Symbolic Violence and Woman's Resistance Reflected in "Legally Blonde" Novel by Amanda Brown

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the issue of symbolic violence and woman's resistance reflected in the Legally Blonde novel by Amanda Brown. Symbolic violence is represented in the form of domination in a subtle way to manipulate the victim. It can be a gift, act of service, or appreciation, and it could be body shaming and hate speech with refined meaning (euphemism). This novel shows a phenomenon that happened in society. This study is related to Pierre Bourdieu's theory called symbolic violence. The method of this study is descriptive and qualitative. The writer analyzed those data by using the theory of symbolic violence by Pierre Bourdieu. The result of the study shows that the forms of symbolic violence that are symbolic violence of parents to children (Brooke's mother to her) and (Elle's mother to her), symbolic violence of boyfriend to his girlfriend (Warner to Elle), symbolic violence of dean to a student (Dean Haus to Elle), symbolic violence between students (Sarah and Claire to Elle), symbolic violence of professor to a student (Professor Pfisak to Elle). And woman's resistance (Elle breaks the stigma about the images of beautiful women as foolish in academics). The writer concluded that kinds of symbolic violence in Legally Blonde novel are symbolic violence in the family, relationships, and academic. In addition, this novel wanted to show that a beautiful woman is perfect. They are kind, intelligent, and independent.

Keywords: Symbolic violence, Woman's resistance, Euphemism.

Introduction

According to (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 7) symbolic violence is experienced by the person who endures it and can only be carried out by the person who carries it out, and in a form that results in misunderstanding, so to speak, which results in recognition as legitimate. In addition, others also state that symbolic violence is violence perpetrated against social agents with their involvement (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p.136). The exercise of symbolic violence where gender are both weaker and less agreeable, less intelligent, more unreliable, and so forth. Symbolic violence is the set symbol that we have and recognized and legitimated by other people such as our job title, study degree and etc. Social pressure is one of the phenomena that reflected symbolic violence. For Bourdieu, symbolic violence seemed to be ubiquitous, to have no limits (Burawoy, 2019, p.62). Symbolic violence can occur in family, relationship, workplace, social media, and academic. This social phenomenon can be reflected in literature. So, it makes literary works always covered the experience of social condition in real life. Literature is very concerned with the social world of humans, their adaptation to it, and their desire to change it (Lauranson & Swingwood, 1972, p.24).

Literature, like society, is a totality, every literary work is a whole of life that can only be understood from its constituent parts (Laurance & Swingwood, 1972, p.29). In addition, literature is a unique human activity. It is born from the

eternal human desire to understand, express, and then share experiences (Pickering & Hoeper, 1981, p.163). Additionally, literary works is a media of author to express their ideas and experiences. Literature is as a realistic reflector of the real content of life (Milner, 1981, p.71). One of the literary works that used to reflect the ideology of author is a novel.

Novel is a tool to spread the message in it to the society or readers. Novel has power that impacts to the life of society. Other novels followed, satisfying the public in other dimensions: notably domestic settings and adventures connected with worldly life and sexuality (Laurance & Swingewood, 1972, p.35). Novel always shows the domination to women and blacks. Women always been dominated because less intelligent and weakness. American is one of the countries that always show the domination to women and blacks through novel. The timing cities, the climate of violence at home and abroad, prolonged college life, the negro activist movement these are only some of the factors in a total context of social inequality and competition which have produced tension in American society (Laurance & Swingewood, 1972, p.59). The certain theme of the novel that spread in the world about the domination toward women is Legally Blonde.

Legally Blonde was written by Amanda Brown and published in 2003 by Time Warner Paperbacks. She is an American novelist born in October 1970 in Phoenix. Her father is a lawyer and her mother is an art gallery owner. She was graduated from Arizona State University and continued her law school at Stanford University. In fact, she has never done her study there. She writes a comedy novel entitled Legally Blonde based on her experience.

