

YouTube content commodification: a critical discourse analysis on Deddy Corbuzier's channel

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Abstract YouTube challenges the media monopoly by providing spaces for everyone to produce content, including the cultural industry products like podcasts. Deddy Corbuzier took advantage of this opportunity by opening a channel on YouTube. At first, Deddy criticised the 'garbage' broadcast on television, but then he invited Dinar Candy and managed to become a top viewer on his channel, which he later called the worst video he has ever made. This study looks at the commodification of two Deddy Corbuzier's YouTube content with Dinar Candy and Siti Fadilah Supari and sees it from Adorno's critical point of view of the cultural industry. This research uses multimodality analysis and critical discourse analysis. The result is Deddy Corbuzier, who was first known as a YouTuber with critical content and used YouTube to resist media monopoly. However, he compromised his integrity, followed capitalism's flow, and created content for profit by repeating his success for popular and uncritical videos.

Keywords: commodification; critical discourse analysis; multimodality; YouTube

INTRODUCTION

Media monopoly has existed for centuries in Europe through the widespread use of Latin. Nevertheless, since the invention of the Gutenberg printing press in 1436, there have been entrepreneurs who have mastered media printing. This gave rise to the birth of a few people who could control the mass media as we know today as media rulers (Bagdikian, 2007). However, the growth of the internet poses a challenge for media rulers. The future of media monopoly is becoming more complicated and increasing uncertainty regarding media monopoly (Bagdikian, 2004).

The internet provides a space for individuals to connect without distance and time limitations. The COVID-19 pandemic since 2019 proved that the boundaries of distances like social space, workspace, public space, private space, or friendship space could be transformed into one space at home that can be connected through communication

technology. The house becomes the centre for regulating the supra-local roles of daily life with the help of communication technology (Fuchs, 2021). Nowadays, the internet has grown from connecting people without limitations of distance and time to other purposes such as advertising, news sources, and propaganda media (Fuchs, 2018). The presence of the internet is a challenge for media monopoly because the internet eliminates the boundaries between producers and consumers in providing content that can be displayed on media connected to the internet. Nowadays, anyone can share their data through the internet. Parents shared their children's data through social media, internet-connected toys and children's wearables (Holloway, 2019). This shows that anyone can be a producer on the internet.

YouTube is one of the channels on the internet that break the monopoly of the media (Chau, 2010). In YouTube, there are no class or educational restrictions to become a content creator. There is no requirement for content creators to have big capital (money or huge production assets) to produce content like other industry capitalists or entrepreneurs who monopolise the media. This enhances a participatory culture among YouTube users. In addition, anyone can watch uploaded content on YouTube, so the opportunity for content producers to be seen by a wider audience arises. Thus, a long tail phenomenon occurs in the digital media industry, where small producers are free to compete with large producers. Something impossible before the internet era (Chau, 2010; Hesmondhalgh, 2013).

This opportunity to compete freely increases the enthusiasm of the content creator on YouTube. Data shows that the number of video content uploaded every minute on YouTube grew by around 40 per cent between 2014 and 2020 (Statista, 2020). About 500 hours of video will be uploaded every minute in 2020 (Wojcicki, 2020). This has an impact on the increasing number of YouTube viewers. In its release, Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia (APJII) stated that in 2020, about 73.7 per cent of the total population in Indonesia would use the internet. Most of this number watch video content as entertainment, with 49.3 per cent. About 61 per cent of YouTube viewers say the YouTube content they watch is mostly in movies, entertainment, and infotainment, with 38.7 per cent of respondents (APJII, 2020). This means that Indonesian people tend to like entertaining shows on YouTube.

YouTube was initially considered to be able to increase participatory culture (Chau, 2010), is useful as a learning medium (Bloom & Johnston, 2010), and its freedom can even blur the line between producers and consumers (Jenkins, 2006). YouTube can also be an alternative media for minorities such as Chinese Indonesians ethnic who previously found it difficult to access mainstream media such as TV. Last Day Production (LDP) is a YouTube channel belonging to young Chinese Indonesians conveying the construction of their national identity as Chinese Indonesians who were marginalised during the 'Orde

Baru' regime. This video became a trending topic on YouTube for two weeks. This means that the message conveyed by young people from ethnic minorities was conveyed and liked by the Indonesian people and proved that YouTube can be an alternative media for minorities (Susilo & Sugihartati, 2021). YouTube also provides free space for viewers to give comments on videos. This makes clicktivism possible, where viewers can criticise dominant institutions such as capitalism and the consumer culture (Kozinets, 2019). YouTube can also be an alternative media that gives content creators the freedom of speech. For example, Breadtubers is a group of content creators with a left-wing perspective that aims to criticise the capitalist system. Breadtubers form a community and open a group discussion for their video viewers. They share videos on YouTube and open discussion rooms on other platforms such as Reddit (Kuznetsov & Ismangil, 2020).

