

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. The Concept of Woman's Masculinity

1. Definition of Masculinity and Femininity

Women's masculinity shows that masculinity can also be expressed by women, challenging traditional gender norms and opening new spaces for analyzing gender identity representation (Halberstam, 2018). Masculinity and femininity are concepts deeply tied to gender order and socio-cultural dynamics. Masculinity is typically associated with traits, behaviours, or roles linked to men, while femininity refers to characteristics often associated with women. However, these definitions continue to evolve. Scientific studies suggest that masculinity and femininity are not merely the result of biological attributes but are also shaped by social norms, culture, and power relations. In this context, the meanings of masculinity and femininity are not static but transform according to social, political, and economic changes in society (Nordin et al., 2024; Goedecke, 2024).

Masculinity can be viewed as a pattern of social practices that emphasizes the dynamic relationship between men and *gender* norms. According to Nordin et al. (2024), masculinity reflects a relational and contested nature, depending on the interactions between individuals and the gender order. Moreover, Goedecke (2024) adds that masculinity cannot be separated from the influence of power structures such as colonialism, race, and sexuality. This perspective reveals that intersecting systems of oppression and privilege shape masculinity, thus creating diversity in the expressions of masculinity across different social contexts.

Gater (2024) documents the changes in masculine identity, particularly among working-class men. He found that young men today express a softer form of masculinity, reflecting evolving gender norms. This shift reflects how social and economic pressures influence the concept of masculinity. On the other hand,

masculinity also continues to face challenges in meeting traditional expectations, which often conflict with modern realities. This shows that masculinity is complex and dynamic, continuously undergoing negotiation and redefinition.

Femininity, on the other hand, reflects characteristics that are more flexible and dynamic. Alsamih (2024) argues that femininity is not just about appearance or stereotypical traits but is more about an energy that encompasses acceptance, belief, and trust in outcomes. Hoskin and Blair (2024) emphasize that social influences shape femininity and reflect cultural expectations that vary in different contexts. Therefore, femininity is not only seen as traditional gender roles but also as a response to changing social dynamics.

In conclusion, masculinity and femininity are social constructs that are dynamic and influenced by cultural, political, and economic factors. Modern perspectives on both concepts emphasize their fluidity and ongoing transformation in response to the changing times. Understanding masculinity and femininity through various dimensions, as described by researchers (Nordin et al., 2024; Goedecke, 2024; Alsamih, 2024; Hoskin & Blair, 2024), helps us to see how gender order affects the lives of individuals and society as a whole.

2. Masculinity in the Context of Gender and Social Identity

Masculinity is a concept deeply influenced by cultural norms, institutional structures, and social relations. In the context of gender, masculinity is often constructed to reflect traits such as dominance, physical strength, and emotional toughness, as explained by Cornea (2024). This creates hegemonic standards that pressure men to conform to these ideal expectations. Masculinity not only shapes individual behaviour but also plays a key role in sustaining patriarchal structures within society. However, this approach often overlooks the reality of more inclusive expressions of gender diversity.

Cornea (2024) highlights that hegemonic masculinity can lead to an identity crisis for men who feel pressured to meet unrealistic social standards. The pressure to exhibit dominance and suppress emotions often negatively impacts men's mental health. Conversely, Tähkä et al. (2024) propose a more open perspective on masculinity that embraces gender expression diversity. This approach challenges traditional norms by encouraging men to define their identities more authentically without fear of social stigma.

Masculinity is also shaped by the intersection of social identities, including race, class, and sexual orientation. Haber-Curran and Tillapaugh (2024) explain that socially marginalized men often experience masculinity differently from hegemonic norms. They face unique challenges in constructing their identities under the pressure of discriminatory social structures. Masculinity within these groups often intersects with other forms of oppression, such as racism or homophobia, creating a complex experience that intertwines gender and social identities.

An inclusive approach to masculinity opens space for diversity in gender representation and social identity. Tähkä et al. (2024) emphasized the importance of fostering a more flexible understanding of masculinity to support men's mental health and well-being. Additionally, acknowledging the unique experiences of marginalized men, as described by Haber-Curran and Tillapaugh (2024), also helps create a more just and equitable society. Masculinity should not be measured by dominance but can instead be celebrated through authenticity and diversity.

In conclusion, masculinity is a social construct that interacts with gender and social identity, reflecting dynamic cultural norms. As highlighted by Cornea (2024), Tähkä et al. (2024), and Haber-Curran and Tillapaugh (2024), the understanding of masculinity needs to encompass more inclusive perspectives and challenge traditional norms. By embracing diversity and removing hegemonic pressures, masculinity can

contribute to the creation of a more equal society that supports the health and well-being of all individuals.

3. The Development of the Concept of Woman's Masculinity in Gender Studies

Women's masculinity has become an increasingly compelling topic in gender studies, reflecting the dynamic evolution of gender roles and social identity. Green and Williams (2024) reveal that women who exhibit masculine behaviour may either benefit from or be disadvantaged in social interactions, depending on cultural and institutional contexts. This phenomenon illustrates the complex relationship between individual characteristics and societal expectations of gender. As society progresses, the concept of female masculinity opens up new space in discussions about the fluidity of gender roles.

In professional contexts, women who display masculine traits such as leadership, courage, and assertiveness are often perceived as more competent but emotionally less warm (Smith & Thomas, 2024). This creates a perception conflict between traditional gender norms and professional demands that prioritize competence. Women in the workplace often have to navigate this challenge carefully in order to meet professional expectations without violating social norms. As such, female masculinity highlights the tension between shifting gender norms and institutional expectations.

