texts contribute to understanding and study.

In this study, I chose TikTok posts that clearly and directly display quotes about women. This selection is based on the idea that quotes are a primary means of presenting ideas to the public sphere, created and expressed in social media content. According to Patton (2015), sampling is more effective when researchers want to understand specific phenomena in depth through informative case studies. This approach ensures that the data truly supports the research objectives. In Stuart Hall's (1997) theory of representation, meaning is generated through specific ways of speaking. Not all media texts directly contribute to people's thinking about society, so selecting the right data is a crucial step. By selecting quotes that discuss the meaning of being a women, researchers can demonstrate how ideas and statements about gender are shaped.

In digital media research, excessive amounts of data are often encountered. This can open researchers' minds to efficiently capturing only the most important data. Bowen (2009) states that when you look at a particular piece of documentation, you should consider how important the information about it is, what its relevance is, and how it can help or provide answers to the research. This technique can make the research more credible and clearly link the data to the theoretical framework.

Source of Data

The data were taken from a TikTok account with the username @itsjaygomez. This study selected content uploaded by JayGomez on his TikTok account to find representations of women on Instagram through his content posts. The content was selected based on several considerations to find the most relevant results related to the representation of women on

TikTok.

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### 1.5.2 Data Collection

In collecting data, researcher will use the following steps. First, they would access the TikTok platform and then go to the search page by typing the name of the account they are looking for, which is @itsjaygomez. Second, they will select content related to the representation of women that both in the form of photos or videos. Finally, they will download content that was uploaded lately of 2025.

### 1.5.3 Data Analysis

All collected data would be analyzed using the CDA method. CDA helps to understand how language plays a role in shaping, reproducing, and maintaining power relations within the public sphere. Furthermore, this analysis will only focus on the representation of women found on the TikTok platform. Visual and textual elements will be the main focus of the analysis. Furthermore, this study was examined how people's perspectives represent women on the TikTok platform.

## 1.6 Definition of Key Terms

**1) Representation of Women**, this is an important process in the formation of meaning, in which language is used to represent the social world, both real and imaginary, and more specifically, representation is not only a reflection of reality, but also shapes

reality itself through a system of signs and symbols mediated by language (Hall, 1997). Meanwhile, the representation of women is a depiction of how women's identities, roles, and images are constructed through various forms, such as language, media, and culture, which often reflect and negotiate power and ideology in the public sphere.

2) **Username Account**, A user account is a way for a person, application, or device to prove who they are so they can access the resources they have permission to use. It's the basis of how modern systems identify who you are and what you're allowed to do. User accounts are very important for protecting data, controlling who can access it, and making sure that everyone is responsible for cybersecurity. Every time a user logs in, every permission that is granted, and every action taken within the system can be traced back to that user's account. This is why cybercriminals often target user accounts to bypass system access controls.

3) **Tiktok**, It is a Chinese short form video sharing social media platform developed by ByteDance that allows users to create, edit, and share videos ranging from 3 seconds to 10 minutes in length, complete with music, filters, and special effects. The platform stands out for its personalized feed algorithm (FYP, or “For You Page”) and its social commerce feature (TikTok Shop).

4) **For You Page**, The main For You Page on the TikTok app, which appears when the app is first opened, displays video content selected by an algorithm based on each user's preferences, interactions, and the most popular trends. This TikTok For You Page feature uses a highly complex algorithm that takes into account a combination of several factors to display content to users. The TikTok algorithm takes into account various key factors, including user interactions, profile information, trends and hashtags, watch time, similar content, and other elements that can influence the user experience while using TikTok.

5) **Quotes**, Quotes are excerpts or collections of wise, inspirational, motivational,

or meaningful messages presented in short sentences. Quotes are sentences used to emphasize an idea. These wise words can provide encouragement or inform people about something through perfectly crafted sentences. The purpose of using quotes is to enrich writing or share the results of one's thoughts on a particular subject, presented in the form of words, and to help convey values or ideas in an elegant and memorable way.