Nowadays, YouTube is used in terms of cultural reproduction, where YouTube has become a business field to gain big profits instead of being a community connection arena for its users. For example, YouTube as a community can be seen in the YouTube polyglots community. This community focuses on learning a lot of different languages. Language learning which was originally a concept of self-discovery and self-development with the aim of social practice, in the hands of polyglots as micro-celebrities for fan base purposes, has turned into an arena for selling their services and products for language learning (Bruzos, 2021). On the other hand, YouTube also implemented a localisation strategy by accommodating the diversity of local languages and cultures to attract local audiences, like in southern India (Mohan & Punathambekar, 2018). A multimodal analysis of the declustering video on YouTube also shows the creative involvement of one's self-expression of material objects related to consumptive culture as a hallmark of post-war capitalism. These YouTubers believe that they can be satisfied by seeing themselves declustering products. This shows how 'good' neoliberal subjects will always be preoccupied with consumer goods (Zappavigna, 2019).

YouTube has quickly grown from a start-up site to a Google-dominated commercial platform (Dijck, 2013). As a result, YouTube is used to seek popularity among young people (Pereira et al., 2018). Current consumption theory argues that capitalism in industrial progress has become the dominant mode of cultural reproduction, in which all social relations, activities, and objects can be exchanged as commodities (Slater, 1997). Nowadays, communication studies need to get more attention since the world faces an existential crisis in political, economic, ideological and environmental issues using big data from social media (Fuchs & Qiu, 2018). Chandler & Fuchs (2019) introduces a term of digital capitalism by portraying personal data as a commodity sold to advertisers who target the audiences based on their profiles. For example, social media and its big data as political tools during the 2016

United States Presidential election campaign (Fuchs, 2018) and the 2017 German federal election campaigns (Fuchs, 2019).

YouTube collaborates with advertisers for content displayed on its platform (Solon, 2017). As a result, YouTube content producers will do anything to increase the number of viewers and attract more advertisers. For example, Lupton (2014) explains the use of YouTube as a platform in telling patient experiences and fears that will be misused by those who use the data to evaluate the goods or services of health care providers. Raun (2018) also exemplifies the self-commodification of a transgender YouTuber who always looks attractive to gain his audience's interest. Sinha (2017) also mentions the use of slapstick comedy content on YouTube to attract viewers. These things initially made YouTube, which is expected to be a form of resistance to media monopoly, but then the content providers follow the flow of capitalism by providing content with aims to gain as much profit as possible. This study will explain how a YouTuber with critical content used YouTube to resist media monopoly then turned into any other cultural industry producers who follow the flow of capitalism and create content for profit.

Deddy Corbuzier is a YouTuber with the podcast genre. Podcasts are a form of creative industry (Rusdi, 2010). UNESCO defines the creative industry as part of the cultural industry (UNESCO, 2009). Deddy Corbuzier is chosen as the focus of this research because Deddy Corbuzier has explicitly stated that he does not like 'garbage shows' on TV. One of his first videos on YouTube was titled "*orang susah suka tayangan sampah di TV* (Poor people like garbage shows on TV)". He critiqued the audience about 'garbage shows' on TV (Corbuzier, 2018). Since then, his followers on YouTube have grown. His content also educates and arouses critical thinking, making people think and evaluate their lives. Thus, they become more sensitive to the social phenomena that occur around them. These things are very much in line with the right cultural industry, according to Adorno (1991). However, what disappointed the audience was when Deddy Corbuzier started displaying content with titles and thumbnails that exploited women's bodies; this made people aware that Deddy Corbuzier had started following the flow of capitalism and creating content for profit.

Previous research on the video of Childish Gambino's song "*This Is America*," which criticises violence and racist culture in America, has also shown the same thing. The video is considered a critique of the social system that exists in society. However, on the other hand, this video is considered to complement Horkheimer and Adorno's Marxist critique of the cultural industry under capitalism for two reasons. First, the selection of music for the song was a form of repetition from other popular songs of that time. Second, the video displayed and explained how racism and gun violence are perceived as normal. This is another sign of the cultural industry under capitalism. (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1987; Fry, 2019)

Adorno (1993) sees cultural products as different from the cultural industry products under capitalism. Adorno (1993) exemplifies music as a cultural product in his writings "*Music, Language, and Composition*," he describes that true music should be toned with identical functions, established sequences, and harmonious melodies. Like language, music has expression, not just metaphor. He cited Beethoven as real music. Thus, the music Adorno believes to be the real cultural product is not coming from mass production that has a similar tone to each other, just like cultural industry product under capitalism. The real cultural product is unique and stimulates critical thinking. However, under capitalism, the cultural product is repetitive, popular, follows the capitalist flow and thus slacks people's minds (Adorno, 1991).

This research will look at Deddy Corbuzier's change from being an idealistic YouTuber with critical content and stimulating people's critical thinking compared to his other content that follows the capitalist flow and slacks people's minds. This study aims to understand the content commodification in Deddy Corbuzier's Channel and analyse it from Adorno's critical perspective on the cultural industry (Adorno, 1991). Hopefully, this research will academically add insight for readers about the form of commodification on the YouTube platform with the podcast genre and view it critically from the cultural industry perspective. In addition, this research is practically expected to give insight for people to be more selective in choosing media and content providers as a source of entertainment, especially those provided by the YouTube platform.

YouTube is one of many platforms that is retrieved and analyse data for advertisements (Sadowski, 2020). On the other hand, YouTube provides hope as an alternative source for those who find it difficult to access conventional media. YouTube was founded in 2005 by three young people, Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim, who started the idea of making YouTube a website to upload their dating videos. YouTube was bought by Google 18 months after it was created for USD 1.65 billion. YouTube has grown rapidly since then. In 2020, more than 2 billion users watched hundreds of millions of hours of videos on YouTube every day (Leskin, 2020).

