Countering Gender Stereotypes: The Power of the Main Female Character in *Thor: Ragnarok* Movie (2017)

Lailatul Fitriyah, Sukarno, Riskia Setiarini, Albert Tallapessy
riskiasetiarini.sastra@unej.ac.id
English Department, Universitas Jember, INDONESIA

Abstract

Gender stereotypes constructed by society are detrimental for women. Women were seen as weak and underestimated by society (the PEW Research Center's survey in 2017). This study aims to discover how a film entitled Thor: Ragnarok *(2017) countered gender stereotypes through the portrayal of the main female character, Hela, and to reveal the reason behind such portrayal of Hela. This study is a qualitative study because the data are qualitative data. The data of this study are clauses collected from the movie subtitles, containing Hela's power to counter gender stereotypes. This study applied Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (three-dimensional framework), supported by Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which focused on the transitivity system for the first-dimension analysis. After doing the three-dimensional analysis, it is found that Hela's character in the movie is portrayed as opposing gender stereotypes. Hela is represented as strong, brave, and feared. These traits are against the stereotype of women described as weak, fearful, and underestimated. The reason behind the portrayal of Hela as a strong woman is to promote the feminism spirit to the people in that women should be empowered, in line with the goal of the United Nations (UN) Women and the UN Foundation that protect women's rights and supports women in achieving gender equality.*

Introduction

Gender is not a biological characteristic of individuals; rather, gender is a social and cultural construct imposed upon people by society (Beauvoir, 1953; Eckert & McConnel-Ginet, 2003; Murray, 2020). Gender refers to both the degree of masculinity and femininity as well as the distinctions between men and women (Rahayu, Ramadhanti, Rahayu, Osada, & Indriyanto, 2019). As a result of social construction, gender stereotypes have emerged which make society view men and women based on their gender (Brannon, 2017). Gender stereotype itself is defined as the beliefs constructed by society about the

psychological attributes and qualities of men and women, as well as the activities that are acceptable to them (Brannon, 2017, p. 46). Stereotypes based on gender have a big influence on how people think about men and women (Azis & Sunra, 2020).

In the US, women were seen as weak and underestimated by society based on the results of a survey held by the PEW Research Center (Gramlich, 2017). The survey was carried out by asking the employed men and women in the US. The result found that women were regarded as weak and underestimated. Because of their weakness and undervaluation, women were reported to be victims of violence and sexual assaults, such as the victims of physical and psychological abuse, polygamy, and sexual assaults or rape (Fatmawati et al., 2017). The UN Foundation has been currently addressing these kinds of cases. In collaboration with the Spotlight Initiative, the UN Foundation created the 'WithHer Fund' as a fundraising instrument. This fund supports local women's groups worldwide fighting gender-based violence in their surroundings (social environment and works sphere) (UN Foundation, 2024).

The Pew Research Center (PRC) surveyed the gender issues happening in the works sphere. The results show that employed women were paid less than employed men for doing the same job, and they also experienced gender discrimination in the work sphere. It shows that society viewed women as lower than men. They assumed that women could not be in the same line as men, and it was detrimental to women because their competence was underestimated.

Thor: Ragnarok (2017) shows the countering of those gender stereotypes through the portrayal of the main female character, Hela. Hela is the firstborn of Odin, King of Asgard, and the older sister of Thor and Loki. She has the power to seize the throne after her father's death. Her social background as the first child of Asgard's King gives her more freedom to slaughter the people who oppose her for the throne. The portrayal of Hela in the movie opposes the stereotypes of women in the US. She is described as strong,

brave, and not underestimated by other characters.

Therefore, this study analyzes three things regarding the movie. The first problem is finding the linguistic data that describes Hela's power that counters gender stereotypes. The second problem is discovering the director's motivation in producing the movie, and the last problem is revealing the reason behind the portrayal of Hela in the movie, which presumably counters gender stereotypes in the US. This study applied Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis model, the three-dimensional framework, to answer the questions.