Furthermore, Miller and Gray (2024) emphasized that gender identity is no longer viewed as static, but rather as flexible and dynamic. The concept of female masculinity is now accepted as part of a broader effort to promote gender inclusivity. With this growing acceptance, women are increasingly empowered to express multiple dimensions of their identity without stigma. This not only enhances gender equality but also deepens society's understanding of social identity. Gender flexibility is key to building a more inclusive and equitable society.

On the other hand, cultural resistance to female masculinity remains a challenge, especially in specific social environments. Lee and Chong (2024) note that women who exhibit masculine behavior, such as taking initiative or leading, often face cultural barriers. However, they are also frequently praised for their courage in breaking traditional stereotypes. This highlights the importance of understanding cultural and social contexts when evaluating the acceptance of female masculinity. Their boldness reflects a societal shift toward broader acceptance of gender diversity.

In conclusion, the development of the concept of female masculinity demonstrates a significant transformation in gender studies and social identity. Green and Williams (2024), Smith and Thomas (2024), and Miller and Gray (2024) agree that gender flexibility plays a crucial role in driving social change. Although cultural resistance persists (Lee & Chong, 2024), female masculinity paves the way for society to embrace more diverse gender identities. This transformation marks an important step toward gender equality and justice in modern society.

4. Representation of Woman's Masculinity in Popular Culture

Masculinity in popular culture is increasingly visible, reflecting a shift in social values related to gender. This representation not only challenges traditional norms but also enriches the discussion around the flexibility of gender identity. Martinez (2025) finds that popular television series depict masculine women characters with emotional complexity, thereby breaking existing gender stereotypes. Furthermore, popular culture serves as an important platform to explore new dimensions of women's masculine identity.

In contemporary action films, woman characters with masculine traits are beginning to dominate the narrative, reflecting changes in traditional gender norms (Johnson & Smith, 2024). Leadership, bravery, and strength traits, typically associated with male masculinity, are now primary attributes of female characters. This indicates that popular culture not only reflects social change but also helps

promote acceptance of more inclusive gender roles. Such representations serve as significant evidence of popular culture's success in redefining gender roles in society.

On the other hand, woman's masculinity in film is also used to critique the dominant binary concept of gender identity, as Patel (2025) suggests. These representations highlight the complexity of gender performance and show how women can deconstruct rigid norms through their roles. By presenting women's masculinity, popular culture becomes a critical space for challenging traditional gender constructions. This fosters broader discussions about gender identity as dynamic and flexible.

In addition to challenging stereotypes, representations of women's masculinity also provide emotional and narrative depth that was previously rarely seen (Martinez, 2025). Masculine women characters are often portrayed as physically strong but also emotionally vulnerable, creating a unique balance that broadens the audience's understanding of masculine traits. This approach not only celebrates women's masculinity but also demonstrates that strength does not exclude empathy or gentleness.

In conclusion, the representation of women's masculinity in popular culture reflects a significant transformation in how gender is understood and portrayed. Martinez (2025), Johnson and Smith (2024), and Patel (2025) agree that popular culture functions as an effective medium to challenge gender stereotypes and introduce new perspectives on gender identity. This shift not only reflects changes in societal values but also promotes a more inclusive conversation about gender and identity.

B. Western Films and Gender Representation

1. History and Characteristics of Western Films

Western films have a long history that reflects the culture, values, and challenges of American society during the frontier era. The genre emerged in the early 20th century and became one of the most iconic genres in film history. Classic Westerns often depict life on the American frontier, focusing on themes of survival, law, and justice (Parker, 2024). Cowboys or lawmen are central characters who battle outlaws, representing morality amid the chaos of the frontier world.

The visual characteristics of Western films include vast natural landscapes that highlight both the beauty and brutality of frontier life. Cinematography features desolate deserts, mountains, and expansive horizons to create a sense of isolation and struggle (Thompson, 2024). The use of dramatic lighting and compositions centered on individual characters reinforces themes of solitude and courage. These visuals not only provide a unique aesthetic but also emphasize the moral conflicts in Western narratives.

By the 1990s, Western films began incorporating traditional elements with contemporary social issues. Smith (2023) notes that modern Westerns feature more complex characters and reflective narratives, mirroring shifting societal values. The genre became more inclusive, presenting protagonists from diverse backgrounds and addressing issues such as social justice and gender. This evolution not only broadened the appeal of the Western genre but also revived its relevance in the modern era.

Contemporary Western films often challenge traditional stereotypes by portraying strong female characters and diverse protagonists (Davis, 2023). In addition, the genre now highlights more complex internal conflicts and social dynamics. This approach brings a new dimension to Westerns, making them a medium to explore universal themes such as identity, justice, and the struggle for

survival. As a result, modern Westerns have become richer and more relevant to global audiences.

In conclusion, Western films are a continuously evolving genre, adapting classic elements like iconic landscapes and moral struggles while integrating contemporary issues. By portraying more diverse and complex protagonists, the genre remains relevant as a reflection of social dynamics. Over time, Western films have successfully maintained their appeal by offering narratives rooted in tradition yet open to change (Parker, 2024; Smith, 2023; Davis, 2023).

2. Gender Representation in Western Films

Western films have historically mirrored gender dynamics, highlighting the roles of men and women in frontier society. In classic films, masculinity was often depicted as a symbol of strength and individualism, while women were placed in passive roles supporting male dominance (Stevens, 2023). This representation reinforced gender hierarchies, with narratives focusing on male protagonists as the sole heroes facing the challenges of frontier life.

