4. Foucaultian Approach and Cyber-Media Research

by Poppy Febriana, M.med.kom

Foucaultian Approach and Cyber-Media Research

[1]Poppy Febriana, [2]Ratih Puspa

[1]Doctoral Student in Social Science, Airlangga University, Jl. Airlangga 4-6, Surabaya
[2]Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Airlangga University, Jl. Airlangga 4-6, Surabaya
E-mail: [1]poppyfebriana@umsida.ac.id, [2]ratih.puspa@fisip.unair.ac.id.

Abstract: *The availability of cybermedia offers many options that vary for discovering and consuming information similar to the ability to generate it. Cybermedia has also given rise to new methods for people to interact and build relationships in society, posing problems for researchers in the communication study field, particularly in dissecting new kinds of multi-modal communication. The research objective is to learn more about how Michel Foucault's discourse analysis applies to the cybermedia discourse. The findings of this study show that Foucault's notions, as found in "The Birth of the Clinic", "The Archeology of Knowledge", and "Technology of the Self", are still relevant in addressing the difficulties of cybermedia research. The Foucaultian approach to social media focuses on sharing processes, which are the foundation of social media. Another aspect of Foucault's media philosophy is "constant awareness and visibility."*

Keywords: *cybermedia, Foucault, new media*

INTRODUCTION

Seeing the diversity of media nowadays, as McNamus described in Severin & Tankard (2014), there has been a transition from media scarcity to the abundance of media. It doesn't end there. The technique of conveying messages through the media also experiences a significant change, with the media becoming interactive and the audience being more than just an object exposed to the media, but an active participant (Rulli, 2014). The rise of cyber media, or network media, is one of the hallmarks of this new medium. This inter-network link through a computer or the internet gives alternatives for discovering and consuming information as good as the ability to create it.

Mark Deuze analyzes in his book Media Work (2007) how developments in technology, culture, and society have influenced the lives and professional identities of media producers in advertising, journalism, cinema, television, and other fields. Deuze focuses on how individuals in the business are responding to the growing need for cross-media innovation, as well as how media audiences have evolved from passive (consumers) to active (producers) viewers (producers).

Cybermedia has created a new method of interacting, forming connections, participating in activities, and performing tasks in society (Putri & Hamdan, 2017). This new perspective alters people's perceptions of objects in their everyday lives, as good as text conversation, social interaction, and even the nature of language (Jones, Rodney H.; Chik, Alice; Hafner, Christoph A., 2015).The presence of the internet and the virtual world in it, according to Yasraf in Yanti (2015), will have an impact on three levels: individual, inter-individual,

and community. Cyber media will alter one's perception of identity on a personal basis. Cyber media will establish virtual social interactions between individuals, while the internet can build an imagined community that is a model of a democratic and open society at the community level (Stephani et al., 2021).

Of course, this development becomes a new challenge in completing studies in the communication study field, especially in dissecting new forms of multimodal-based communication (Yanti Dwi, 2015). Unlike conventional forms of communication, which use only one medium to communicate. For example, in face-to-face communication. The conversation is carried out directly without media intermediaries. Thus, the analysis focused on the delivered text and the captured body language. Another example is communication with conventional media in newspapers or magazines. The research focused on texts produced using semiotic methods, content analysis, or discourse analysis.

As a result of this phenomenon, discourse wars in cyberspace have dynamics that are not evident in traditional media. As a result of this background, the researchers were interested in looking into social media as a type of cybermedia. From Michel Foucault's discourse analysis, the point of view utilized is how a conversation in cybermedia.

METHOD

Michel Foucault's discourse analysis was chosen because there are still not many theses, theses, and dissertations that specifically discuss Foucault's works to read discourse in cyber media.

Regarding the discussion of cyber media, the author will relate some of Foucault's works, including The Birth of The Clinic, The Archeology of Knowledge, and Technology of The Self.

The Birth of the Clinic is a book by Foucault examines the history of medicine, medicine, and sickness. Foucault employs two criteria in his depiction of medical history, namely "appearance" and "language." The term "gaze" alludes to Foucault's description of physicians' activities when they see sickness in a patient, in which the patient's body becomes the subject of medical inspection and study. The illness is discovered thanks to this doctor's sight.