There are five related studies scrutinizing power and gender stereotypes using CDA theory. The first previous study was written by Heathy (2020). The study analyzed gender stereotypes in advertising, and it revealed that the advertisement eternizes women stereotypes from cheerful housewives to sexual objects. In this, women were still portrayed as powerless, reliant, and inferior beings. Another research on gender issues, in a children picture book, found that despite women in the picture book were described as enlightened and educated, it was implied that women were still portrayed as ones ingrained with domestic responsibilities, unlike men who were depicted as ones dominating public sectors (Setiarini et al., 2021). McCardy & Matusitz (2021) examined the power of the *Hidden Figures* movie (2016). This study aimed to reveal the sexism and racism that the movie's main characters endured. Al-Zubaidi (2022) investigated the power exercise in selected texts from Khaled Hosseini's novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. The study revealed that in society, power is derived from interpersonal relationships, and issues about gender, politics, society, and ideology have all led to the abuse of power. A study conducted by Andriaka, Sukarno, and Setiarini (2023) scrutinizing how gender stereotypes were exposed in Rick Riordan's novel, *The Lightning Thief*, by applying van Dijk's CDA.

From the previous studies above, no research has been reported to analyze power and countering gender stereotypes in the *Thor:*

Ragnarok movie. Therefore, the novelty of this study is revealing the power of the main female character in *Thor: Ragnarok* movie that counters gender stereotypes by applying Fairclough's CDA, with Halliday's SFL as the tool to analyze the text, and two social theories, Language and Power and Gender Theory.

The 3 (three) objectives of this study are to obtain the linguistic data used to describe Hela's power that counters gender stereotypes, to discover the director's motivation in producing the movie, and to reveal the reason behind the portrayal of Hela in the movie that counters gender stereotypes. This study can help and support further research about the study of Critical Discourse Analysis focusing on the analysis of power and countering gender stereotypes.

Methodology

This study is qualitative. Qualitative study is demonstrated using natural language and non-numerical (Gerring, 2017). This study uses qualitative study because the data are qualitative data. The data analyzed in this study are in the form of clauses. The source of data is the *Thor: Ragnarok* movie (2017). The data are clauses containing Hela's power that counters gender stereotypes collected from the movie subtitle.

There are some steps to collect the data. The first step is watching the movie carefully and paying attention to the running text (subtitle). The second step is counting the number of clauses in the subtitle and it was found 1611 clauses overall. The third step is finding the clauses that contain Hela's power that counters gender stereotypes and there are 76 clauses found and analyzed in this study.

The data are analyzed by applying the Critical Discourse Analysis theory proposed by Fairclough. In the text analysis, this study uses Halliday's SFL as the tool, specifically the ideational metafunction. The metafunction is used to dismantle the hidden meaning of the clauses (Tallapessy, Wahyuningsih, & Anjasari, 2020). In the text analysis, this study focuses on the transitivity system to see the representation of reality through the clauses. The clauses are separated into tables to analyze the process, participant, and circumstance. In this stage, the analysis is also supported by two social theories, Language and Power and Gender Theory to examine the clauses that show Hela's power – in terms of a notion of how Hela is able to take control or not to be dominated by the dominant party, in this, the men - thus countering the gender stereotypes. The next step is doing the discursive practice analysis which analyzes the movie's production, distribution, and consumption. The discursive practice is used to discover the movie director's motivation by analyzing how the movie is produced, how the movie is distributed, and who is the target viewers of the movie. The last step is doing the third dimension, the social-cultural practice of the movie. In this stage, the study analyzes the situational, institutional, and social context of the movie. Then, synthesizing the results of the three-dimensional analysis is done to answer the three research questions mentioned in the previous part.

Results and Discussion

Based on the three-dimensional framework analysis of Fairclough's CDA, the results have been obtained from the analysis in every dimension. The first is the results of the text analysis. In this dimension, this study is trying to find the linguistic data used to describe Hela's power that counters gender stereotypes based on the transitivity system. It is found that Hela's power that counters gender stereotypes is described using all of the processes. The results of the transitivity system can be seen in the following table.

