

**Power Relation in The Novel *Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon (2015)**

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***Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of The Requirement to Obtain Strata One (S1)***

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## ABSTRACT

**Rahmat Fadhli, 2023. Power Relation In The Novel *Everything, Everything* By Nicola Yoon (2015). Undergraduate Thesis. English Language and Literature Department. Faculty of Language and Arts. Universitas Negeri Padang.**

This analysis delves into the power relation between Madeline Whittier and her mother, Pauline, in Nicola Yoon's 2015 novel *Everything, Everything*. The narrative is shaped by Madeline's relationship with her mother, who holds significant power due to her severe medical condition. Pauline's role is both mother and doctor of her daughter (Madeline), ensuring Madeline's well-being but also restricting her freedom and social interactions. The analysis examines Pauline's protective nature, which reflects maternal love and fear, and how Madeline, despite her physical limitations, gradually asserts her agency and challenges her mother's authority, leading to a power shift within their relationship. The research explores the power relation between Madeline and Pauline in the novel *Everything, Everything*, focusing on their evolving relationship and the challenges they face in a complex mother-daughter setting. It highlights the diverse ways power can be asserted, challenged, and redefined in extraordinary circumstances.

**Keywords: *Power Relations, Power, Power Abuse, Resistance.***

## ABSTRAK

**Rahmat Fadhli, 2023. Power Relation In The Novel Everything, Everything By Nicola Yoon (2015). Tesis Sarjana. Program Studi Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris. Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni. Universitas Negeri Padang.**

Analisis ini menyelidiki hubungan kekuasaan antara Madeline Whittier dan ibunya, Pauline, dalam novel Nicola Yoon tahun 2015, *Everything, Everything*. Narasinya dibentuk oleh hubungan Madeline dengan ibunya, yang memegang kekuasaan besar karena kondisi kesehatannya yang parah. Peran Pauline adalah sebagai ibu dan dokter dari putrinya (Madeline), memastikan kesejahteraan Madeline tetapi juga membatasi kebebasan dan interaksi sosialnya. Analisis ini mengkaji sifat protektif Pauline, yang mencerminkan cinta dan ketakutan keibuan, dan bagaimana Madeline, meskipun memiliki keterbatasan fisik, secara bertahap menegaskan hak pilihannya dan menantang otoritas ibunya, yang menyebabkan pergeseran kekuasaan dalam hubungan mereka. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi hubungan kekuasaan antara Madeline dan Pauline dalam novel *Everything, Everything*, dengan fokus pada hubungan mereka yang terus berkembang dan tantangan yang mereka hadapi dalam lingkungan ibu-anak yang kompleks. Hal ini menyoroti beragam cara kekuasaan dapat ditegaskan, ditantang, dan didefinisikan ulang dalam keadaan luar biasa.

**Kata kunci:** *Relasi Kekuasaan, Kekuasaan, Penyalahgunaan Kekuasaan, Perlawanan.*

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Rahmat Fadhli

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of The Research

Relationships are a part of human life that cannot be separated. Relationships bind people together on a fundamental level. They interact with one another on a social and interpersonal level. According to Cherry (2022) Relationships can be categorized into seven categories, such as: Romantic relationships, Friendships, Acquaintances, Professional/Work relationships, Sexual relationships, Situational relationships (sometimes called "situationships") and Family relationships. Different traits distinguish one relationship from the others. Commitment, honesty, trust, and respect define a romantic relationship. Typically, it involves a man and a woman. Friendship is a type of relationship where there are absolutely no formalities or hesitations. Because they desire to boost their chances of earning a promotion and accessing better career possibilities, people who have work relationships might collaborate in their professional networks to accomplish their objectives and aspirations. The last type of connection is a family, where members are related through marriage or blood.

It is possible to observe the manifestation of power relations in the course of interpersonal communication in all of the relationships mentioned above. Most people are certainly familiar with power. Undoubtedly, we frequently hear about it in the news, particularly in relation to governmental and political matters. Power

can come from anywhere and operate anywhere, thus it is not generally thought of as being related to politics and the government. According to Foucault (as cited in Lynch, 2010) "Power is never anything more than a relationship that can, and must, be studied only by looking at the interplay of the terms of the relationship". From this definition, it can be concluded that power is not an object but rather a relation.

We all must be familiar with the word "Power" because since we were kids, we have always been taught that we must have high aspirations so that when we grow up, we can have a higher power as well. What is power? Max Weber (as cited in Lobato, 2022) states that power is the probability of imposing one's own will, within a relationship, even against all resistance and whatever the basis of that probability may be (Weber, 2005). It can be concluded that power is a social force that helps a person to move other people more easily, regulate people, and even eliminate resistance to the owner of power. The relationship between the effectiveness of a ruler and power cannot be separated. The position occupied by the ruler can be realized when the ruler with their power is able to influence or arouse the people under them to do what they want. Power relations can be anywhere such as in an administration, or within an institution, or in a family (Foucault as cited in Balan, 2010).