Hatch (2019) explained that the performance of YouTube, which can attract a larger audience than Netflix and videos on Facebook, is a good place for the advertising and marketing industry. Zhou et al. (2021) proved a positive correlation between advertising on YouTube and sales. In addition, influencers sometimes insert advertisements in their video material, even without the audience's concerns (Lee & Abidin, 2021).

Advertising on YouTube is different because ads are paid according to the duration of the viewer watching a video. There are several types of ads on YouTube. First, the 'must-watch ads' or the ads that the skip ads button is not available if the audience does not want

to watch it. For every ad that this user watches, the advertiser must pay YouTube, and the video maker will automatically get paid for the ad impression. Second, 'true view video ads' allow viewers to skip the ad after it has been running for 5 seconds. Every time a viewer watches this ad for at least 30 seconds, the advertiser is charged, and the video creator gets paid. Furthermore, YouTube overlay Ads, YouTube Midroll Ads, and YouTube Sponsored Cards have a similar pattern with other ads mentioned before. These ads give benefit to the video content creators, as well as to advertisers who can reach a larger audience for their ads.

YouTube's current business model uses an algorithm to sort the video list presented by the number of views, ratings and the date the video was uploaded to YouTube. The number of views is the most prominent feature on YouTube, which compares videos (Burgess & Green, 2009). This forces video content creators on YouTube to take various ways to attract and increase the number of viewers on their video. YouTubers even increase the number of views by creating sensational content, containing false information such as rumours, hoaxes, and clickbait for various purposes, including profit (Zannettou et al., 2020). Bart's research explained that content producers with many viewers would be at the top of the recommendation lists on YouTube searches (Barti, 2018).

It is not surprising if producers will do everything for profit in the capitalist era. As Adorno (1991) stressed, the cultural industry under late capitalism made standard products that slacked people's minds. Commodification is inevitable, as profit becomes a content producer's goal for this industry. Cultural products no longer bring enlightenment and provoke the critical thinking of society. This is what Adorno alluded to when discussing the cultural industry products. (T. W. Adorno, 1991)

The cultural industry is conceptualised as the process of creating, reproducing, and mass distributing cultural products (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1987). This concept emerged after Adorno saw the condition of the United States, where great corporations developed mass culture without any intervention from the Government. This gave rise to the commercialisation of mass culture under capitalism. In that era, capitalism was marked by its growing markets and consumption. However, in the internet era, capitalism has been marked by the rise of flexible production (DiMaggio & Cohen, 2005).

Adorno considers cultural industry products under capitalism to be contrary to the concept of enlightenment. The main goal of enlightenment is to liberate human beings and guarantee freedom of thought for society. The four millennial Irish writers, Sally Rooney, Naoise Dolan, Nicole Flattery and Lucy Sweeney Byrne, are good examples of how cultural products through novels and short fiction can present a critique of capitalism which is described as an oppressive system and also a critique of social media as a means to foster the illusion of control (Darling, 2021).

The emergence of mass culture under capitalism brought people to oppression and domination. Alibaba is an example of how a company that has gone from a democratic and participatory platform against a country's poor infrastructure has to turn into a platform that monopolises the market for profit (Zhang, 2020). In India, data collected from residents, including name, address, gender, date of birth and several biometric details such as fingerprints, irises, and photos summarised in a unique number called Aadhaar. Aadhaar is connected via India Stack to several digital services. India Stack also collaborates with several institutions such as banks to use Aadhaar numbers and their data. This is one example of digital capitalism, where data can be a commodity (Hicks, 2020).

Products of the cultural industry shape people's ways of thinking, norms, and life. The cultural industry products are different from other industries because the cultural industry products affect human knowledge and understanding of the world. These cultural industry products are supposed to be built by institutions involved in the production of social meaning. These institutions can be for-profit institutions, the state, or non-profit institutions. (Hesmondhalgh, 2013).

Nevertheless, capitalism develops along with rapid technological developments. Factory with their mass products raises capital through capital ownership. Nowadays, platforms like YouTube under Google raises capital through data and monetary from advertising (Sadowski, 2020).

The cultural industry is used as an adhesive for social functions and values. However, under capitalism, the cultural industry has produced standardised works known as popular culture. As a result, cultural industry products do not represent the creativity of their creators, yet these products are easier and cheaper products for mass-production purposes (T. W. Adorno, 1991). This shows that capitalism's cultural industry is used to further strengthen and develop its dominance. (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1987)

The 'popular' word has shifted its meaning from legal and political terms to the modern term as 'widely-favoured' or 'well-liked'. Popular culture is divided into inferior types of works such as popular literature, popular press, and works that are deliberately made to make people like them. Popular entertainment and popular journalism are examples as opposed to democratic journalism (Williams, 1976).