Legally Blonde is a comedy novel that talks about the struggle of a blonde named Elle, whose school at the University of Southern California socio-political jewelry design major. She wants to prove herself to everyone that she is not only beautiful but also kind and intelligent. She is success become a sorority at Stanford law school. But, people around her still underestimate her. She did all that for backstreet with her boyfriend named Warner. He broke up with her because he

assumed Elle was a foolish girl.

Legally Blonde novel reflects women's lives in the modern era, where they lived glamour, beauty, and fashionable. They lived with the beauty standards of Barbie dolls, such as white skin, blonde, etc. This novel also shows the point of view of academics about women that have to fulfill the beauty standard. They assumed that beautiful women didn't have a future because they were never seriously and seemed foolish.

So, they dominate and give the beautiful woman violence in the way of a language, action, and it didn't realize by the victim. The forms of symbolic violence that occurs in this novel there is symbolic violence in the family, relationship, and academic. For example, parents give symbolic violence to their children by saying fat, ugly, stupid, and also seditious.

Legally Blonde novel shows jokes that can make the readers laugh without realizing it is a satire. This novel shows strange things such as how symbolic violence can occur with the closest people around us, such as parents toward their children, a man toward his girlfriend, and lectures toward the student, there is something unique and controversial from this novel, which is it shows different forms of domination as beautiful woman is easy to be dominated by others than ordinary woman. Hence, it is a significant reason for the writers to describe and discuss it with a more detailed explanation. Here, the researcher tries to analyze the symbolic violence toward women characters and woman's resistance in Legally Blonde novel by Amanda Brown using 'Pierre Bourdieu's perspective'.

Literature Review

Few literature reviews conducted to understand the awareness related to human rights which supports the present researches are presented below:

The relations of power in society and the dynamics arising from these relations for the acquisition, maintenance and domination of capital by different groups form the backbone of Bourdieus' comprehensive theory of society,

which is built on the concepts of habitus, field, capital F and symbolic violence. Moreover, these concepts allow analysis of how power exists (Moi, 1991, p.4). Therefore, Bourdieu's framework allows us to focus on the dynamics of dominance and reproduction and the contestation of dominance through practice (McDonough & Polzer, 2012, p.6).

Habitus is a disposition that produces practice and perception and in the true sense: a characteristic or condition, state, or appearance of a typical or normal body, is a combination of disposition, generating and classifying schemas (Jenkins, 1972, p. 190). In Bourdieus' words, habitus can be defined as: a structured structure which tends to function as a structuring structure such as generating principles, organizing practices and representations which can be objectively adapted to their results without presupposing an objective or expressive mastery of the operations necessary to achieve them (Bourdieu, 1990, p.23). It can here be seen an example of this "structuring structure". Colonial and postcolonial experiences have taken many forms and have influenced how Africans perceive themselves and there is a single narrative underlying inferiority and achievement (Mamdani, 1996, p.63-64; Weda, et al., 2021, p.727). It can be hypothesized that the habitus of subsequent generations has been structured by this experience and that it is the reality of "how they perceive themselves" (Connolly, 1997, p.66). Therefore, habits are part of the socialization process in which everything we experience, is understood and categorized according to what we have experienced in the past and events experienced in childhood is very important in developing a "perceptual matrix" which serves to inform how we come to see the world and more importantly how we react in different contexts (Swartz, 1997, p.53).

This field will vary greatly how the autonomy is gained from the social sphere as a whole. The autonomous field is characterized by a high degree of specificity, it has its own history, a special configuration of agents operating in it and fighting for special interests. It fosters its own habitus and upholds a distinctive set of beliefs, such an autonomous field is highly differentiated

and marked by sharp boundaries, beyond which it has no impact on practice (Peillon, 1998, p.213); (Rahman, 2019, p.4)

In addition, (Bourdieu, 1977, p.405) describes symbolic capital as capital of honor and prestige. It builds on things like reputation, publicity and fame, manifests itself in titles such as, knight, master or professor, and grants the holder certain rights and opportunities that can be turned into other forms of capital.