Gender divisions in traditional Western films confined women to domestic spaces or peripheral roles in the story. Taylor (2024) noted that women often lost agency in the narrative, being shown only as supporters or objects of male protection. Female characters, though present, rarely had a direct influence on the central conflict of the story, emphasizing the gender imbalance in the film's cultural representation.

Gender roles in classic Western films were also rigid, reflecting the patriarchal values of the era. Men were portrayed as harsh and unemotional, while women were cast as “damsels in distress” or mothers supporting male struggles (Anderson, 2023). This representation not only overlooked the complexity of female characters but also limited the potential for more diverse storytelling.

However, in recent decades, the representation of gender in Western films has undergone significant changes. Women have started to appear as active and

empowered characters, challenging traditional gender norms. Lee (2024) observed that many modern Western films depict women with substantial narrative power, able to influence the course of the story. This transformation reflects a broader social shift towards more inclusive and equitable values.

In conclusion, the representation of gender in Western films has evolved from conservative portrayals to more inclusive narratives. These changes allow for a more complex exploration of female characters, while also challenging rigid gender stereotypes. Thus, the Western genre not only preserves its traditions but also adapts to more egalitarian social values (Stevens, 2023; Taylor, 2024; Lee, 2024).

3. The Influence of Western Films on Social Perceptions of Gender

Western films have had a significant influence on social perceptions of gender, creating stereotypes that reflect and reinforce societal norms. Male characters in this genre are often portrayed as the ideal masculine figure, strong, independent, and dominant. This representation ingrains the idea that masculinity is synonymous with physical bravery, power, and control, shaping societal expectations of men's roles in everyday life (Lei & Azahari, 2024).

On the other hand, women's roles in Western films are often limited to supporting characters such as housewives or objects of protection. This representation reinforces traditional gender stereotypes, where women are seen as weak and dependent on men. It restricts the perception of women's ability to take active roles in both social and professional life (Fregolent, 2024).

Although some female characters in Western films display bravery or strength, they remain overshadowed by male characters. Yakalı (2024) notes that this representation can reinforce the idea that women lack equality in the political, social, and professional arenas. Thus, Western films often perpetuate narratives that limit women's potential.

However, the impact of Western films is not entirely static. Modern films have begun to challenge these stereotypes by featuring more empowered women and more complex male roles. By shifting the focus from hegemonic masculinity to more inclusive representations, some Western films provide opportunities to transform social perceptions of gender into something more equal and progressive (Lei & Azahari, 2024; Yakalı, 2024).

Overall, Western films have shaped gender perceptions by reinforcing traditional roles, but the evolution within this genre shows potential to promote more inclusive views. These changes are important in reflecting the evolving values of society while addressing stereotypes that limit the roles of both men and women in various aspects of life.

4. Woman's Masculinity in Western Films

Significant changes have occurred in the representation of women's masculinity in Western films, with more space now given to intense and complex female characters. No longer relegated to the role of the "damsel in distress," women are now taking on leading roles, becoming decision-makers, or even law enforcers. This shift changes societal views on gender roles that were once rigid (Hickmott, 2020). This process demonstrates how Western films function as a medium for redefining gender, introducing women with strong masculine attributes.

Women's masculinity in Western films is reflected through characters who challenge traditional stereotypes of femininity. Women in films like *The Double Life of Veronique* (1991), *Carol* (2015), and *Ammonite* (2020) expand the definition of masculinity by showcasing traits like courage, independence, and strength, which were previously considered male-associated characteristics. These characters do not merely serve as supporting roles but become the focal point of the narrative, illustrating the social changes in recognizing women as equals in leadership and bravery (Jiayang Chen, 2024).

Women in modern Western films adopt masculine traits such as courage, assertiveness, and leadership abilities. For instance, in *Jane Got a Gun*, the lead female character demonstrates that women can become central figures in a genre traditionally dominated by men. Furthermore, the miniseries *Godless* provides a platform for female characters to lead, even including a character with a gay identity. This kind of representation reflects the evolution of the Western genre in embracing gender diversity and challenging traditional roles of masculinity (Blanco-Herrero et al., 2021).

This transformation highlights how the Western genre is gradually opening up space for women to occupy positions traditionally dominated by men. Women's masculinity is not only expressed through physical courage but also through how they lead, make decisions, and take control of their lives. It is a more dynamic and inclusive representation, changing how society perceives the role of women in popular culture (Jiayang Chen, 2024; Blanco-Herrero et al., 2021).

Overall, Western films now present a more diverse portrayal of women and masculinity. With strong and independent female characters, the genre encourages audiences to rethink traditional gender constructs, offering new insights into women's roles in a more egalitarian society. This change is not just about gender recognition but also about how female characters are redefining the meaning of bravery and leadership.

C. Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA)

1. Definition and Basic Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an approach aimed at uncovering how language, ideology, power, and social structures are interconnected within discourse. This approach focuses on how language is used to shape, maintain, or even challenge existing social structures. CDA examines how power and social inequality are reflected in language and other forms of communication, and how discourse can

either reinforce or dismantle existing social dominance (Shepherd, 2024; Zajda, 2023). Thus, CDA not only analyzes texts in a textual sense but also within their social and historical contexts. Kress & van Leeuwen (2001) MCDA views meaning as being constructed through the combination of text, visuals, audio, and other multimodal elements that function together within discourse.

The basic principle of CDA is to view language as a non-neutral tool in social interactions. Language is always influenced by and plays a role in supporting ideologies and power within society. Catalano and Waugh (2020) argue that critical discourse analysis can identify how discourse reflects power inequalities and supports the dominance of certain ideologies. Therefore, CDA not only analyzes the linguistic forms used but also the social meanings embedded within them. In this regard, CDA serves to explore how discourse shapes social reality.