Adorno's concern about the cultural industry under capitalism was that it would shape society according to the capitalist's goal. People will lose their critical thinking because the cultural industry products will slack people's minds. People are trapped in false consciousness and think they deserve leisure entertainment after hard work. They do not realise that they still have to work for their entertainment. Capitalists made these entertainment products to gain as much profit as possible. In the end, this cultural industry will shape society's values and behaviour patterns. (Adorno, 1991)

Cultural industry before the capitalist era places society as an object rather than a subject. It was not a standardised product or the result of commodification. Adorno compared cultural products before and after capitalism as 'serious' and 'popular products'. Serious product was not intended to profit but solely to produce works of art with high aesthetic value. Hence, serious products cannot be produced as quickly as popular products under capitalism. The goal of serious products is not profit but adorable products for their high quality. Therefore, the products were authentic, spontaneous, and unique. (Adorno, 1991)

Under capitalism, the cultural industry or what Adorno (1991) listed as 'popular culture' produces standardised, popular, repetitive, and not unique products through mass media. The cultural industry at that time was regarded as entertainment and tragedy, which was formed into what they called works of art. What happens is that the cultural industry products imitate high-quality works of art and turn them into standard works for massive products for everyone. As a result, there is a change in the production of the cultural industry from use value to exchange value.

Standardising and repetitive products of the cultural industry lead people to think in the same way. As a result, people are complacent and do not protest against the system built by the capitalists. People's critical thinking is eliminated by consuming entertainment for-profit goals under capitalism. Thus, this entertainment product leads to the audience's interchangeability and puts them as objects with no critical thinking and complacency. (Adorno, 1991).

The fate of the cultural industry artists or producers under late capitalism is sceptical. According to Adorno (1991), they must follow capitalist circumstances to survive. Under late capitalism, artists in the cultural industry are just like workers in Adorno's conception. They have to meet the goals of capitalists when they create cultural products. Those who choose to idealise and do not follow the capitalist path will be given the freedom to produce cultural industry products as they wish. However, they will be marginalised, isolated, and eventually die under late capitalism in other ways. (Adorno, 1991)

Adorno's view of the mass media is pessimistic as he stated that mass media is a prolong of capitalism. He saw that people who enjoyed mass media did not have critical thinking and thought that the world was going well, regardless of whether there had been damage or injustice around them. Here people are misled, and the entertainment hampers their awareness under late capitalism or, in Adorno's term, 'mass deception'. Adorno considers this as a form of anti-enlightenment for society. It means the community is no longer equal, respecting each other, happy, appreciating thoughts, and critical of the situation. (Adorno, 1991)

The development of mass media in America is a starting point for Adorno in understanding the cultural industry under late capitalism. For Adorno, the mass media no longer reflects the condition of society, but

rather society is formed through what is shown in mass media. Mass media shapes society through a standardisation process, which means that the cultural industry through mass media produces standardised products. It happens because capitalists need fast production at the lowest possible cost for the highest profit in mass cultural production. (Adorno, 1991)

Commodification is one condition that happened in the cultural industry under late capitalism. Commodification changes use value into exchange value for profitable products (Adorno, 1991; Mosco, 2009). According to Adorno, mass media products encourage people to become subjects, not objects. This means society will become passive when they receive cultural products under late capitalism, not as subjects who produce or criticise the products. Therefore, Adorno argues that the media do not impact society, but instead, the media shape society through this process. (Adorno, 1991)

Commodification in the cultural industry described in this paper follows the forms of commodification described in detail by Mosco (2009). According to Mosco, commodification can be seen in three ways as content commodification, audience commodification, and worker commodification. Content commodification involves transforming messages into meaningful systems of thought into a marketable and profitable product. The content commodification from a media such as YouTube is associated with data, words, moving images, and the sound produced in a content.

Smythe (1977) explains that the commodification of the audience is the main commodity of the mass media. Mass media is formed from the process of attracting an audience and using it as a target for advertisers. The development of the digital era with YouTube as one of its platforms further expands commodification in the entire communication process because the digital system can measure and monitor precisely for every information transaction as YouTube does through its algorithm. This YouTube algorithm is updated from time to time. However, the YouTube algorithm system provides a kind of reward and punishment for vloggers based on their performance. If the viewer does not like the video and stops in the middle of it, the vlogger will be 'punished' by shifting its position from the YouTube algorithm. This makes YouTubers need to improve their performance by following the market's will. YouTubers also modify their behaviours by compromising their integrity and personal safety to 'fit' the algorithm (Pedersen, 2019). The YouTube algorithm also affects animation content creators on how they choose themes, techniques, treatment, and duration on their video (Ribes, 2020) to attract brands and advertisements (Bishop, 2018). Pedersen (2019) explains that YouTubers believe watch time, the thumbnail photo, video title and controversial content dictate the algorithm. The comment rate after watching and the attitude expression rate after watching have a significant positive effect on a YouTuber's

annual income. Thus controversial and debatable videos make more money on YouTube (Han, 2020).

Braverman (1998) explains that workers are a unit who design and execute works for a broad market in the commodification process. Consequently, the workers involved in designing a product are expected to work most efficiently for maximum profit. YouTube content creators or YouTubers are considered workers for YouTube (Lessig, 2008 in Ulya, 2019) because they provide content for YouTube. This research will focus on the content commodification in Deddy Corbuzier's YouTube account to see changes in the content uploaded by Deddy Corbuzier.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses qualitative research methods to collect information directly from the source through the observation process. Researchers can see how research objects act and behave in their context in qualitative research. In addition, researchers can examine documents, observe behaviour, or interview participants to capture the meaning or message behind it (Creswell, 2014). This study uses a qualitative approach to reveal the commodification behind the video on Deddy Corbuzier's channel.

