THE REPRESENTATION OF PATRIARCHAL CULTURE IN E.L JAMES’ NOVEL “FIFTY SHADES OF GREY”: A FEMINIST STUDY

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Abstrak


Kata kunci: budaya patriarki, feminis, novel Fifty Shades of Grey

Abstract

This research aims to know the patriarchal culture in the Fifty Shades of Grey novel, describe how patriarchal culture reflected in the Fifty Shades of Grey novel, and explain why the author delivers a patriarchal culture in her novel. This research is qualitative research. The primary data source is taken from the novel Fifty Shades of Grey. The secondary data sources are books, online journals, theses, research papers related to this research. The technique of data collection the writer used in this study is library research. To analyze Fifty Shades of Grey novel, the researcher uses a feminist study approach. In presenting the data validity, the researcher uses triangulation by Denzin (2004). Based on the result, the researcher found that there are two aspects that can be presented as patriarchal culture from the Fifty Shades of Grey novel, they are social aspect and economic aspect. Secondly, the researcher found that patriarchal culture reflected in the Fifty Shades of Grey novel through characterization, setting, plot, and conflict. Finally, the author of Fifty Shades of Grey novel delivered a patriarchal culture explicitly through the storyline in this novel.

Keywords: patriarchal culture, feminist, Fifty Shades of Grey novel

1. INTRODUCTION

Up to now, patriarchal culture still exists all over the world, we can found patriarchal culture in every aspect part of life. Patriarchal culture is a system that
men are more dominant or have authority than women. Patriarchal culture can be found in the political system, economic system, education system, even though in the legal system. The patriarchal culture system tends to social violence or discrimination to gender. The patriarchal social system makes men have special rights than women. Their dominance is not only personal power, but also in a broader role such as politics, education, economics, social, and legal participation.

In the private sphere, patriarchal culture is the root of the emergence of various kinds of violence handled by men to women. They also feel they have the right to exploit the woman’s body.

There are many researchers that have conducted in analyzing the novel "Fifty Shades of Grey". First, Sunarto(2015) conducted research entitled “FEMININE OEDIPUS COMPLEX IN E.L JAMES’S FIFTY SHADES OF GREY”. The aim of this research is to depict the main character of this novel, Anastasia Steele and the second is to find the reflection of Feminine Oedipus complex in Anastasia Steele's masochism. In addition, Jarjie(2016) conducted research entitled “ANASTASIA’S STRUGGLE AGAINTS GREY’S VIOLENCE IN E.L JAMES’ FIFTY SHADES OF GREY”. The aim of this research are to study the types of violence experienced by Anastasia Steele and to identify Anastasia’s struggle against Grey’s violence.

The different between this research with previous study is this research focused on the patriarchal culture topic only. The researcher conducts research entitled THE REPRESENTATION OF PATRIARCHAL CULTURE IN E.L JAMES’ NOVEL “FIFTY SHADES OF GREY” : A FEMINIST STUDY in order to know the patriarchal culture presented in the Fifty Shades of Grey novel, describe how patriarchal culture reflected in the Fifty Shades of Grey novel, and explain why the author deliver a patriarchal culture in her novel.
2. METHOD

The type of this research is descriptive qualitative research because it does not need statistic data to get the fact but it is a research which is the result of the data in written data. The object of the study is *Fifty Shades of Grey*. There are two types of data sources which are needed to conduct this research, they are primary data source and secondary data source. The primary data source is taken from the novel *Fifty Shades of Grey*, while secondary data sources from this study are books are related to this study, online journals, theses, research papers related to this research. In order to analyze *Fifty Shades of Grey* novel, the researcher uses a feminist study approach and applies it using descriptive analysis which concerns to make some interpretation of dealing with the novel. The researcher used triangulation by Denzin (2004:330), (1) Source Triangulation (data). This triangulation compares and checks the degree of trust information obtained through different sources in the method qualitative, (2) Method Triangulation. This triangulation tests the credibility of the data carried out by checking data to the same source with different techniques, (3) Analyst Triangulation. This triangulation by utilizing researchers or other observers for the purposes of checking the degree of confidence of the data. For example, comparing the results of the work of analysis with other analyzes. (4) Theory Triangulation This triangulation is based on the assumption that certain facts cannot be examined by the degree of trust with one or more theories but that it can be done, in this case, called an explanatory explanation.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Patriarchal Culture Presented in the *Fifty Shades of Grey* Novel