As for the opinion (Bourdieu, 1970, p.151) that symbolic violence is a necessary and effective means to exercise power and every power to use symbolic violence, for example every power that succeeds in imposing meaning and imposing it as legitimate by hiding the power relations on which it is based. its power, adding a special symbolic power to that power relationship. Moreover, symbolic violence is carried out by the authorities by using power to discriminate against social agents. Symbolic violence is violence perpetrated against social agents with its complications (Webb, et al., 2002, p.15); (Vedas, et al., 2021, p.720). In addition, Bourdieu also argues that symbolic violence is an unconscious surrender to power, namely real or symbolic, which is carried out by a person or group and which dominates the social agents who are controlled in a particular field. (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p.136) considers that the main premise of symbolic violence is that individuals are subjected to forms of violence in an internalized or symbolic way rather than physical violence, for instance they can be treated as limited inferiors. in their mobility and social aspirations.

Symbolic power or what can be called symbolic violence is an invisible power that can also be exercised only with complications from those who do not want to know that they are submissive or even they are exercising it themselves (Bourdieu, 1991, p.7).). As for another opinion, namely, symbolic violence is domination that is not taken for granted, a form of domination that works through misrecognition (Burawoy, 2019, p.9). Most social agents take part in acts of symbolic violence voluntarily, and it is unfortunate that it is seen as a legitimate and part of the environment, or field, in which they

operate. This internalization is aided by the process of misrecognition (Webb, et al., 2002, p.15). The essence of symbolic violence is to secure and obscure the entire social scope of society at large, even all societies throughout history (Burawoy, 2019, p.9; Rahman & Weda, 2018, p.159).

Those who have more capital in a field are more likely to commit symbolic violence with complications than those who suffer from it (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, 136), and individuals can be treated as inferior or subordinate to others by being defined, for example, as marginalized careers. , limited in terms of realistic aspirations, or denied resources (Webb, 2002, p.15; Rahman, et al., 2019, p. 155). In addition, in this area there is a deeper idea of symbolic violence, which is it related to reflexivity and public involvement (Burawoy, 2019, p.9).

A related concept in Bourdieus' understanding of power is the concept of doxa, it is a combination of unstated and heterodox norms and beliefs, taken for granted and the assumptions or common sense behind the differences we make. In addition Bourdieu, (1984, p.5) argues that doxa occurs when we forget the boundaries that have created unequal divisions in society, and it is adherence to the relations of order that because they form the real world and the world of thought and are accepted as self-evident.

Doxa implies all norms and practices that are accepted as a natural and self-evident part of the social, needless to say and not open to contestation or questioning (Agarwal, 1997, p.17). Sahib, et al. (2019, p.2) describes that an undeniable acceptance of the world of everyday life. Doxa is the key to symbolic violence in social practice (Webb, 2002, p.15), for example perhaps a young girl marries a man chosen by her parents in an arranged marriage, without this. Moreover Bourdieu questioning Wacquant, (1992, p.136) explains that dominated people who are subjected to symbolic violence do not see it as violence, but mistakenly recognize it as part of the existing normal social order.

The researcher reaffirmed that symbolic violence

is the violence that not transparently and indirectly without hurting physically, this violence is not known or recognized by people who are dominated because this violence is related with doxa, that the rulers point of view is considered as a universal point of view. This rule is carried out by the authorities who dominate people who are no power. One example of symbolic violence between teacher and student is uncontrolled speech of the teacher who came out while talking to students who did wrong, bad grades and late. So, the students will feel sad, embarrassed, even offended and angry.