Everyone has their own power capacity, whether it's at school, at work, or at home. For example, at school, students must follow the directions of their teacher because it is the teacher who has the "power" to give grades to the students. In the office, employees must follow the directions of their boss because the boss is the one who has the "power" to control and pay them. At home, children must follow

the directions of their parents because it is the parents who has the “power” to take care for them and feed them every day. It means that the parents have “parental power” over their children.

What is “parental power”? John Locke (as cited in Rutegwalera, 2018) defines parental power as:

The power that the parent has to raise their children and to govern them for their sake until they reach an age or a level of knowledge where they can be assumed to be able to comprehend the law, whether it be the law of nature or the municipal law of their nation, and at that point, they are to be left in charge of themselves (Locke, 2005: 123).

From this definition, it can be revealed that parents have full control over their children. parents can limit their children for the good of their children, until their children can live independently. However, what happens when parents abuse their power over their own children? This is what happened in the novel *Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon (2015) and this is what will be the topic of discussion in this research.

*Everything, Everything* is the debut young adult novel by Jamaican-American author Nicola Yoon, first published by Delacorte Books for Young Readers in 2015. Ayesha (2015) said that: “The way the author describes Madeline’s world using such beautiful imagery makes the reader appreciate the little things in life”. This novel tells the story of a mother (Pauline) who is a doctor who experienced trauma in her past, which caused her to diagnose her daughter (Madeline) with a rare disease called severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), also known as "bubble baby disease", and decided to lock her own daughter in the house since her daughter is still 8 months old until her daughter is 18 years old now.

This novel is one of literary works that uses the abuse of power as the main conflict. This conflict can be analyzed by using the power relation theory of Michel Foucault which discusses the relation of power among the characters in the novel.

## **1.2 Brief Explanation of Author's Biography**

Nicola Yoon is the no. 1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *Instructions for Dancing*, *Everything, Everything*, *The Sun Is Also a Star*, and a co-author of *Blackout*. She is a National Book Award finalist, a Michael L. Printz Honor Book recipient, a Coretta Scott King New Talent Award winner and the first Black woman to hit no. 1 on the *New York Times* Young Adult bestseller list. Two of her novels have been made into major motion pictures. She's also the co-publisher of Joy Revolution, a Random House young adult imprint dedicated to love stories starring people of color. She grew up in Jamaica and Brooklyn, and lives in Los Angeles with her husband, the novelist David Yoon, and their daughter.

Sona Charaipotra (2017) states that the reason Nicola Yoon wrote the novel *Everything, Everything* is because she wanted her daughter to see a reflection of herself on the page. "When I was growing up, I didn't see myself reflected in books very often,". "Maddy looks the way she does in the book because my little girl looks like that. I wanted my daughter to be able to see herself in the media. It's important that everyone gets to see themselves as the hero of a story". She wanted to write a book that reflected her child on the pages. Her first-time mother's worries about protecting her baby from danger gave her the idea to write a story about a 17-year-

old girl who needed the same level of protection. It took Yoon three years to write the book, writing early in the mornings while working full-time and raising her infant daughter. Her husband, Korean American graphic designer David Yoon, drew the illustrations.

The novel *Everything, Everything* was released in September 2015, and debuted as Number One *New York Times* best seller for young adult hardcover books. The book spent 40 weeks on the bestseller list. A film of the same name based on the book, adapted by J. Mills Goodloe, starring Amandla Stenberg and Nick Robinson, was released in May 2017.

### **1.3 Focus of The Problem**

The analysis of this research focuses on the relations between the mother character (Pauline) who is a single parent and her daughter (Madeline) who is also the only child, after the death of her husband and son in an accident 17 years ago. The analysis is supported by including briefly several characters in the novel that have influence towards the construction of power relation. The highlight of this research is to find the discourses of power relations contained in the novel *Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon 2015, and to find the form of resistance to abuse of power in the novel *Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon 2015 and what causes it.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

The questions of the research are:

1. What are the discourses of power relations contained in the novel *Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon 2015?
2. What is the form of resistance to abuse of power in the novel *Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon 2015 and what causes it?

#### **1.5 Purposes of The Research**

The purposes of the research are:

1. To find out the discourses of power relations contained in the novel *Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon 2015.
2. To find out the form of resistance to abuse of power in the novel *Everything, Everything* by Nicola Yoon 2015 and what causes it.

## 1.6 Conceptual Framework