The discussion begins with how Foucault sees the meaning of a healthy and sick body. How then can a doctor go through an examination carried out on labeling those who come and be examined with the labels "healthy body" and "sick body"

Foucault explains that many things then happen to reconstitute humans and the human body. It is into a network of understanding and specifications, later built, separated, broken down, operated, understood, and taught. And all this happens between the realm of 'gaze' and 'language". New alliances are formed between words and things, enabling people to see and say (Foucault, 2003).

Meanwhile, in The Archeology of Knowledge (1969), Foucault wants to take a deeper look at the processes that occur in the formation of history. Foucault sees that there is a shift in the meaning of history. From a progressive, linear story written by historians, to endless micro-stories, each with its own story.

Foucault (2002) realizes that there is no law of regularity in tracing a history. Foucault calls this the "rules of formation," which broadly sees that the existence of history can appear in various forms: existence, coexistence, maintenance, modifications, and disappearance.

In another of his works, Technology of the Self (Martin et al., 1988), the main point that the author wishes to discuss is Foucault's concept of "subjectivation." In The History of Sexuality (Foucault, 1978),

Foucault develops his understanding of the constitution of the self as a subject and the dynamics involved in that elaboration. Then, in The Use of Pleasure (1988), Foucault introduced the concept of "subjectivation" to define the four dimensions in establishing the self as a subject, namely (a) The ethical substance or part of the self-concerned with moral behavior (e.g., feelings, intentions, or desire); (b) Modes of submission in which people are invited or instigated to acknowledge their moral obligations (such as divine law, natural law, or rational order); (c) Self-formation activities are carried out on the self to change it; and (d) Human figure that is aspired to when we behave morally (e.g.: free, immortal, or self-controlled).

For Foucault, the idiosyncratic mechanism of self-constitution (i.e., subjectivation) is what he calls self-technology. These are the procedures and practices present in all civilizations in various forms, through which individuals form, develop and maintain a single identity with a specific purpose (Foucault, 1984). According to Foucault (1988), self-technology allows individuals to perform in their way or with the help of others some operations on their body and soul, mind, behavior, and way of life, to change themselves to achieve certain conditions of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From a Foucaultian perspective, social media is more than just a "vehicle" for exchanging information but social media is also a "vehicle" for identity formation. It is inseparable from the ability of the internet to distribute content globally and instantly. Through social media, people will consciously build their identities into whatever figures they want (Hartley et al., 2013).

The Foucaultian approach to social media focuses on mechanisms that are essentially about sharing. The foundation of social media is sharing. Content sharing, on the other hand, is more than just an information exchange. The majority of the time, when someone posts anything on social media sites, they do so openly, in front of their followers. As Don Juan and J.L. Austin (2003) point out, sharing is a sort of performance in that it is a performance to do something in the world. This performative component of sharing will shape the logic and experience of the activity.

When someone publishes material on social media, there is an element of self-reflection. They are motivated to provide their finest performance, like a stage performer who is aware that his performance is being monitored by the audience. It is similar to social media users who purposefully choose and frame material to please or impress people in their network. Later, they were referred to as the followers. As a result of this desire, the phenomena of the edited self, as defined by Marwick, emerges. People might use social media to deliberately create their identities based on the idea that the body has autonomy and is always changing (The Sage Handbook of Social Media, 2017).

The panopticon, which Foucault built from Jeremy Bethams' ideal jail model, is one of the most intriguing aspects of Foucault's ideas on the emergence of social media. According to Betham's design, the panopticon is a circular cell layout with a guard tower in the centre. The presence of this tower can be seen from behind the bars of the cell at any time, making them feel constantly monitored even though they have no means of knowing whether they are being observed by the guard or not.

In Foucault's view, the panopticon took on the function of holding prisoners accountable and bringing their behavior

into order. The feeling of being watched at all times makes them behave in an orderly manner under the provisions imposed in prison. The main effect of the panopticon, according to Foucault, is to cause permanent awareness and visibility that can ensure the functioning of a power (Jenks, 2003).

What social media delivers in terms of media is what Foucault refers to as "permanent awareness and visibility." We have become subject to a virtual panopticon by freely discussing our actions on social media. The people who observe the behavior we share have a direct impact on surveillance.

If the picture of guards and captives in the panopticon is an analogy, then we are the guards and prisoners who monitor and evaluate each other for the things they and we share.

With the analogy of the panopticon, Foucault provides a tool to examine the appeared discourse on social media, how the mechanism of supervision, the role-play of supervisors and prisoners flows on social media. Who is in control of a conversation on social media? How does someone then do "edited self" as an adjustment form to make the information they share to get more praise, likes, shares, etc. Another method of examining social media from Foucault's perspective is to look at the discourse on social media to see how new patterns that were previously not by societal standards appear and are accepted on sites like YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook. One of them is the rise of cross-dressed fans and male beauty influencers.