This study uses the critical thinking paradigm with CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis) method with multimodality analysis. CDA is a critical analysis used to describe and detail linguistic features and determine why and how these features were produced and what ideological purposes may be behind them. CDA is used to analyse Deddy Corbuzier's YouTube videos to reveal something that appears normal or neutral on the surface but is an attempt to form a representation for a specific purpose. Critical means that the researcher will denaturalise the language to reveal interests, ideas, absences, and assumptions buried in the text (Machin & Mayr, 2014).

The analytical approach using multimodality is intended to determine how semiotic processes or events are produced, interpreted, or used (Kern, 2015). Multimodal discourse analysis is used to describe all the important elements of the text that convey meaning. The text by (O'Halloran, 2011) is a useful introduction to this particular method. Multimodal discourse analysis extends the study of discourse by adding other sources, such as cues, music and sounds, images, and symbolism.

The data collection method in this study used observation and documentation techniques. The data source comes from Deddy Corbuzier's YouTube video content. Video content will be analysed for its titles, thumbnails, and conversations. Then the content will be observed in an unstructured manner. This unstructured observation is appropriate for observing objects that cannot provide feedback to researchers (Kern, 2015). The analysis will be carried out based on the findings during the observation process.

The stages of the qualitative research in this study are adapted from Creswell (2014) as follows. First, we will organise and prepare the

data for analysis. The data in this study will be taken from Deddy Corbuzier's YouTube video. And then read and view the data as a whole. Thus, data was encoded by organising data representing a particular data analysis segment. The coding results are used to categorise by theme for analysis. We use narration to describe the information from the analysed video. The last step is to interpret data by making narratives based on the results or findings and linking them to the concepts and theories relevant to the research objectives.

This study will focus on two videos from Deddy Corbuzier's channel. These two videos represent the focus of the study on the critical and uncritical content of Deddy Corbuzier's channel. The first video is with the title "*SITI FADILAH, SEBUAH KONSPIRASI - (EXCLUSIVE)*." The second video is titled "*PODCAST TANPA BRA!! DINAR CANDY*". At last, this study will show Google's capital model with YouTube as one of Google's services and how YouTube and YouTubers make money.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS



Figure 1. Number of Monthly Subscribers on Deddy Corbuzier's YouTube Channel
Source: Socialblade.com (2021)

Based on data from Socialblade.com (2021) in figure 1, the highest number of subscribers obtained by Deddy Corbuzier was in May 2020 with 910,000 subscribers, and the second-highest was in September 2020 with 700,000 subscribers. The author finds it difficult to determine which video triggers the increase in subscribers in that month, so the author takes a video sample with the highest number of views in both months. In each of these months, there is one video that has the most views, one of the videos is "*SITI FADILAH, SEBUAH KONSPIRASI - (EXCLUSIVE)*" with 7,596,137 views and aired on 21 May 2020. The second video with the most views in September 2020 is a video titled "*PODCAST TANPA BRA!! DINAR CANDY*", which was broadcast on 23 September 2020, with 23,394,524 views. These two videos will be used for further analysis.

Content Commodification Through Meta Level Features

The content commodification in Deddy Corbuzier's YouTube channel can be seen in how he uses the meta-level feature in his uploaded YouTube videos. Meta-level features such as titles, taglines, thumbnails are the most sensitive parts to increase video popularity (Hoiles et al., 2016).

The more popular the video, the more views it will gain. Thus it will generate greater profits for the YouTuber.

The first meta-level feature can be seen from the title chosen by Deddy Corbuzier on each of the two videos. Both videos use interesting words. The first video uses the words 'conspiracy' and 'exclusive,' while the second video uses the words 'tanpa bra (no bra).' Previous research found that including popular terms in video titles can increase the number of views (Iek & Zhang, 2015). Moreover, both videos mention the names of the guests in the title, 'Siti Fadilah' and 'Dinar Candy.' The two videos also feature a tagline with the name of the character #sitifadilah in the first video, then #dinarcandy and #deddycorbuzier in the second video, making it easier to find YouTube search. The use of figures' names is one way to make cultural industry products accepted in the market (Hesmondhalgh, 2013).



Figure 2. Thumbnail from Deddy Corbuzier's Videos

Source: <https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=by3SglhT9Dc> and <https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=CK7L4-dS4OA>

Thumbnails on both videos use interesting images to click on. In the podcast video with Siti Fadilah Supari, the title "SAYA DIKORBANKAN (I WAS SACRIFICED)" is written in large red letters to emphasise the video. "I was sacrificed" puts Siti Fadilah as a party that needs attention. The name 'SITI FADILAH' is also printed in bright yellow and larger font than the word 'I WAS SACRIFICED.' This emphasis attracts users' attention mainly because, as a result of this video, their interviews are considered to violate the rules. After all, Siti Fadilah is still in detention (Kuwado, 2020).