Furthermore, CDA also seeks to identify how discourse can influence or be influenced by social structures and power relations in society. This involves understanding how discourse affects policies, social practices, and even individual attitudes toward certain groups. Zajda (2023) explains that CDA seeks to reveal how language is used to sustain or challenge power across various social contexts. Therefore, critical discourse analysis is not only focused on the text but also on the social context and ideology underlying it.

Thus, CDA provides a deeper insight into the relationship between language and social structure. This approach allows us to look beyond the literal meaning of a text and uncover how it can shape, reinforce, or challenge power relations and ideologies in society. Through CDA, we can critically understand the role of language in building and dismantling existing social structures and power dynamics.

2. Application of Critical Discourse Analysis in Media and Film Studies

The application of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in media and film studies provides deep insights into how media shapes and reinforces ideologies within society. By utilizing CDA, researchers can analyze how discourse in films or other media conveys messages that contain social, political, or cultural biases. As found by Audah Kadhim and Fadhil Abbas (2023), CDA can be used to assess how animated films, such as *The Lion King*, subtly build and maintain racial ideologies, which in turn influence viewers' perceptions of race and social class. Through this analysis, we can become more critical of the impact that media representations have on societal views.

CDA also enables the uncovering of how discourse in films relates to power and social ideologies. Young and Phillips (2024) explain that films set in the Appalachian region often depict "white working-class" identities that are tied to negative stereotypes. These portrayals not only reinforce societal views of these groups but also relate to ideologies of punishment that justify punitive policies. By using CDA, the influence of ideology in films can be identified and analyzed, providing a deeper understanding of how the media strengthens existing social and political structures.

Additionally, CDA is applied to investigate how documentary films address issues such as stigmatization and stereotypes. Brylla (2023), in his research, demonstrates how media can shape social perceptions by introducing or challenging stereotypes through visual and narrative representations. In this context, CDA serves as a tool to analyze how discourse in documentaries either reinforces or challenges social stigma, as well as how films can reduce or exacerbate discrimination against certain groups. This approach allows for the identification of social dynamics that might not be apparent at first glance.

Overall, the application of CDA in media and film studies provides a critical perspective on social representations in various forms of media. By integrating intersectionality theory, as proposed by Esposito (2024), this analysis is able to uncover how different forms of oppression, such as race and gender, are intertwined in media narratives. Therefore, CDA is not only a tool for understanding representations but also for exploring how media can reinforce or transform existing power structures within society.

3. Multimodality in Discourse Analysis: The Integration of Text, Image, and Sound Elements

Multimodality in discourse analysis refers to the integration of various elements of communication, such as text, images, sound, and other elements, to construct more complex and profound meanings. In many contexts, such as international political campaigns, the use of multimodality is crucial in influencing public opinion. Liang and Jiao (2024) explain that in international public campaigns, various media, such as propaganda videos, combine speeches with dramatic music and emotionally stirring visuals to strengthen the message being conveyed. These elements work together to create a more persuasive and emotional narrative, which can more effectively influence the audience's views.

Suarez Abreu and Barbieri Vieira (2022) also reveal that multimodality not only creates meaning but can also influence the emotions of the audience. The use of images and sound in a text provides additional cues that not only enrich the reader's understanding but can also alter their interpretation of the message being conveyed. Images can clarify the context, while sound or music can add emotional nuance, creating a stronger connection between the audience and the message. In discourse analysis, the ability of multimodality to influence perception and emotions becomes a crucial aspect of understanding communication dynamics.

Furthermore, multimodality also encompasses non-verbal elements that are important in face-to-face communication, such as gestures and facial expressions. Lim et al. (2022) mention that, in addition to text and images, body aspects such as hand movements or facial expressions provide additional critical information in the communication process. In face-to-face interactions, these elements play a significant role in adding layers of meaning, enriching the message, and clarifying the sender's intent. This indicates that multimodality is not limited to more familiar media forms like images or text but also includes physical dimensions that are often unspoken yet highly meaningful.

Overall, the application of multimodality in discourse analysis allows us to view communication as a more holistic process. By combining text, images, sound, and other non-verbal elements, multimodality provides a handy tool in understanding how messages are produced and received in various contexts. This enriches discourse analysis by incorporating various dimensions of meaning that cannot be fully understood through a single type of media alone, offering more profound insights into how communication influences the audience.

4. Critical Analysis of Gender Representation in Film Using a Multimodal Approach

Critical analysis of gender representation in film using a multimodal approach opens new insights into how media, particularly film, shape and construct gender identity. This approach combines various elements such as visuals, dialogue, and sound to reveal how gender is represented in a specific context. Bezerra (2020) demonstrates how the film *Sex and the City* uses multimodal elements to portray female agency in the narrative. Through multimodal discourse analysis, we can see how the representation of women in popular films interacts with other elements to construct their roles as social actors.

Navarro and Adriano (2024) also highlight the importance of a multimodal approach in assessing the representation of women in movie posters. By examining visual elements like facial expressions, colours, and layout, along with the language used, their study uncovers the gender stereotypes often present in the film industry. Movie posters, as the first visual element seen by audiences, play a significant role in conveying messages about how women should be perceived in society. The use of specific colours or passive facial expressions often reinforces traditional gender narratives that limit women's roles.