Table 1. The Results of the Transitivity System

No.	Process Types	Frequency	%
1.	Material	38	50%
2.	Mental	5	7%

No.	Process Types	Frequency	%
4.	Relational	27	35%
5.	Behavioral	1	1%
6.	Verbal	2	2%
7.	Existential	4	5%
	Total:	**76**	**100%**

Based on Table 1, the dominant process used by the characters in the movie to describe Hela's power is the material process, used as much as 50%. The material process (doing-happening) itself usually describes the role of men (Poynton, 1985, p. 72 Cited in Oktaviani & Jauhara, 2014). That statement shows that Hela's power is mostly described using the process of doing-happening which usually involves men's role (Poynton, 1985, p. 72). Hela is mostly described as the Actor. Actor is a participant who makes the change or makes something happen (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 179). Her social status as the first child of Asgard's King gives her the right to take over the throne after Odin's death. She has the power to control Asgardian people under her command. As the Actor, she does not even need any approval from other parties to achieve the Goal. Hela is portrayed as a strong and brave woman, so other characters do not underestimate her. It shows that her character is countering gender stereotypes, as explained in the PEW research conducted in the US in 2017, that women were seen as weak and underestimated by society.

The results of the discursive practice are about the movie's production, distribution, and consumption. It also presents the social background of the director, Taika Waititi. The movie played an important role in bringing out the plot of the next movie in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, because the ending of the movie shows that Thor and the Asgardian people meet Thanos, in which this then becomes the opening of the next movie, *Avengers: Infinity War*. That crucial plot motivated him to create a movie with more good characters, plots, and messages without forgetting the characteristics of Marvel movies which have gone global. He created Hela as a strong female character of which idea is seemingly engraving a concept that women can be equal to men, and that is in line with other Marvel movies which usually present strong and brave female characters. He implanted the idea of countering gender stereotypes to propagate the spirit of feminism to viewers worldwide. The target viewers of this movie are teenagers and adults who love Marvel movies. This movie is one of the great Hollywood movies loved by many people worldwide, so it is a good chance to spread the meaning.

The last is the results of the social-cultural practice analysis. According to a survey by the Pew Research Center conducted in the US in 2017, society viewed women as weak and underestimated. Because of this, cases of sexual harassment and gender discrimination in the workplace and in society at large have been reported. Women-harming gender issues have also paved the way for the rise of many feminist movements advocating for women's justice in the US between 2015 and 2017, including the Women's March and #MeToo. The movie tries to disseminate the feminist spirit among its audience by subtly conveying the untruth of gender stereotypes that are cultivated by society. Every man and woman are free to behave whatever they like; they are not bound by the gender norms that are in place. The way that Hela is portrayed as a strong, courageous woman might inspire women to fight for justice and their rights with the same bravery and strength.

To explore the three-dimensional framework analysis of *Thor: Ragnarok* movie (2017), the discussion is divided into three subs. The first sub is the text analysis, the second sub is the discursive practice, and the last sub is the social-cultural practice of *Thor: Ragnarok* movie (2017). The discussion is provided in the following subs-result and discussion.

1. The Text Analysis of Thor Ragnarok Movie (2017)

To identify the process, participant, and situation, the collected sentences conveying Hela's power which defies gender stereotypes were divided into tables. The participants of the transitivity analysis in this study are not only Hela but other characters are also included. It is because Hela and other characters (Odin, Thor, Loki, Valkyrie, Heimdall, etc.) in the movie play important roles in describing Hela's power that counters gender stereotypes.

Table 2. The Processes Used to Describe the Counter of the Stereotypes

Women Stereotypes	The Counters	The Processes Used
Weak	Strong Brave	Material Relational Mental Behavioral Existential
Underestimated	Overestimated Acknowledged	Material Relational Mental Verbal Existential

Based on Table 2 above, Hela's character in the movie counters two stereotypes of women. The first point is that Hela is portrayed as a strong and brave woman, and it is described using material, relational, mental, behavioral, and existential processes. The second point, Hela is overestimated and highly expected by other characters. Her power is acknowledged and also the biggest threat to other characters in the movie. The counter of being underestimated is described using material, relational, and verbal processes. Several data samples from this study that are given in this sub-chapter demonstrate the presence of countering gender stereotypes. In addition to the data sample of the material process, which is the main process used in the movie, other processes are also displayed by the justification needed in the parts that follow.

a. The Counter of Being Weak

Hela is seen as a strong and brave woman. She constantly tries her hardest to accomplish her goals since she is a courageous lady. She only cares about the crucial goal she wants to accomplish; thus, she doesn't care what other people think of her. Being the firstborn child of Asgard's King, she possesses the capacity to be a powerful woman. She will possess unbounded power once she is in Asgard. Hela, the film's lead female character, demonstrates her worth as a formidable antagonist. The counter of being weak can be seen in the data samples below.