Deddy Corbuzier's podcast video with Dinar Candy also uses an eye-catching thumbnail (figure 2). The same writing characteristic of the title is maintained in this video by using large red letters at the top for the theme "NO BRA PODCAST" and large bright yellow letters at the bottom for the name "WITH DINAR CANDY". Deddy Corbuzier always maintains the same characteristic by using capital letters of red, yellow, and white in almost every video. This repetition is one of Deddy Corbuzier's efforts to create a character in his podcast. This characteristic will make his video easy to search by audiences. Zannettou et al. (2020) explained that eye-catching thumbnails would increase the number of clicks from viewers on the video.

The podcast video of Deddy Corbuzier with Siti Fadilah uses a thumbnail image of Siti Fadilah talking on the left and Deddy Corbuzier on the right looking down as if he is listening to her (picture 2). This does not match the reality because the interview on this podcast was not conducted in Deddy Corbuzier's studio, but somewhere when Siti Fadilah was undergoing treatment and still in detention (Kuwado, 2020). Meanwhile, in the podcast video with Dinar Candy (figure 2), the thumbnail on the left shows Dinar Candy in a position of undressing her shirt that covers her breasts and looking into it. On the right, Deddy Corbuzier looked at her with his left hand holding his chest as if surprised. The use of Dinar Candy's body on the thumbnail combined with the 'shocked' expression of Deddy Corbuzier is an exploitative form of the woman's body that can be used to increase views. Advertisers have previously used the exploitation of women's bodies in the TV industry for sales escalation. (Kumud et al., 2012).

Despite the controversy behind both videos, and analysis of the meta-level feature of the two YouTube contents of Deddy Corbuzier shows that there were efforts from Deddy Corbuzier to increase the number of views. The consistent use of meta-analysis proves a more focused and convergent self-presentation strategy. The speed of changing trends on the internet forces YouTubers to create a character that can be recognised from time to time (Bruzos, 2021). This will lead to symbolic recognition (Bourdieu, 1991) from viewers and increase views from YouTube viewers. It will certainly be a fruitful land for advertisers (Hatch, 2019). When opening both videos, viewers will be presented with a 'must-watch true view ad' for 5 seconds before the podcast video starts. However, there will be no more advertisements until the video podcast ends. The content commodification in the media related to the procedure for selecting titles, thumbnails, and taglines is directed to increase the number of views, which will lead to a profit increase obtained by YouTubers (Dijck, 2013).

Critical Discourse Analysis and the Critique of Cultural Industry Under Late Capitalism

The metaphor used by Siti Fadilah in her podcast interview with Deddy Corbuzier accurately describes that the title of this video deserves to be called 'Conspiracy.' The metaphors used include: '*anehnya* (strangely),' '*saya membuktikan* (I prove),' '*komersialisasi* (commercialisation),' '*hati-hati* (be careful),' 'false positive,' 'false negative,' and '*membongkar* (expose).' However, the flow of this conversation cannot be separated from the role of Deddy Corbuzier. He also uses metaphors that successfully directs his conversation with Siti Fadilah. The metaphor that Deddy Corbuzier uses includes "*Ibu membongkar* (you exposed)," "*Ibu berhasil* (you succeed)", "*Ibu menolak* (you refuse)", "*Ibu nyetop* (you stop)", "*Ibu yakin* (you are sure)". Deddy always puts the conversation on his guest. This makes the interview focus on the second party and can reveal the opinion of his guest. The metaphor used by

Deddy serves as a rhetoric to persuade or convince the listener or interlocutor (Haryatmoko, 2019). Deddy used this metaphor to persuade his interlocutor, Siti Fadilah, to express her thoughts about the pandemic conspiracy spread to the public's attention at the time. This is one of the politeness strategies that is used by Deddy Corbuzier (Pangestuti & Nirmala, 2015).

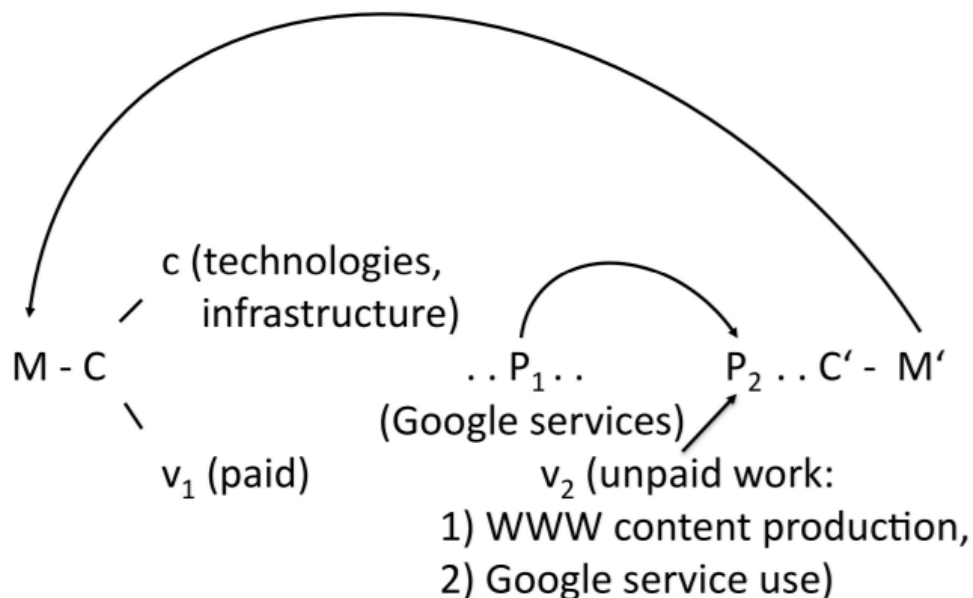
Apart from the topic of the conspiracy being discussed among audiences at that time, this conversation between Deddy Corbuzier and Siti Fadilah has opened up the audience's critical thinking. The questions and allegations made by Siti Fadilah in the conversation sparked controversy until Deddy Corbuzier closed the special comment column on this video. The debate did not even stop here, and the mass media also discussed the conversations between Deddy Corbuzier and Siti Fadilah. One of the news explored every controversial fact from Siti Fadilah's claims during the conversation (Garnesia, 2020). Through his good approach to Siti Fadilah during the interview, Deddy Corbuzier made Siti Fadilah feel free to reveal the facts she believed in. Deddy Corbuzier, through this video, has succeeded in proving that he can still produce interesting works but can provoke a critical attitude among the audience. This contradicts Adorno's criticism that the cultural industry products eliminate society's critical thinking (T. W. Adorno, 1991).