Elorza (2023) employs multimodal analysis to examine how cinematography and other technical elements, such as slow-motion shots or close-ups, influence gender narratives in action films. While there has been an increase in female representation in action roles, the study shows that women are still often depicted as more physically prominent than in terms of their fighting abilities. The choreography of fight scenes and the soundtrack often emphasize women's physical appeal, indicating that despite progress in their roles, gender stereotypes remain dominant in action films.

Overall, the application of multimodal analysis in film studies provides a deeper understanding of how gender representation is constructed and maintained in various media contexts. By combining visual, auditory, and narrative elements, we can more critically assess how films influence our perceptions of gender. This approach allows for the identification of hidden stereotypes and changes in the representation of women, opening space for more inclusive and equitable interpretations in cinema.

D. Argumentative Writing and Essay Writing Skills.

1. Definition of Argumentative Essay and Basic Structure.

An argumentative essay is a form of academic writing that requires claims, evidence, and logical reasoning to persuade the reader, making it closely related to the development of critical thinking skills (Hyland, 1990). An argumentative essay is a type of writing that aims to persuade readers of a particular opinion or viewpoint by presenting rational reasons and supporting evidence. Writing an argumentative essay not only requires strong writing skills but also the ability to construct logical arguments based on in-depth knowledge of the topic being discussed (Liu et al., 2024). In this type of essay, the writer must be able to build a strong argument by coherently and effectively connecting claims, evidence, and analysis.

The basic structure of an argumentative essay consists of three main parts: introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion (Newell et al., 2019). The introduction serves to introduce the topic and present the thesis statement, which becomes the foundation for all arguments throughout the essay. This thesis statement is crucial as it gives the reader a clear understanding of the writer's position on the issue and what will be demonstrated through the arguments made.

The body paragraphs in an argumentative essay typically consist of three or more paragraphs, each containing a claim that supports the thesis statement, relevant evidence, and analysis that connects the evidence to the claim. In each paragraph, the writer must ensure that each claim is supported by strong data, facts, or examples to strengthen the argument (Ozfidan & Mitchell, 2022). Furthermore, the writer should also consider and respond to different perspectives to provide a more comprehensive view of the topic.

Overall, the argumentative essay is a highly valuable tool in both academic and professional settings because it fosters critical thinking skills and the ability to develop logical arguments. A well-organized essay structure allows the writer to

convey their ideas clearly and effectively, ensuring that readers can easily follow the flow of reasoning. By understanding the basic structure and essential elements of writing an argumentative essay, writers can produce work that is not only convincing but also thorough and well-rounded.

2. Argumentative Writing Skills in Education

Argumentative writing skills are an essential competency in education, as they not only assess writing ability but also critical and analytical thinking skills. In the educational context, argumentative writing involves the ability to develop explicit claims, provide strong reasoning, and support arguments with relevant evidence. According to Hu and Liu (2024), students who understand the elements of argumentation, such as claims, reasons, evidence, and counterarguments, can produce more cohesive and persuasive texts. Therefore, educators must teach the structure of argumentative essays systematically so that students can effectively develop these skills.

Practical instruction in argumentative writing involves a comprehensive approach, including planning, evidence-based argument construction, and revision. Hisgen et al. (2020) demonstrated that this multicomponent approach can significantly improve the quality of students' argumentative writing, particularly among those with lower academic performance. Through instruction that includes these strategies, students can more easily organize their ideas and construct clear and structured arguments. With appropriate instructional support, students can significantly enhance their writing skills.

In addition, the use of technology can support the development of argumentative writing skills. Jakkrapong Thongpai (2022) found that the use of computer-assisted argument mapping, combined with a metacognitive approach, helps students compose more structured and cohesive arguments. This technology provides students with visual tools to organize ideas and understand the relationships

between parts of an argument. Thus, students not only learn to write but also improve their understanding of the logical structure underlying an essay.

Overall, developing argumentative writing skills in education requires a holistic approach that combines structured instruction, evidence-based learning strategies, and the integration of technology. Through this approach, students can become more confident in constructing strong and organized arguments. Proficiency in argumentative writing also equips students with critical thinking skills that are essential for meeting academic and professional challenges in the future.

3. Developing Critical Thinking Skills through Argumentative Essay Writing

The development of critical thinking skills is essential in education, and argumentative essay writing is one of the most effective methods to achieve this goal. Argumentative writing involves students' ability to evaluate evidence, consider counterarguments, and build logical conclusions. According to Demircioglu et al. (2023), engaging students with scientific topics through argumentative writing encourages them to sharpen their critical thinking abilities. This activity not only enhances writing skills but also strengthens the evaluation and analytical processes needed to construct convincing arguments.

Furthermore, research by Zeng et al. (2025) shows that an ontology-based reasoning approach in teaching argumentative writing plays a significant role in improving critical thinking skills. This method helps students more easily identify the components of an argument, allowing them to build more structured and logical arguments. The ability to identify these components facilitates students' analysis of arguments and enables them to draw more profound and more detailed conclusions. This has a positive impact on their ability to think critically and compose more comprehensive arguments.

Critical thinking and argumentative writing skills cannot develop independently of each other. Lustyantje et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of

developing both skills simultaneously during the teaching process. Their study shows that critical thinking skills have a direct impact on the quality of students' argumentative essays, even though the effects may not always be immediately apparent. Therefore, effective teaching must include strategies that support the joint development of these two skills, ensuring that students not only learn how to write but also how to think critically while constructing arguments.

Overall, argumentative essay writing is a highly effective tool for developing students' critical thinking skills. By engaging students in in-depth argumentation processes, they not only learn to compose coherent texts but also improve their analytical and evaluative abilities. Therefore, educators need to continue implementing comprehensive and innovative approaches in teaching argumentative writing to ensure that students can optimally refine their critical thinking skills.