> "*Our sister **destroyed** your hammer like a piece of glass.*" (C25-00:46:20)
> "*She **is** stronger than you.*" (C27-00:46:26)
> "*and (I **am**) the Goddess of Death.*" (C17-00:31:56)
> "*and I **am** here to restore that power.*" (C18-00:32:21)
> "*Where **do** you **think** all this gold came from?*" (C46-01:41:47)
> "***(Do)** you **see**?*" (C55-01:45:58)
> "*No one **is going** anywhere.*" (C56-01:45:59)

The first data samples are C25 and C27. The clauses are uttered by Loki. C25 is a material process and it is marked with the verb *destroyed* as the process of doing. The Actor in the clause is *Our sister* which refers to Hela as Loki and Thor's sister. The Goal is marked with the possessive words *your hammer* (refers to Thor's) and is followed by *like a piece of glass* as the Circumstance of manner-comparison marked with the word *like* (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 262). The circumstance there shows that Hela did not need much effort

to destroy Thor's hammer because Loki says that Hela did it like a piece of glass.

C27 is a relational attributive process, identified with the word *is* as the process of being (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 218). Pronoun *She* refers to Hela as the Carrier who carries the Attribute (*stronger than you*). Pronoun *you* is indexing Thor, the most powerful man in the movie. From Loki's statement, it can be drawn that women who are used to be considered as weak, can turn out to be stronger, or even can beat the most powerful man, like Thor. So, this film highlights the power of women, through the representation of Hela.

The second data samples are C17 (relational identifying) and C18 (existential). The clauses are uttered by Hela to the armies of Asgard who are facing down her when she is already on Asgard to take over the throne. She describes herself to the armies using the relational process (identifying) because she wants to show them her characteristics using the identifier (values). Then, she tells them the purpose of her arrival using the existential process (C18). Existential process is the process that represents something that happens or exists (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004: p. 256). It is identified with the word *am* as the process of existence, continued with the word *here* as the Circumstance of location-place which refers to Asgard, and then *to restore that power* as the Circumstance of cause-purpose. The words *'that power'* refer to their glory era when Hela and her father together led Asgard to become the most powerful in the cosmos. She wants to restore that power and restore Asgard's position to what it used to be before she was imprisoned by her father.

The last data samples are C46, C55, and C56 which are uttered by Hela to Thor when she meets him in the throne room, in Asgard. C46 is the mental clause marked with the word *think* as the process of sensing. The process of sensing can be understood as flowing from an individual's awareness or as impacting it (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004: p. 197). C55 is a behavioral process that is marked with the word *see* as the process. The behavioral process is the process of physiological and psychological behavior like breathing, smiling, seeing, dreaming, etc (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004: p. 248). The behaver is *you*, refers to Thor, and the C56 (material process) is her statement that confirms that Thor would not be able to defeat her, Hela's troops gained the upper hand and succeeded in cornering Thor's troops. *No one is going anywhere* (C56), which means Hela has conquered Asgard. *No one* (the Actor) there means that no one of Thor's troops can escape her invasion. Her statement makes Thor's courage shrink and he starts to despair, and this shows how powerful Hela is to Thor and others.

The data samples show that Hela is seen as a strong and brave woman, so she is compatible – in terms of power - with those powerful men as described in the film. It implies that the primary male character does not think Hela as powerless, instead as someone with authority. Thor as the main male character who is seen as the strongest hero in the movie admits that Hela is strong. She has the supranatural power to beat her enemies. He admits that Hela can do something or go somewhere because she has the power to do it. The discussion above shows that Hela is countering one of women's stereotypes of being weak.

b. The Counter of Being Underestimated

In 2017, society in the US underestimated women's competencies. They consider women to be less competent than men, as is evident from one survey which shows that working women will be paid less than men even though they do the same work. Rather than being underestimated, Hela is feared, and acknowledged by other characters. The data samples that show the countering of being underestimated can be seen below.