At first, Deddy Corbuzier refused to show trash content on TV. Then when he created a YouTube channel, he created fitness-themed educational content and critical content. Currently, he is popular as a YouTuber with a podcast genre that often raises critical themes that open people's minds. However, he began to create vulgar content over time, one of which invited Dinar Candy. In the video, the words used by both parties tend to be vulgar, such as the words: 'toket' (boobs) (2 times), 'payudara' (breasts) (4 times), 'tetek' (tits) (12 times), 'bra' (31 times), 'celana dalam' (panty) (27 times), and 'sex' (2 times). Even in the middle of the interview, Deddy said: "*This seems like the stupidest podcast I have ever...*". This statement is Deddy's confession that the themes and conversations raised in this podcast are different from other podcasts he made. However, this video podcast with Dinar Candy is the video with the highest number of views throughout the videos on Deddy Corbuzier's channel. This led Deddy Corbuzier to repeat his success by inviting Dinar Candy back to his podcast twice, with the titles: "*SEKARANG NO CD!! DINAR CANDY - GUE GILA LAMA2- Deddy Corbuzier Podcast (NOW NO PANTY DINAR CANDY - I WILL BE CRAZY - Deddy Corbuzier Podcast)*" and "*MAKSIAT LOE MAKSIAT LOE!!- DINAR CANDY - ALDI TAHER -Deddy Corbuzier Podcast (SINNER, SINNER!!- DINAR CANDY - ALDI TAHER -Deddy Corbuzier Podcast)*". As we see, he produced standardised videos and made repetition by bringing the same theme and same guest to his podcast exposed woman's bodies because the first video with Dinar Candy was popular. This shows that Deddy Corbuzier repeats the theme of his podcast with Dinar Candy after the first successful video. This is in line with the criticism that the cultural

industry under late capitalism is a standardised and repetitive process to gain profit (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1987). Adorno's concern for the cultural industry product is reflected in these podcasts. The cultural industry, through mass media, produces standardised, popular, repetitive, and not unique products. The show places people as uncritical objects, do not want to think, and are complacent (T. W. Adorno, 1991). YouTubers that we hope will survive with critical content have finally given up on YouTube's algorithm and the market's desire by serving popular content. This proves that in the internet era, Adorno's thoughts on the fate of the cultural industry under capitalism still apply, although in different shapes.

Google Capitalism Model and How YouTuber Make Money

Fuchs (2012) explains the details of Google's capital accumulation by applying capital accumulation according to Marx and comparing it to this digital era. YouTube as one of Google's services is included in the capital pattern of Google as the parent company. So this paper will explain the overall pattern of Google's capital accumulation according to (Fuchs, 2012).



C' = Internet prosumer commodity (user-generated content, transaction data, virtual advertising space and time)
 Google services are free to use, they are no commodity.
 Not services or the search capacity are the Google commodity, but user data.

Figure 3. Google's capital accumulation process (Fuchs, 2012)

Figure 3 shows the process of Google's capital accumulation. (Fuchs, 2012) explains that Google buys capital (M) in the form of fixed capital (technology, infrastructure, etc.) and wages for its employees. Then Google employees use fixed capital to produce Google services (P1) that are provided for free to the viewers, one of many Google services is YouTube. P2 is the result of the work of unpaid employees. They are Google users who use various Google services for free and produce data commodities according to their interests and activities in these services. These data commodities are then sold by Google (C') to advertisers (C'-M') to get money (M') from advertisers. This is where the exploitation of users as productive labourers works for Google and helps generate more value for free (Fuchs, 2012).