Crossdressed itself is a term used to describe theater performers in the era of Roman theater when male performers played female figures and dressed as women. A similar phenomenon has appeared on the catwalk stage and cyberspace through several accounts of men who often dress as women. Call it

one of them is Jovi Adhiguna, whose Instagram account now has 760,000 followers. It's different from beauty influencers, which is being pinned to beautiful men on social media. One of them is Andreas Lukita, who is famous for his Instagram account @alpha.makeup. Andreas is followed by his female fans widely because he regularly uploads content containing make-up tutorials or content of make-up products reviews. He and himself have a false eyelash product called Loreca Lashes. With 110,000 followers, Andreas is one of many male accounts dubbed as beauty influencers.

These two phenomena are a form of the emergence of body transgression in men. A transgression is an act of going beyond the boundaries as well as pre-determined authority, in opposition to the boundaries that have been constructed (Jenks, 2003).

Both the transgression actor and the followers and people around the celebrity show the phenomenon of body transgression. It considers the body from three points of view, as defined by Julia Kristeva. Namely corporeal body (body in real form); the socio-cultural body (the socio-cultural meaning of the body); and the imaginary body (an imaginary body that appears in the media).

In The Birth of the Clinic (2003), Foucault examines how medical science classifies and defines sickness. How a patient is diagnosed and identified as a patient, with an ailment through the doctor's gaze. An ill person has an impact not just on him, but also on his family and society. Similarly to celebrities who have transgressed, Foucault's point of view in The Birth of the Clinic will aid in understanding how a transgressor is described by himself, his closest friends and family, and the community around him.

The book's central idea, The Birth of the Clinic, differs from Foucault's

understanding of the meaning of a healthy and sick body. How can a doctor conduct an examination based on the designations "healthy body" and "ill body" applied to those who come to be examined? The world of medical practice in the 18th century, according to Foucault, described the body based on natural laws, origin space, and illness spread. Many things happen after that, according to Foucault, to reassemble humans and the human body into a network of understanding and specifications, which may be built, divided, broken down, operated, understood, and taught. All of this takes place in the space between 'gaze' and 'language.' Words and things develop a new alliance, allowing individuals to see and speak things.

To elaborate, Foucault discusses how sickness is grouped by family, genus, and species, resulting in the Nosological Structure, which is like a "picture" for Foucault that will help us recall how the domain of disease propagates.

Mapping disease in Foucault's image like a map is what later became the basis for doctors to define the disease suffered by the patient. Complaints of the disease suffered by the patient will then be seen for similarities with the description of the disease that has existed before, and then the same complaint will be diagnosed as the same disease. This is what Foucault then questioned, how a disease that has many dimensions is only defined based on the similarities that appear on the surface.

Mapping disease in Foucault's image like a map later becomes the basis for doctors to define someone's disease. Complaints suffered by the patient will then be seen for similarities with the description that has existed before, and then the same complaint will be diagnosed as the same disease. It is what Foucault questioned. How disease that has many dimensions defined based on

the similarities that appear on the surface?

In the 18th century, the health universe is also interpreted by Foucault as an era of struggle for doctors. It is because this profession has a political side. Therefore the first task of doctors is political. It must begin with the fight against bad government. Man will be completely healed if he is left free: 'Who, then, would reproach the tyrants of mankind if not the doctors, who made man their sole study, and who, every day, in the homes of the poor and the rich, among ordinary citizens and the highest in the land, in huts and mansions, contemplate human misery which has no other origin than tyranny and slavery?

If medicine could be more politically works, it would no longer be so medically necessary. In an ultimately free society, where inequality is diminishing and harmony reigns, doctors will have more role to play than advising citizens and legislators on how to take care of their bodies and hearts. So there will be no need for academies and hospitals.

Some of Foucault's other thoughts that also contribute to analyzing social media are archaeological and genealogical approaches to studying history. Foucault's thinking, archeology is understood as a means of critical analysis to uncover the relationship between power and knowledge in discourse. He uses the term discourse to describe knowledge-based ways of thinking and acting (Jones, 2009). Foucault views power unlike the Weberians, namely the subjective ability to influence others. Power is not interpreted as a material artifact like the Marxians, that can be controlled and used by a certain class (the bourgeoisie) to dominate and oppress another (the proletariat).