*"If I **let** her leave,"* (C35-01:07:34)
*"she will **consume** the Nine Realms and all the cosmos"* (C36-01:07:34)
*"He **told** you (that) you were worthy."* (C43-01:41:31)
*"She **is** too strong."* (C61-01:47:59)
*"We **need** to hold her off,"* (C67-01:51:42)
*"until everybody **is** on board."* (C68-01:51:42)

C35 and C36 are uttered by Heimdall, a male character in the movie. The context is Hela is already on Asgard and has taken over the throne by force and threatened to kill the Asgardian people if they did not obey her. Heimdall uttered the clauses to Thor when they were communicating using their telepathy intending to tell Thor about the situation of the Asgardian people who are being threatened. C35 and C36 are material processes, identified with the words *let* and *consume* as the process of doing-happening. He said that Hela would consume the Nine Realms and all the cosmos if he let her leave. It means that he could not let that happen because Hela is their biggest threat.

The next sample is C43, uttered by Thor. C43 is a verbal process and is marked with the words *told* as the process of saying (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 252). *He* in the clauses refers to Odin as the Sayer, *you* refers to Hela as well as the Receiver. The Verbiage here is *Hela was worthy*. According to Thor, when Odin was still alive, he once told Hela that she was worthy and he said the same thing to Thor. As the King of Asgard, Odin admitted Hela's value even though her daughter had chosen the wrong way because of her violent passion.

The last samples are C61, C67, and C68. C61 is uttered by Thor, which is a relational process marked with the word 'is' as the process of being and having (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 218). *She* refers to Hela as the Carrier, and *too strong* is the attribute. The attribute here describes how great her power is. C67 and C68 are uttered by Valkyrie. C67 is a mental process, marked with the word 'need' as the process of sensing. *We* refers to Thor's squad as the Senser, and *to hold her off* is the Phenomenon ('her' refers to Hela). C68 is an existential process marked with the word *is*, and *everybody* as the Existent.

The discussion of the data samples above shows that Hela is portrayed as a high-value woman. Her power makes her feared by other characters. She is acknowledged and respected if not feared by other characters in the movie which counters the women's stereotypes as reported by Pew Research Center's surveys in the US in 2017, that women's competence is underestimated. Based on the result of the

data, the material process is mostly used by the characters because they admit her greatness and implicitly show support, that not only men who are able to do material things, but women are able to do the same as well. The second dominant process is the relational process. The characters in the movie also describe Hela's power which counters the stereotypes of women, using the process of being and having. They mostly describe Hela as the Carrier who carries the Attribute and as the Token who has the Value. They apply the process of being and having to describe her value as a powerful woman and what she gets after her freedom due to her father's death.

The movie shows that women can be strong as well as men and can be more respected by society if they have power. Power itself should be gained with hardwork and courage. When women fight for their rights, they are building power in society to eliminate gender discrimination and also sexual harassment. The results of the transitivity analysis show that the movie carries a message about the feminist movement. This feminist movement can be influenced by the director, producer, and distributor of the movie. The background of the director, producer, and distributor of the movie is provided in the following parts.

2. The Discursive Practice of Thor: Ragnarok Movie (2017)

The result of the text analysis shows that Hela is portrayed as a strong and brave woman. This portrayal is influenced by the former of the text. In this case, the portrayal of Hela through the clauses in the text analysis is influenced by the director, producer, distributor, and the targeted consumers of the movie. This movie was produced by Marvel Studios and released in 2017. It is the third sequel of the *Thor* movie after *Thor* (2011) and *Thor: The Dark World* (2013). Taika Waititi directed the movie from the script written by Eric Pearson, Craig Kyle, and Christopher L. Waititi is the third director of *Thor*, because the directors of the previous movies would not return to Marvel due to the heartbreaking experiences (Ryan, 2015). He was confirmed as the director of *Thor: Ragnarok* in 2015. He did not participate as the director only, but he

also played Korg, a Kronnan warrior in the movie.