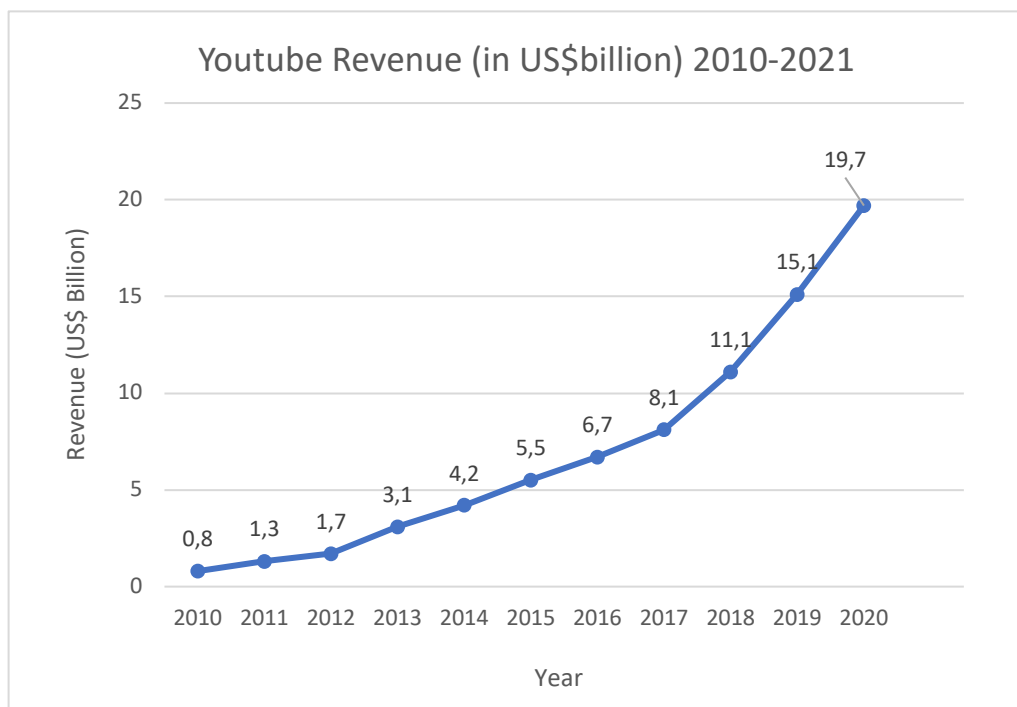


Figure 4. YouTube Annual Revenue 2010-2021
Source: (Iqbal, 2022)

As seen in figure 4, The total YouTube revenue increases yearly. In 2020, YouTube earned \$19.7 billion in revenue. Income through YouTube TV Paying Subscribers was US\$ 3 million, and YouTube Premium Paying Subscribers was US\$ 30 million (omnicoreagency.com, 2021).

YouTube is a little different from other Google services because YouTube has content creators paid according to the ads clicked on their videos. (Fuchs, 2012) introduces a different formula for this content creator.

$$p = s / (c + v1 + v2)$$

s: surplus-value, c: constant capital, v1: wages paid to fixed employees, v2: wages paid to users

Here, content creators on YouTube do not work completely free for Google and still earn money (see v2) through a collaboration between YouTubers and Google AdSense. Currently, statistics in Socialblade.com (2022) shows that Deddy Corbuzier is estimated to earn US\$31.3K to US\$501K monthly, or around US\$375.8K to US\$6M annually.

Besides the revenue from Google AdSense ads, YouTubers also can make money from their popularity to earn income from other sources. Trust in YouTuber's expertise in making videos will lead advertisers to entrust the promotion of their products online to YouTubers. Deddy Corbuzier shows a scene eating candy products in the video with Dinar Candy. Until now, Deddy Corbuzier's videos have started to include not one but several products in his video podcast. However, regulations in Indonesia ensure the confidentiality of individual data for tax purposes, so we cannot get information about how much Deddy Corbuzier earns from this online promotion.

This whole explanation about how YouTube and YouTubers make a profit proves Adorno's concern about the cultural industry under capitalism. Here we see that people have lost critical thinking because the cultural industry products will slack people's minds. People are trapped in false consciousness and think they deserve leisure entertainment after their hard work from YouTube. They do not realise that they still have to work for the entertainment they have and become free labour by providing their data for YouTube to gain profit from advertisements. (Adorno, 1991)

CONCLUSION

This study aims to analyse two podcast videos with Dinar Candy and Siti Fadilah on Deddy Corbuzier's YouTube channel. The results of multimodality analysis in the form of titles, thumbnails, and taglines on both videos show that Deddy Corbuzier commodifies content to attract attention from his viewers in both videos. The content commodification in the media related to selecting titles, thumbnails, and taglines is directed to increase the number of views, which will lead to a profit increase of YouTubers.

The results from the CDA in the interview texts of the two videos show that Deddy Corbuzier's interview with Siti Fadilah still maintains the critical nature that Deddy Corbuzier has carried as an idealisation concept for his YouTube channel. This contradicts Adorno's statement that society's critical nature will be lost in the cultural industry products under capitalism. However, the opposite happened in the video with

Dinar Candy. Deddy even admits that this video is the 'stupidest' video he has ever made in this video. The very high number of views on this video prompted Deddy to invite Dinar Candy back in two other videos. This aligns with Adorno's statement that the cultural industry products tend to be standardised and repetitive. YouTubers that we hope will survive with critical content have finally given up on YouTube's algorithm and the market's desire by serving popular and uncritical content. This proves that in the internet era, Adorno's thoughts on the fate of the cultural industry under capitalism still apply theoretically, although in different shapes.

Practically, the Google capital model shows that YouTube viewers have lost their critical thinking because the cultural industry products slacked their minds. They are trapped in false consciousness and think they deserve leisure entertainment after their hard work from YouTube. They do not realise that they still have to work for their entertainment. They become free labour by providing their data for YouTube to profit from advertisements.

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