4. The Multimodal Approach in Enhancing Argumentative Writing Skills

The multimodal approach in argumentative writing instruction offers significant new opportunities for developing students' writing skills. In an era of rapidly advancing technology, multimodal writing provides flexibility in creating meaning and enhances students' understanding. Zeng (2024) emphasizes that educators need to be equipped with the skills to implement multimodal writing activities effectively. This helps students express their ideas more creatively and deeply by utilizing various media such as text, images, and sound, which supports a more holistic learning experience.

Furthermore, research by Lei and Zhang (2024) shows that the application of multimodal metaphors in teaching argumentative essay writing can enrich content and increase student engagement. The integration of multimodal elements such as text, images, audio, and movement can stimulate students' critical and metaphorical thinking skills. This approach offers a more engaging way for students to organize

and present their arguments, as well as to connect ideas more dynamically, which in turn improves the quality of their argumentative writing.

The implementation of a multimodal approach has also shown significant improvements in argumentative writing skills, as revealed by Xu (2023). Using digital multimodal composing (DMC), the experimental group outperformed the control group in text length, sentence structure, content, and readability. This multimodal approach allows students to incorporate various visual and audio elements into their writing, enriching their argumentative texts in ways that are not only engaging but also effective in clarifying and reinforcing their arguments.

Overall, the multimodal approach offers significant benefits in enhancing students' argumentative writing skills. By integrating technology and various media elements, students can develop arguments that are more creative, structured, and effective. Therefore, educators need to continue incorporating multimodal approaches in the learning process to ensure that students acquire stronger argumentative writing skills that are relevant to the demands of the modern era.

E. The Relationship Between Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis and the Development of Argumentative Writing Skills

1. How MCDA Can Enhance Understanding of Gender Representation

Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) is a practical approach for exploring gender representation in various texts, including online media, textbooks, and other educational materials. Through multimodal analysis, MCDA enables researchers to identify and critique the use of linguistic and visual techniques that shape our understanding of gender roles. Elgreatly et al. (2024) reveal that by applying Visual Grammar theory and Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA), MCDA can uncover how gender representation in online campaigns empowers women and challenges traditional gender roles. This approach highlights the critical role of visuals and discourse in shaping more inclusive social narratives.

MCDA is also effective in uncovering hidden ideologies within gender representations, such as those found in EFL textbooks. Al Kayed et al. (2020) reveal how the discourse embedded in educational materials can reinforce social inequality and legitimize imbalanced power structures. By using MCDA, we can observe how gender ideology is embedded in discourse structures, which in turn influences how students understand and perceive gender roles in society. This approach provides deeper insight into the inequalities present in educational materials and how they impact learning.

Research by Liang (2022) also demonstrates how MCDA can be applied to English textbooks to explore gender representation. By analyzing the SEPH Oxford English textbook, Liang reveals how the relationship between discourse and social ideology shapes students' understanding of gender roles. This MCDA approach shows that texts and images in textbooks are not merely informational, but also function as tools that shape social ideologies about gender—often without the awareness of the readers or users. This indicates that gender representation is influenced not only by language but also by the visual elements within the text.

Overall, MCDA is a handy tool for enhancing our understanding of how gender representation is constructed and maintained across various contexts. This approach allows us to identify the roles of media, texts, and images in shaping social perspectives on gender. Therefore, the use of MCDA in gender-related research is crucial for advocating equality and challenging gender stereotypes embedded in society.

2. The Use of MCDA as a Tool to Stimulate Critical Thinking in Essay Writing

The use of Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) in essay writing can stimulate students' critical thinking skills. MCDA helps students analyze not only written text but also visual and linguistic elements in their writing. This allows them to see how the structure of arguments, language, and other multimodal elements shape

the message being conveyed. Hanim Rahmat et al. (2020) show that strengthening critical thinking skills in writing can improve the quality of students' academic work, and MCDA provides a robust framework for training such critical analysis.

Through MCDA, students are encouraged to analyze and evaluate various elements in the text to create more logical and cohesive arguments. Khairuddin et al. (2021) emphasize the importance of critical thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and reflection in writing. By using MCDA, students not only organize words but also systematically process ideas and information while examining the impact of the visual and linguistic representations used in their texts. This approach enriches their writing process by introducing deeper critical thinking skills.

MCDA also supports the development of metacognitive writing strategies, focusing on planning, monitoring, and evaluating their ideas critically. According to Teng and Yue (2023), metacognitive awareness enhances students' ability to construct strong arguments and evaluate sources more analytically. In the context of MCDA, students are encouraged not only to think about what they write but also to consider how they manipulate multimodal elements to support their arguments more effectively and efficiently, thus improving the overall quality of their writing.

Overall, MCDA serves as an effective tool to stimulate critical thinking skills in essay writing. This approach not only teaches students to produce more structured and cohesive arguments but also increases their awareness of the influence of various elements in the text. By combining critical analysis of linguistic and visual elements, MCDA enriches the writing process and encourages students to be more reflective and analytical in constructing their essays.

3. The Contribution of MCDA in Analyzing and Writing About Gender Representation in Films

Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) makes a significant contribution to analyzing gender representation in films. With this approach, various

elements in films such as dialogue, visuals, symbolism, and narrative are critically analyzed to uncover how gender roles are portrayed and maintained. For example, Cunha & Gomes (2023) reveal how the film *Aquarius* portrays women who challenge gender stereotypes, linking this representation to factors like social class and age. MCDA enables a deeper understanding of the interaction between different factors in shaping societal views on gender in films.