Waititi is a movie director, writer, comedian, and actor from New Zealand. His mother is a Russian Jewish, and his father is a Maori of Whānau-ā-Apanui descent (Kahn, 2022). He joined Marvel in 2015 and directed *Thor: Ragnarok* as his first movie in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU). He also directed the fourth sequel of *Thor*, *Thor: Love and Thunder* (2022) which also portrays the main female character as a strong woman. In Thor: Love and Thunder, Waititi provides a fresh physical portrayal of the main female character that defies traditional gender concepts of femininity with its few big-screen appearances of muscular women (Paramita, 2022). It means that not only men who can have big muscles and be strong, but women can have it too. He did it because he built up the possibility that a woman can be equal to a man, and vice versa. It is in line with his characteristic that he occasionally switches roles, giving "male" portions or lines to a female character and vice versa (Kahn, 2022).

As a movie produced by Marvel Studios, *Thor: Ragnarok* is influenced by the characteristics of Marvel movies. Marvel Studios is a production company for American film and television which produces MCU movies and series based on the characters in Marvel Comics. Marvel creates many female characters with brave, strong, and active characteristics, such as Wanda Maximoff in *The Avengers: Age of Ultron* (2015), Carol Danvers in *Captain Marvel* (2019), and Natasha Romanoff in the *Black Widow* movie (2021). The portrayal of the female characters in Marvel movies seems to promote that women can do what men stereotypically can do, to society, in this, to viewers. Thus, Marvel seems to reconstruct new female characteristics, like strong, brave, active, and trustworthy that differ from the common stereotypical traits of women. These new female stereotypes give optimism that Marvel Studios may continue to depict female characters in a feminist (and inclusive) manner moving ahead, defying tendencies like objectification, hypersexualization, and Eurocentrism (Killian, 2023).

Marvel Studios was acquired by Walt Disney Motion Pictures in 2009 (Peterson, 2023). That is why all of Marvel's films and televisions can be enjoyed through the Disney+ Hotstar, the streaming service of Walt Disney Motion Pictures. Disney+ Hotstar distributes Marvel's films and television together with the films and television shows from Pixar and other production companies that also partner with Disney. Walt Disney offers a wide range of movie genres, including comedy, horror, superhero, action, and even animated films so the streaming service is very popular with many people from children to adults because they can freely choose the content that suits their age. According to the MCU storyline, this movie was released after *Avengers: Age of Ultron* (2015) and before *Avengers: Infinity War* (2018). To provide a clear chronology for the MCU, the movie is crucial to advancing the story of the subsequent film and tying the previous one together.

The target viewers of *Thor: Ragnarok* movie are teenagers and adults. This movie is rated PG-13 for action, brief suggestive material, and intense sequences of science-fiction violence. Starred by Cate Blanchet (Hela) as the main female character, and Tessa Thompson (Valkyrie) as the Asgardian warrior in the movie, also may attract women to watch because it shows that women played important roles in MCU dominated for a decade by men (Cavna, 2017).

3. The Social-Cultural Practice of Thor: Ragnarok Movie (2017)

Linked with the text by the discursive practice, the social-cultural practice is also used to analyze the text according to its context. The movie was released in the US on November 3, 2017, so the movie is closely related to the social-cultural context of that year. According to the results of the survey held by the Pew Research Center, there were abundance of gender issues, specifically women, that happened in the US in 2017. Society viewed women as weak beings and always underestimated their competencies. One of the results of the survey shows that employed women were paid less than men for doing the same job, and they also received less

support from their senior leaders (Gramlich, 2017).

They experienced gender discrimination and were treated as if they were incompetent. They had no voice in the matter regarding the harsh treatment they endured because of their low status within the company. If anything, the punishment for their actions—which was deemed to be against the rules—would only cause injury to themselves. The cause is none other than the perspective that women are seen as powerless. Therefore, women are mostly dominated, not dominate. It is in line with Fairclough's (1989) statement that only people with power that can take control, can persuade someone or a group to do something using their language. If they do not have power, they will be controlled by someone or people who have it.