Foucault distinguishes between archeology and the genealogy of power. Archeology focuses on existing historical conditions, while genealogy is more

concerned with historical processes. More precisely, genealogy offers us a process relationship about discourse networks, where the archaeological approach gives us a snapshot and slice through the discourse chain (Foucault, 2002b), genealogy is history written by the commitment to solve the problems of the present, and it will break into the present. In a nutshell, genealogy is an effective history written as a present-day intervention (Letche, 2001).

Meanwhile, in Foucault's view, what is meant by discourse is the way of producing knowledge and the accompanying social practices, the form of subjectivity formed from it, the power relations behind such knowledge and practice, and the interrelationships between all these aspects (Foucault, 2003). (2002a). According to Foucault our view of the world is formed from the dominant discourse that emerges, which is then language in action, and human identity is determined by the discourse they have.

In each era, the discourse that appears is generally different, depending on the existing episteme. According to Foucault, episteme is a structure of knowledge or what in its terms is referred to as a discursive formation, namely a point of view about everything that exists in the world based on facts that are understood by people who see it (Kuper & Kuper, 2000).

Episteme is a state of mind that allows knowledge and theories to form over a while. In Foucault's work, "archeology" or "archeological analysis" refers to efforts to make explicit or investigate the episteme that defines a certain period (Beilharz, 2002). The Renaissance, the classical period, and the nineteenth century, according to Foucault, are all epistemes that sustain one other. According to Foucault, each age has its own historical a priori. Archeology or

archaeological analysis, as defined by Foucault, is an endeavor to study the episteme that determines a certain period.

In light of this, it is fascinating to investigate how discourse is sustained in cyberspace, observing how this archaeological process unfolds in cyberspace, how power relations arise, who becomes the ruler, and how sustained power is. Is it still relevant in cyberspace? These questions might be developed as a kind of cybermedia analysis to deepen Foucault's thinking on the archeology of knowledge.

It will be fascinating to connect Foucault's other ideas in Technology of the Self (Martin et al., 1988) to the phenomena of the emergence of bloggers. Personal or individual technology is a method for individuals to undergo self-transformation to achieve specific states of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality defined by Foucault.

Although he employs the term "technology" to define material objects such as prisons and concepts such as the soul in his other writings, it refers to applied knowledge meaning a manner of self-transformation. The term "self-technology" is more closely associated with the Greek word techne, which means "practical reason guided by particular conscious goals." In contrast to the general meaning of technology.

There are at least two elements related to the technology of the phenomena of bloggers and writers in cyber media. The first is the usage of hyperlinks in blog writing as a technique for authors to improve the depth of their work by linking to other blog posts that support it. Second, the blog writer includes a brief description of the link content associated with the blog, so that readers can determine whether or not to follow the link.

As mentioned in the research conducted by Siles, the practice of

blogging as a form of self-technology that Foucault meant may be seen from the features of subjectivity in it when considered as a whole (Siles, 2012). Siles discovered various features of subjectivity in his research with several pioneering bloggers in America, including posting on blogs as a medium for writers to give themselves up to others. Bloggers believe that blogging in cyberspace helps them become trustworthy writers, critical thinkers, create reputations, and sharpen their creativity. It is because bloggers must adhere to regulations and norms when posting on a blog.

CONCLUSIONS

According to the foregone explanation, Foucault's concepts and analytical methods provide an opportunity for scholars interested in researching the cyber world to undertake research n this topic. Foucault's views are pertinent in addressing the issue of cyber media research. Whether in The Birth of the Clinic, The Archeology of Knowledge, or Technology of the Self. It includes performing a study on multimodal communication in cyber media, which employs multiple forms of media at once. Uploads to a page, for example, text, links, videos, music, and even direct contact with the page manager. Similarly, communication on social media platforms such as Instagram, where users may make live video broadcasts as entering messages that display on the screen and can be responded to by those viewing the live broadcast. The fundamental nature of power relations continues to play a significant influence in these media development despite the use of new media.

It includes when Foucault's faced point of view with the presence of digital storytelling, another interesting about this cyber media is the presence of digital storytelling. In simple terms, a digital story is an autobiography that combines media based on video, photos, narration, and music. These include blogs, vlogs, digital special effects, hypertext. It is digital storytelling, an activity carried out by social media users when sharing their daily stories on Instagram, Facebook, Whatsapp, or on microblogging sites which in practice is a form of what Foucault calls subjectivation.