3.1.1 Social aspect

Social aspect is one of patriarchal culture presented in the *Fifty Shades of Grey* novel. It can be seen in this novel when Ana worked at electronic store. She met with the electronic store’s brother named Paul. Suddenly, Paul hugged Ana
and she was surprised. On the other side, Grey obviously did not like what Ana did in front of him.

“Yep. You’re looking well, Ana, really well.” He grins as he examines me at arm’s length. Then he releases me but keeps a possessive arm draped over my shoulder. I shuffle from foot to foot, embarrassed. It’s good to see Paul, but he’s always been over-familiar. (p.14)

3.1.2 Economic aspect

Economic aspect becomes the other patriarchal culture presented in the Fifty Shades of Grey novel. In gender equality, both women and men are equal in economic aspect. Women can get their own money without any helps from men. Grey gave Ana a new laptop that was not really needed for her. But Ana can not refuse it because Grey will be mad to her. On her graduation, Grey also gave Ana a new car as a present:

*He’s bought me a damned car, brand new by the looks of it. Jeez... I’ve had enough trouble with the books. I stare at it blankly, trying desperately to determine how I feel about this. I am appalled on one level, grateful on another, shocked that he’s actually done it, but the overriding emotion is anger.* (p.118)

3.2 Patriarchal Culture Reflected in the Fifty Shades of Grey Novel

3.2.1 Characterization

1) Christian Grey

a) Domineering

Domineering is one of characters that can describe Grey. The part that explained about Grey’s domineering is down below:

“I employ over forty thousand people, Miss Steele. That gives me a certain sense of responsibility – power, if you will. If I were to decide I was no longer interested in the telecommunications business and sell up, twenty thousand people would struggle to make their mortgage payments after a month or so.” (p.2011)
Christian Grey has a domineering character in order to get everything what he wants no matter that can hurt other people or not. His domineering character can be observed by others clearly in the way he talks and acts. Grey is a person who authoritatively gives command and loves in controlling over people around him.

b) Possessive

Possessive is also being a character of Christian Grey that reflected patriarchal culture in the Fifty Shades of Grey novel. Grey is such an over-protective person to Ana. Basically, Grey did that to Ana for a purpose. Grey assumed that Ana is his sex slave, so that, no one can touch or even closed with her except Grey himself. The example of Grey’s possessive character can be seen in the following part in this novel:

“Eat,” he says more sharply. “Anastasia, I have an issue with wasted food... eat.”
“I can’t eat all this.” I gape at what’s left on the table.
“Eat what’s on your plate. If you’d eaten properly yesterday, you wouldn’t be here, and I wouldn’t be declaring my hand so soon.”
His mouth sets in a grim line. He looks angry (p.34)

c) Cruel

Christian Grey can be called as a cruel man. His cruelty character is clearly seen from the actions and utterances in this novel. A cruel personality of Grey can be seen through the part in the story line of this novel below:

He reaches up and pulls my chin.
“Stop biting your lip, or I will fuck you in the elevator, and I don’t care who gets in with us.” (p.64).
1) Anastasia Steele
   a) Independent
   Anna can be seen as an independent woman in the *Fifty Shades of Grey* novel. In the beginning of the story, Anna is a shopkeeper in Claytons. The parts in the novel that explained about Anna’s independent character are down below:

   "I’ve worked at Clayton’s since I started at WSU. It’s the largest independent hardware store in the Portland area, and over the four years I’ve worked here, I’ve come to know a little bit about most everything we sell – although ironically, I’m crap at any DIY. I leave all that to my dad." (p.10)

   b) Tough
   Tough is also one of Anastasia Steele's characters that reflected the patriarchal culture in the *Fifty Shades of Grey* novel. Anna is very strong when she received punishment from Grey because with this, Anna can escape as a sex slave of Grey. The event can be seen in the following part of the novel:

   "Count, Anastasia!" he commands.
   "One!" I shout at him, and it sounds like an expletive.
   He hits me again, and the pain pulses and echoes along the line of the belt. Holy shit... that smarts.
   "Two!" I scream. It feels so good to scream. (p.232)

3.2.2 Setting

The patriarchal culture reflected in the *Fifty Shades of Grey* novel can be seen through the setting of the story line. The researcher found that there are many parts with various settings within the novel that reflected a patriarchal culture. First the setting is at Ana’s house with sad situation. Ana told her friend about her first experience having sex with Grey. She said that Grey fucked her,
not have sex as a common couple. The following part is situation which tells about that:

“He uses sex as a weapon.”

“Fuck you into submission?” She shakes her head disapprovingly. I blink rapidly at her, and I can feel the blush as it spreads across my face. Oh... spot on, Katherine Kavanagh, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist.

“Ana, I don’t understand, you just let him make love to you?”

“No, Kate, we don’t make love – we fuck – Christian’s terminology. He doesn’t do the love thing.” (p.88)

3.2.3 Plot

In introduction, the writer formed a beginning of story line by the stages of events which is about Anastasia Steele. She was a student in WSU who lived with her close friend named Katherine Kavanagh in a small community of duplex apartments in Vancouver, Washington. In the rising action stage, the story formed by sequences of events that presented through characters of the novel which started from Anna who agreed and signed the contract as a slave and master relationship with Grey. Climax stage is a turning point or can be called as the point of greatest suspense or action. The peak of conflict stage showed when Anna accepted Grey's challenge. Gray's challenge is touching Grey's body when having sex because in Grey's rules, he did not allow Anastasia as a slave touched his body of a master.

Falling action is the actions and events that occurred after the climax. The falling conflict stage showed when Anna decided to ask Gray to not approach her again and then leave her. In resolution, the writer ended the story line where the conflicts and problems are solved. Conflict resolution is shown by Christian Grey after trying hard to ask Anna not to leave him. She realized that she was not fit for him. Thus, Anastasia left him and this was Anna's patriarchal resistance to escape from Christian's character as a dominant and slave.
3.2.4 Conflict

The patriarchal culture reflected in the *Fifty Shades of Grey* novel can be seen through the conflict in the novel. In the *Fifty Shades of Grey* novel, Grey gave everything for Ana no matter it is such an important thing or not in order to make him look superior for her, but there are many parts where Ana refused it even though usually she always accepts that. The part will be proved in the following part of the novel:

“I don’t know, and I don’t care. I can’t accept these from him. I’ll send them back with an equally baffling quote from some obscure part of the book.” (p. 25)

3.3 The Author’s Reason in Delivering a Patriarchal Culture in the *Fifty Shades of Grey* Novel

A patriarchal culture that was delivered by author of *Fifty Shades of Grey* novel reminds the readers about gender equality. The researcher found that the author want to deliver a good moral value to the readers explicitly which is very well presented in this novel. In delivering a patriarchal culture, the author explained explicitly because the story line in this novel is dominated about sex life of Grey. In conclusion, *Fifty Shades of Grey* novel emerged as a form of aspiration by the author’s intention about gender equality in the world. Because of culture of men domination and patriarchal culture, the author delivered an example that women must be respected and was not controlled by men through a story line within the *Fifty Shades of Grey* novel itself.

4. CLOSING

The researcher analyzed the patriarchal culture reflected in the *Fifty Shades of Grey* novel by E.L James in feminist perspective. Firstly, the researcher found that there are two aspects that can be presented as patriarchal culture from the *Fifty Shades of Grey* novel. They are social aspect and economic aspect. Secondly, the researcher found that patriarchal culture reflected in the *Fifty Shades of Grey* novel
through characterization, setting, plot and conflict. Finally, the author of *Fifty Shades of Grey* novel delivered a patriarchal culture explicitly through the storyline in this novel. The author presented the moral value very well about for readers to treat women fairly as same as men in every aspects in this life.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