According to CNN (2017), women encountered several difficulties and disruptions in 2017. Following Donald Trump's inauguration, there was an increase in the Republican Party's assaults against women throughout the year. Among these assaults were attempts to defund Planned Parenthood, limit women's legal and reproductive rights, and reduce essential health benefits (Schnall, 2017). As an impact of sexual harassment and gender discrimination in our culture, women are gaining the strength to fight for justice. The millions of individuals who joined the #MeToo movement and took part in the Women's March demonstrate that women will no longer keep silent (Schnall, 2017). The Women's March is a feminist movement group that assists new grassroots activists and organizers in getting started in their communities by providing events, outreach programs, and training. Additionally, it offers intersectional education on a broad spectrum of issues. Women are becoming more involved in politics, the workforce, and society as a result of these feminist initiatives.

The Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017 was passed by the US government, signed into law by President Trump, and became public law no. 115-68 on October 6, 2017. The bipartisan resolution would increase efforts to prevent, moderate, and resolve conflict by increasing the participation of women in mediation and negotiation procedures. It highlights how powerfully women can affect change and are leading the charge in identifying threats to global security while encouraging peace and stability (Dharmaputri, Shoemaker, & Williamson, 2018). As an example of women's participation in government, there is Catherine Cortez Masto who was elected to the US Senate. In 2017, she was elected to the legislature, as the first woman representative from Nevada (McNamee, 2024).

In the film, Hela is depicted as a powerful and honorable lead female heroine in *Thor: Ragnarok* movie. She is Odin's (the King of Asgard) first child. She attempts to reach Asgard after being released by Odin's death since it is where she obtains her strength. When she is on Asgard, no one will be able to stop her because of her unbounded power. Hela's traits are in line with women's struggles in the US to gain power to fight for justice. The discussion of the first and second dimensions shows its hidden meaning regarding the support of the feminist movements and shows that there are possibilities for women to be equal to men. No more gender discrimination and women are no longer underestimated by society in social, work, and government aspects. Any women's participation will be positively responded to because their competencies are not underestimated anymore (Dharmaputri et al., 2018).

Conclusion

This study scrutinizes the countering gender stereotypes portrayed in the main female character in *Thor: Ragnarok* movie (2017). She is portrayed as a strong and brave woman, and these oppose the female stereotypes as reported in a survey conducted in the US in 2017 that women were seen as weak and underestimated. Aimed to dismantle Hela's power that counters gender stereotypes and to reveal the reasons for the portrayal of Hela, this study applied Fairclough's CDA model, using Halliday's SFL focusing on the transitivity system to analyze the micro aspect, and two social theories (Language and Power and Gender Theory) to give limitation for the whole analysis in this study. Based on the results and the discussion in the previous part,

it can be concluded that the research questions of this study are answered.

Based on the text analysis, Hela's power that counters the gender stereotypes is described using material, relational, mental, and existential processes for both traits: strong-brave and overestimated. Apart from those aforementioned, strong-brave trait is also constructed through behavioral, while overestimated is additionally manifested by the verbal process. The most dominant process is the material process and it means that Hela is mostly described using the process associated with men's role. It strengthens that Hela is portrayed as opposed to gender stereotypes.

Based on the discursive practice analysis, the director of the movie was motivated by Marvel Studios and Walt Disney Motion Pictures in producing the movie. Waititi usually tries to avoid assigning a gender to any of the characters he created. It is aimed at building the possibility of gender equality so that women are no longer viewed as weak and underestimated by society. He delivered the message through the movie because Thor is one of Marvel's movie series which is loved by many people around the world. It is a good opportunity to promote the feminism spirit to the target viewers of the movie, both teenagers and adults who love MCU.

The last is the analysis of the social-cultural practice of Thor: Ragnarok movie which is used to answer the third research question. The social-cultural context of the movie also influenced the portrayal of Hela. Many gender issues were reported to exist from 2015 to 2017 in the US, and harmed women. Those gender issues led several feminist movements to emerge to fight for rights and justice, such as Women's March and #MeToo. This movie tries to spread the idea of countering gender stereotypes to the wider community and also gives a subtle message to the viewers that gender stereotypes constructed by society are biased. Men and women are free to act as they wish without sticking to the existing gender stereotypes. The portrayal of Hela can motivate women to be strong and brave in fighting for their rights and justice.

In conclusion, this study is expected to help others understand the relation between gender, language, and power. This study limits its analysis upon the main female character in *Thor: Ragnarok* (2017) as one of MCU movies. It is hoped that further researchers are interested in dismantling the feminism spirit in other MCU movies on a larger scope.

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