Using Foucault's theory, there are many more intriguing aspects of cyber media to investigate. It involves examining the relationship between social media and what Boyd (2008) refers to as "social convergence." This language further emphasizes how social media has merged social contexts into one, making it impossible for people involved to discern between one social environment and another. In reality, in each place and situation where conventional communication occurs, this social context is served as a reference for building norms. This social convergence necessitates people's ability to interact with various audiences without resorting to a social script.

According to Castells (Castells & Castells, 2010), the novelty of this internet technology-based communication, resides not in its ability to introduce virtual reality into the actual world, but in its ability to build genuine virtuality or real virtuality. This new reality, mediated by the presence of information technology, has given birth to wholly virtual phenomena, such as virtual culture and virtual communities, such as the phenomenon of Selebgram followers, a type of virtual community.

REFERENCES

Beilharz, P. (2002). *Teori-Teori Sosial (Observasi Kritis Terhadap Para Filosof Terkemuka)*. Pustaka Pelajar.

Boyd, Danah. (2008). Facebook's Privacy Trainwreck: Exposure,

Invasion, and Social Convergence. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, *14*(1), 13–20. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354856507084416

Castells, M., & Castells, M. (2010). *The rise of the network society* (2nd ed., with a new pref). Wiley-Blackwell.

Foucault, M. (1978). *The history of sexuality* (1st American ed). Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (1988). *The history of sexuality* (1st Vintage Books ed). Vintage Books.

Foucault, M. (2002a). *Arkeologi Pengetahuan (Penerjemah: HM Mochtar Zaini)*. Qalam.

Foucault, M. (2002b). *THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE*. Routledge.

Foucault, M. (2003). *The Birth of The Clinic*. Routledge.

Hartley, J., Burgess, J., & Bruns, A. (Ed.). (2013). *A companion to new media dynamics*. John Wiley & Sons.

Jenks, C. (2003). *Transgression*. Routledge.

Jones, P. (2009). *Pengantar Teori-teori Sosial: Dari Teori Fungsionalisme hingga Post-modernisme*. Obor.

Juan, D., & Austin, J. L. (2003). *The Scandal of the Speaking Body*. Stanford University Press.

Kuper, A., & Kuper, J. (2000). *Ensiklopedi Ilmu-ilmu Sosial*. Rajawali Press.

Letche, J. (2001). *50 FIlsuf Kontemporer, dari Strukturalisme sampai Postmodernitas*. Kanisius.

Mark, D. (2007). *Media Work*. Polity Press.

Martin, L. H., Gutman, H., & Hutton, P. H. (1988). *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*. University of Massachusetts Press.

Putri, D. W., & Hamdan, S. R. (2017). *Perilaku Bermedia Digital dalam Pelaksanaan Tridarma Perguruan Tinggi di Kalangan Dosen Unisba*. *10*, 14.

Rulli, N. (2014). *Teori dan Riset Media Siber*. Prenadamedia Group.

Severin, W. J., & J. Tankard, J. (2014). *Communication Theories: Pearson New International Edition*. Pearson Education Limited.

Siles, I. (2012). Web Technologies of the Self: The Arising of the "Blogger" Identity: Web Technologies of The Self. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *17*(4), 408–421. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2012.01581.x

Stephani, N., Rachmawaty, M., & Dyanasari, R. (2021). Why We Like Podcasts: A Review of Urban Youth's Motivations for Using Podcasts. *Mediator: Jurnal Komunikasi*, *14*(1), 99–112. https://doi.org/10.29313/mediator.v14i1.7609

The Sage handbook of social media (1st edition). (2017). SAGE inc.

Yanti Dwi, A. (2015). DARI SIMULASI REALITAS SOSIAL HINGGA HIPER-REALITAS VISUAL: Tinjauan Komunikasi Virtual Melalui Sosial Media di Cyberspace. *Jurnal Profetik*, *8*(2), 15–26.

4. Foucaultian Approach and Cyber-Media Research

students' computational thinking skill and technology comprehension", 2022 24th International Conference on Advanced Communication Technology (ICACT), 2022
Publication

| 10 | d-scholarship.pitt.edu
Internet Source | <1 % |
| 11 | eprints.nottingham.ac.uk
Internet Source | <1 % |

| Exclude quotes | Off | Exclude matches | Off |
| Exclude bibliography | On | | |