MCDA also helps identify how gender representations in films can either reinforce or challenge existing social norms. Chambers (2022) shows that modern science-based films can depict female scientists as leading characters contributing to the narrative without falling into gender stereotypes. Through multimodal analysis, MCDA reveals how these characters are represented not only in words but also through visual elements that support their portrayal as empowered and competent individuals. This helps present a more complex role for women in the fields of science and technology.

Aley & Hahn (2020) also reveal how visual elements in movie posters can construct a strong image of masculinity, particularly in the depiction of male heroes. Using MCDA, elements such as colour, facial expressions, body language, and composition can be analysed to understand how masculinity is constructed within the context of heroism. This approach allows us to see how gender roles, particularly masculinity, are built in visuals to reinforce specific social values. MCDA provides an effective tool for evaluating the representation of masculinity in films and other visual media.

Overall, MCDA provides deep insights into how gender representation in films is shaped and received by audiences. By analyzing both linguistic and visual elements simultaneously, MCDA allows for a more comprehensive analysis of gender roles in media. This approach not only helps assess how gender is portrayed

in films but also opens up space for understanding how these representations influence social perceptions and the prevailing gender norms in society.

F. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is an essential component in research that illustrates the logical flow of the researcher in formulating assumptions and relationships between variables, based on the synthesis of relevant theories, to clarify the focus of the problem and guide the analysis process systematically.

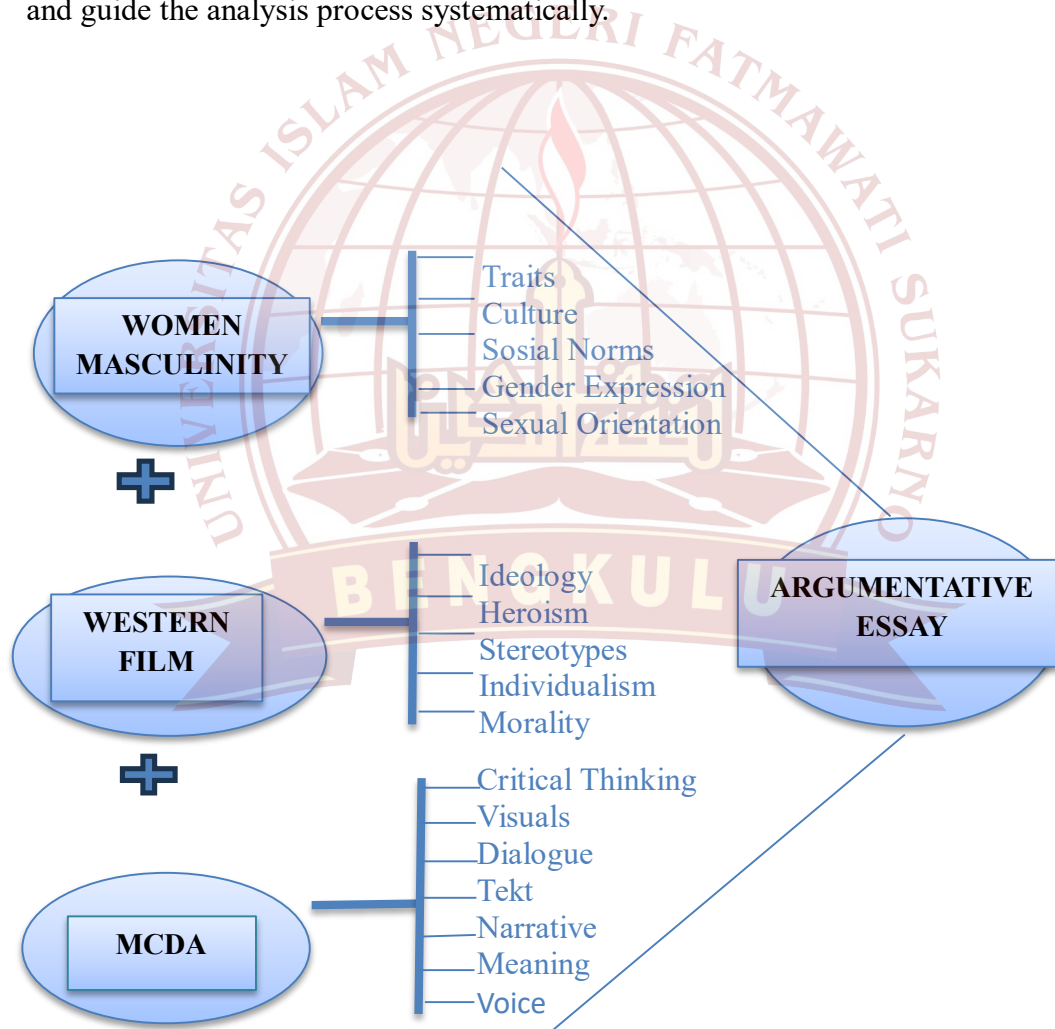


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

The concept of *woman's masculinity*, which encompasses traits, culture, social norms, gender expression, and sexual orientation, is closely related to the skills required for writing an *argumentative essay*. By recognizing masculine traits like courage, assertiveness, and dominance in female characters, students can develop more nuanced and focused arguments. Additionally, culture and social norms provide context that allows students to examine how female masculinity is constructed, accepted, or rejected by society. This perspective helps construct arguments that are not only text-based but also take into account the social background and dominant ideologies. Understanding gender expression and sexual orientation further enriches the analysis of complex identity representations.