Method

In analyzing the data, the researcher used descriptive qualitative method. Based on the description of qualitative method, the researcher would apply that method in conducting this research because the researcher wants to describe how the symbolic violence toward characters and woman's resistance reflected in Amanda Brown's Legally Blonde novel. There are two types source of data in this study, primary data is the data which is collected from Legally Blonde novel Amanda Brown. Primary data includes; quotes phrases, sentences, dialogue of characters that had been used as data of analysis that had been used as data to give the complete understanding of analysis. Secondary data is the data which is collected from many sources (some journals, books and thesis) that deal with the research object (material object). All the collected data would use theory of symbolic violence by Pierre Bourdieu to describe how the symbolic violence toward characters and woman's resistance reflected in Amanda Brown's Legally Blonde novel. All the selected data is analyzed to prove what are written in the object of this research and finally the writer can draw the conclusion for this research

Findings and Discussion of the Study

On the basis of analyzed data and interpretation of the results the following findings have been emerged out of the study being beautiful is the desire of all women. Women always want to look beautiful and fashionable to get attention and confession. Beauty itself has standard criteria that must be fulfilled as a beautiful woman. The criteria are whiteness skin, blonde, pointed nose, body goals and fashionable etc. All women that fulfill the criteria become easy to well accepted in society, meanwhile women who didn't deserve the beauty standard such as the black skin and bad shape of their bodies will be easy to dominate. But in this novel, it also shows another perspective where the beautiful woman getting more domination than ordinary woman in academics.

According to Bourdieu symbolic violence is a forced system of symbolism and meaning, including cultural domination such as capital or cultural habitus towards groups or classes in such a way that it is experienced as something legitimate. So, Symbolic violence occurs in the real life without realizing it, and those affected by symbolic violence didn't feel it. This is due to the justification of the violence, as part of the duties and work of subordinates, who are controlled and governed.

1. Method Symbolic violence in family

Symbolic violence is violence that is not realized by the victim. Symbolic violence can happen between parents and children. Unconsciously Parents always force their children to follow their utterance for reasons of politeness and fear of being labeled lawless. Symbolic violence between parents and children can be seen bellow:

"Her mother called Brooke a liar and wretched, dumpy little failure. She said all these awful things. She even said that Brooke was jealous of her mother's beauty, she wouldn't take her calls and told her to move out of the house" (Brown, 2003, p.142).

The quotation above is symbolic violence given by Brooke's mother to Brooke in the form of hate speech and body shaming. The impact felt by Brooke is disappointed. It can be a mental disorder that has a long-term effect. Her mother gives her symbolic violence because she thinks Brooke is only ugly, fat, and spreading awful rumors. Brooke accepts the symbolic violence given by her mother because she feels that she is only a child who is under her mother's control. So, she takes her mother's treatment. She was even kicked out of the house but didn't realize it would be toxic and interfere with her mental health. Symbolic violence is not only practiced in society. It is also in the family in the name of the position like fathers, mothers, and children. The father and mother have a higher place while children have required obeying their parents' words. So, they don't become disobedient children. It is already in Doxa.

"Law school? What are you talking about? Darling, one must pass tests for that sort of nonsense and ..." (Brown, 2003, p.19). The expression above is a form of symbolic violence given by Elle's mother to Elle. Elle's mother was shocked when Elle told her that she wanted to continue her studies at law school. She doesn't believe in it because she knows Elle's abilities. Elle's mother thinks Elle is just a girl who cares about her appearance. She unintentionally belittled Elle. Supposedly as a mother, she will help and support Elle's desire to continue law school. But he doubted her daughter's abilities. It makes Elle sad because she is not supported and mentally dropped before facing the exam. She told her mother to get support but dropped mentally.

2. Symbolic violence in relationship

As explained by Pierre Bourdieu, the exercise of symbolic violence is women are weak than men it makes easy to get symbolic violence. Symbolic violence in relationships is subtle violence usually perpetrated by men against their partners. Because men feel they have more power than women. They dominate women by saying it is something natural because women are under men. When a man always dominates a woman, it is a toxic relationship which is an unhealthy relationship that hurts one party. When the man is considered proper, the woman should obey him even though it hurts her. The toxic relationships always make women suffer and do not realize it. Women are always afraid to express their opinions and desires. However, when this unhealthy relationship can be detected or contained in the relationship, the best way is to break up.

