

**THE CONSTRUCTION OF CAREER WOMEN IN *CLEO*:  
A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**

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**2011**

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**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF LINGUISTICS**

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## ABSTRACT

This study looked at the discursive construction of career women in *Cleo*, Malaysia edition, a women's magazine, which is also published in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Singapore. The study used the framework of Fairclough (1995, 2001), widely known as the three-dimensional framework that analyses a text as well as the context 'engaged' in a dialectical relation (Fairclough, 2009). 12 articles from *Cleo* about career women, published between August 2007 and August 2008 were analysed. The articles titled 'Career Coach' addressed divergent issues on career women (e.g., workplace problems, personality problems, and acquisition of workplace skills and ethics). The analysis shows how the identities of career women in Malaysia are constructed according to the modern and globalised system of management discourses, by means of 'empowering' them in terms of job skills, knowledge, actions and personalities. The analysis further shows that popular media is consistently trying to shape the preferred identity(s) for women, in this case, through the means of a female magazine.

## ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan menyelidik secara diskursif mengenai wanita berkerjaya dalam *Cleo*, Edisi Malaysia – sejenis majalah wanita yang juga diterbitkan di Australia, New Zealand, Afrika Selatan dan Singapura. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kerangka kerja Fairclough (1995, 2001) yang dikenali dengan meluas sebagai kerangka kerja tiga dimensi bagi analisis wacana kritikal (CDA) untuk mengkaji hubungan dialektal (Fairclough, 2009) dari segi teks dan konteks. Kajian ini telah menganalisa 12 artikel *Cleo* tentang wanita berkerjaya yang diterbitkan mulai Ogos 2007 sehingga Ogos 2008. Artikel yang dilabelkan sebagai “Jurulatih Kerjaya” mengandungi isu-isu yang pelbagai mengenai wanita dan kerjaya (contohnya seperti masalah-masalah yang dialami oleh wanita di tempat kerja, permasalahan mengenai personaliti dan bagaimana untuk memperolehi kemahiran dan etika tertentu di tempat kerja). Analisis tersebut menunjukkan bagaimana sistem moden wacana pengurusan masa kini telah memberikan impak yang mendalam terhadap pembentukan wanita berkerjaya di Malaysia dari segi personaliti, identiti dan kelakuan. Ia juga menunjukkan pembinaan identiti yang selalu diperdebatkan dan peranan media yang berterusan dalam membentuk identiti yang digemari bagi kaum wanita.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the name of Allah the Almighty, who had given me all the possible ways to complete this dissertation and it is truly beyond words to thank Him and the love He had showered upon me. This dissertation is indeed a precious gift from Him, created in the midst of raising my first son who had fallen sick repeatedly and written in many of my sleepless nights filled with worries and tears. Finally, here it is.

It is a pleasure to thank those who made this dissertation possible. First and foremost, I owe my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Mahmud Hasan Khan for all his guidance and faith in me. I know it would be impossible if he had not spared his time discussing with me and helping me out with my writing all the way.

To my previous supervisor, Dr. Surinderpal Kaur, thank you so much for sharing your time discussing the analysis of this dissertation.

I am truly indebted to my husband who substantially supported me with faith that I would manage to complete this piece of writing. He also had taken good care of my son while I was away finishing this dissertation. It meant a lot to me to be able to sit and write in peace.

To my parents, who had bestowed upon me their ongoing prayers, I know I had been such a nuisance at times, but their faith has kept me going strong till this day.

I am also grateful to my best friends Malin, Deena, Stef, and Harizal, who helped me with the proofreading of this dissertation and had incessantly supported me with good words and advice when I crouched in misery over my son's poor health.

To my head of department, Dr. Tam Shu Sim and my deputy dean, Dr. Jawakhir Mior Mohd Jaafar, I am so grateful to have you pushing me from behind especially when it was so hard for me to move on while dealing with my bad health due to my second pregnancy.

Finally, perhaps I have missed a few more important people out there who assisted me with this writing, thank you so much for your time and concern.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

		<b>Page</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Background of the study	1
1.2	Statement of the Problem	4
1.3	Objectives of the study	6
1.4	Research Questions	6
1.5	Scope and limitations	7
1.6	Theoretical framework	8
1.7	Significance of the study	9
1.8	Concepts and definitions	10
1.9	Organisation of the study	11
1.10	Ethical considerations	12
<b>CHAPTER 2</b>	<b>LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1	Introduction	13
2.2	The nature of career articles featured in <i>Cleo</i>	14
2.3	The construction of career women's subject position(s)	15
2.4	The construction of career women's personality and behaviours and how they cope towards workplace values and issues	22
2.5	Literature used in providing methods for analysing the data	27
	2.5.1. Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Framework	30
2.6	Conclusion	31

		<b>Page</b>
<b>CHAPTER 3</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Research design</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Data gathering process</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>3.4</b>	<b>Methods of data analysis</b>	<b>34</b>
	3.4.1 Discourse analytical tools	36
	3.4.2 Analysis of categories	43
<b>3.5</b>	<b>Closing remarks</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>CHAPTER 4</b>	<b>DATA ANALYSIS</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Analysis of the data</b>	<b>52</b>
	4.2.1 Identifying the Roles/Identity/Behaviour/Action of Career Women in Malaysia	52
	4.2.1.1 Legitimate/Non-legitimate	65
	4.2.1.2 Normative/Non-normative	68
	4.2.2 Labeling the Roles/Identity/Behaviour/Action of Career Women in Malaysia	74
	4.2.2.1 Legitimate/Non-legitimate	79
	4.2.2.2 Normative/Non-normative	83



	<b>Page</b>
4.2.3 Rules that Circumscribe Career Women	86
4.2.3.1 Mistakes done by the career women that have led to problems, struggles and challenges at work – mark of identity of career women in Malaysia constructed by <i>Cleo</i> .	91
4.2.3.2 Solutions suggested by <i>Cleo</i> towards the problems, struggles and challenges at work.	94
4.2.3.3 Reproduction of the career women and identity construction	98
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>5.1 Introduction</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>5.2 Summary of findings</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>5.3 Implications of the study</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>5.4 Limitation of the study</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>5.5 Recommendation for further study</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>5.6 Summary</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>111</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>3.1</b>	Formal features of Experiential, Relational and Expressive categories (adapted from Fairclough, 2001)	35
<b>3.2</b>	Themes of the Selected Articles in <i>Cleo</i>	37
<b>3.3</b>	Categorisation of data	44