In the context of Western films, elements such as ideology, heroism, stereotypes, individualism, and morality significantly contribute to students' ability to write an *argumentative essay*. Ideology and heroism, for example, enable students to evaluate the representation of cultural and gender values in film narratives. Stereotypes in films provide a basis for critical analysis of the construction of social identity and gender roles. Meanwhile, the elements of individualism and morality help students analyze the concept of freedom of action and the ethical choices made by characters. By understanding moral dilemmas and narratives about individual autonomy, students can build arguments that are not only logical but also based on philosophical and ethical considerations.

Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) integrates elements such as critical thinking, visual, dialogue, text, narrative, meaning, and sound, all of which are relevant in the process of writing an *argumentative essay*. This approach encourages students not only to passively receive media messages but also to question the ideologies, biases, and hidden assumptions within multimodal content. Visuals, narratives, and verbal quotes are used as evidence to build strong and analytical arguments. By utilizing these various modalities, students can craft essays that are more

comprehensive, critical, and touch upon social, aesthetic, and emotional perspectives often overlooked in single-text-based analysis.

Thus, *woman's masculinity, Western films, and Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis* (MCDA) significantly contribute to improving the quality of students' argumentative essay writing. Together, they offer an interdisciplinary approach that facilitates understanding of issues related to identity, culture, and power. *Women's masculinity broadens the gender perspective in writing*. Western films provide a narrative and ideological framework that can be critiqued, while MCDA enhances analytical skills through multimodal exploration. The integration of these three approaches enables students to construct inclusive, critical, and relevant arguments on contemporary issues. Therefore, *writing argumentative* essays becomes a reflective means to deeply respond to the complexities of social and cultural dynamics.

G. Some Related Previous Studies

Research on female masculinity in Western films has been widely explored in various studies. White (2022) examined how auteurs challenge traditional masculinity in Western films by integrating feminist perspectives, breaking conventional gender narratives, and representing marginalized identities. Armengol (2024) also found that gender representation has become more fluid, with an increase in depictions of women taking on masculine roles within the Western genre. Meanwhile, Almwaka (2022) highlighted how the "Final Girl" trope in Western horror films can serve as both a tool for female empowerment and a reinforcement of patriarchal norms. Overall, these studies show that the representation of female masculinity in Western films is dynamic, reflecting both resistance to traditional gender norms and the reinforcement of patriarchal structures.

Research on Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) in film studies has highlighted various aspects of visual, linguistic, and auditory discourse in shaping meaning. Markhabayeva and Tseng (2024) studied how multimodal cohesion devices in

films enhance audience understanding of scene transitions, demonstrating that these elements clarify the narrative. Li and Chen (2024) explored subtitle translation strategies in films using the MCDA approach, finding that understanding visual, auditory, and linguistic elements is crucial to maintaining the film's meaning. Gao et al. (2025) analyzed promotional films for the 2022 Beijing Olympics, showing how a combination of imagery, music, and language creates a cohesive cultural identity. Overall, these studies reveal that MCDA plays an important role in understanding the construction of meaning in films.

Research on argumentative writing and academic skills in English language learning highlights the development of argument structure and the use of technology to support learning. Hu and Liu (2024) and Zeng (2024) studied the development of argumentative essays by EFL students over four semesters, finding that the quality of writing and understanding of argument structure gradually improved. Wambsganss et al. (2022) developed the ALLEN App, which provides automated feedback on claim-premise structure, helping students improve their arguments. Meanwhile, Nguyen et al. (2024) found that the use of ChatGPT helps students generate ideas and organize arguments more effectively. Overall, this research shows that both pedagogical strategies and technology play crucial roles in enhancing academic writing skills in EFL students.

Research on the use of film as a learning medium in language education indicates that film can enhance linguistic competence, cultural awareness, and critical thinking skills. Herrero and Vanderschelden (2019) and Leonhardt (2020) emphasized that integrating films into language teaching not only increases learning motivation but also enriches students' multilingual experiences through audiovisual translation. Meanwhile, Ryu (2024) found that using films rich in cultural aspects helps students broaden their global perspectives and prepares them for cross-cultural interactions. Overall, this research suggests that utilizing film in language classrooms can enhance learning effectiveness by integrating linguistic, cultural, and visual elements.

Although various studies have highlighted the representation of female masculinity in Western films (White, 2022; Armengol, 2024; Almwaka, 2022), these studies have primarily focused on narrative analysis and gender ideology without directly linking them to the development of academic skills, particularly in argumentative essay writing. On the other hand, research on Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) in film studies has shown the role of visual, linguistic, and auditory elements in shaping meaning (Markhabayeva & Tseng, 2024; Li & Chen, 2024; Gao et al., 2025), but has not connected it to pedagogical practices for enhancing critical and argumentative thinking skills in students.

Furthermore, studies on argumentative writing in English language learning (Hu & Liu, 2024; Zeng, 2024; Wambsganss et al., 2022; Nguyen et al., 2024) have discussed the improvement of argument structure through technology and pedagogical strategies, but have not explored how gender representation in films can be used as a tool to stimulate critical thinking in academic writing. Similarly, research on the use of films as a language learning medium (Herrero & Vanderschelden, 2019; Leonhardt, 2020; Ryu, 2024) has primarily focused on aspects of motivation and cultural awareness without investigating their specific contribution to the development of argumentative writing skills.

Therefore, this research offers novelty by integrating MCDA, the representation of female masculinity in Western films, and argumentative essay writing learning into one study. This study not only explores how films can be an effective learning medium but also examines how the MCDA approach to films can stimulate critical thinking and enhance students' argumentative writing skills in the context of English language learning.