"What I mean is, I thought now would be a good

time to give it back. We're not going to be together forever Elle. You know that. It was a sweet thought, but I have decided to turn my life around and get serious. I think we should make a clean break before I leave for Standford law school" (Brown, 2003, p.8). The quotation above is Warner's break-off statement to Elle. He breaks with Elle for a reason he would continue his study at Stanford law school. Therefore, he thought Elle would not be suitable to be his partner when he was already a Stanford law school. He felt he would not suit a girl like her who was never seriously and only thought about her appearance. Warner feels he has the recognition that if he became a Stanford law school student, it makes Warner would look for a genius woman. Warner indirectly underestimated Elle. She is listening to all of the Warner's breakup statements and makes her sad. Elle didn't realize that Warner had given her symbolic violence. Elle even tries to change herself to be like Warner's wants though she doesn't want that. It is to get back with Warner. Elle doesn't realize that she has stepped out of her comfort zone and is in a toxic relationship.

"Registering for what? This isn't the textiles department, Elle." Warner laughed. (Brown, 2003, p.28). The quotation above is Warner's greeting when he met Elle for the first time during the re-registration of new student admissions at Stanford. Warner greeted Elle with a condescending expression. He tells Elle that this school is not a textile school. Warner also laughed at her as if he couldn't believe that Elle was at Stanford Law School. Warner drops Elle mentally in front of his new girlfriend, Sarah. He is not happy when he meets Elle. Warner only finds it funny when Elle is there. The symbolic violence that Warner gives to Elle is a form of humiliation because he underestimates Elle's abilities. Indirectly Warner said this place is not suitable for her. Elle should go to fashion school. Warner also laughed in contempt for Elle in front of his new girlfriend. Elle didn't realize that she had been humiliated by Warner the umpteenth time. She still loves Warner and continues to get insults frequently. Elle always felt Warner was never wrong in her eyes. Elle did not realize that she was in the incorrect circle, namely a toxic relationship.

3. Symbolic violence in academics

Moreover, Bourdieu considers that academia is such a field, embedded and reflecting social relations and therefore, for him, the field refers to a distinct social arena or space in which capital is mobilized or habitus acts, 'the potential embodied in habitus only exists forever manifested in the context of a particular field', and each field is distinct and thus operates according to its own logic (McNay, 1999, p.97).

Symbolic violence in academics is subtle violence usually carried out by individuals who have power against those who don't. Like deans and professors, it is easiest to give dominance to students because they have "power" in the form of symbolic capital. They have considered having strength, so it will be effortless to do symbolic violence. In academics, symbolic violence can also occur between students. The intelligent students will easily give dominance to less intelligent students and students who have a family or relative relationship with one of the lecturers and a wealthy student. These students can more easily give symbolic violence to students whose considered stupid, poor, and ugly.

"And now, ladies and gentleman, what class would be complete without a sorority president?" (The dean smirked to a scattering of boos and laughter). "Ms. Elle Woods, also has the distinction of being, among thousands of applicants, our only homecoming queen!" (Dean Haus continued) "appropriate to sillicon valley, our own pentium blonde!" (Brown, 2003, p.35). The data above shows symbolic violence carries out by the dean to Elle during a speech event to welcome new students at Stanford Law School. Dean gives her some domination in a subtle way called euphemism. Euphemism is a refining meaning of a word to manipulate the victim. Dean dominates her in front of many students through his utterance. Elle recognized the worst words to her and made her sad. But she can't do anything because she has no power at Stanford law school, she just a new student so that she decides to exit from the hall room. The dean operates symbolic violence on Elle because he thinks that Elle is a different student that she is beautiful and sexy with the silicon surgery. He also states that Elle is a homecoming queen while

she has been a homecoming queen in her school before. The dean guesses Elle is not serious become a student at Stanford law school but only showing up for her appearance and it makes him ridicule her. He thinks that Elle doesn't fit with Stanford Law School.

"Like a talking Barbie", Elle overhead Sarah whisper. Claire shushed her friend, tapping her pearl-studded ear and indicating Elle. She flipped open her monogrammed Bermuda Bag to scribble notes instead. She passed a note to Sarah on which the words HOMECOMING QUEEN! Cloud be easily be read by Elle (Brown, 2003, p.36). The situation above shows Sarah and Claire's ridicule of Elle by saying like a talking barbie and homecoming queen. They subtly bullied Elle. Talking barbie means a beautiful doll who lives but has no brain. She is just pretty but dumb, and Claire calls her homecoming queen because she guesses that Elle is a proper homecoming queen and not proper to be a student at Standford law school. Elle didn't recognize it as symbolic violence. She thought that she looked beautiful like barbie and it was her excess as homecoming queen. She equalized people's perceptions of her as she was in the delta gamma house.

When Professor Pfisak began reading Elle's essay to the class, it was clear that his idea of reforming the capitalist status quo did not start with the Blonde Legal Defense Fund. Voice heavy with sarcasm, the professor paused several times to shake his head in apparent disbelie (Brown, 2003, p.111). The sentence above shows when Professor Pfisak reads the results of the mini-essay made by Elle in front of the class by showing an expression that mocks Elle. He couldn't believe what Elle wrote. He thinks Elle doesn't understand the assignment. Professor Pfisak thinks Elle's writing about blonde is very unreasonable. He also let out sarcasm that made all the students in the room laugh at Elle. Professor Pfisak also shows some forms of ridicule to Elle by shaking her head which means Elle is very stupid. The symbolic violence that Professor Pfisak gave to Elle was symbolic violence in the form of humiliating her in front of Elle's classmates. The result of this symbolic violence makes Elle feel very embarrassed and

can have long-term effects. This form of symbolic violence is unpleasant for Elle, but she still accepts it because she can't do anything as a student who has no power. Lecturers should be able to provide space for students to express themselves in their essays according to what they want to write and should be able to maintain an attitude so as not to embarrass their students because this can form trauma and also students' fear of expressing themselves. Lecturers can provide input or correct errors and then correct them, but still in good language so that students don't get hit mentally. This form of symbolic violence is in the form of humiliating, mocking, and considering students stupid.

4. Woman's resistance against domination in academic

... "Here" (He beamed at Elle) "Is the real star!". Cameras were flashing, placing Elle securely ih her element. The reporters had a lot of questions, many of them for Elle, which she answered beautifully. The last question, however, was directed at Christoper" (Brown, 2003, p.266) "Is the real star!" was Professor Christopher's proud greeting to Elle who had won the trial in Brooke's case. Some media highlight them both. Elle is happy that she has won the trials and proud to be Professor Christopher's intern. Because of this incident made she was accepted and treated well at Stanford Law School. She won without being someone else. She loves herself as she is without being like the others. She can prove that she deserved to be in Standford law school to her parents, ex-boyfriends, deans, lecturers, and students who underestimated her. Elle shows them that she is not a stupid beautiful woman. She has fashion skills that can help her finish problems in court. These make everyone appreciate her and no longers care about his appearance. Her win is a form of resistance to the people around her who always oppress her. She did this fight to break a stigma in academics that beautiful people are not necessarily stupid.

Conclusion

Legally blonde's novel shows women's standards in a different arena between beautiful women and bookworm women. Beautiful women will be easy to accept in the fashion and the general public but not in the academic world. On the other hand, bookworm women will be easier to adapt to the academics, but they are tacky and stodgy on fashion and beauty. Amanda Brown wants to show that Elle is a perfect role model for women. She is a beautiful, intelligent, kind and independent woman. Beautiful woman will be easier adapting to all fields with their abilities. This novel indirectly dominates nerdy women by showing characters of evil, selfish, and bullies, as well as men pictured as parasites who always take advantage of women and take every opportunity for their interests. This novel breaks the stigma about beautiful women who are stupid, weak, and have no power instead of showing their role in the success of men.

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