

**STRUCTURAL OPPRESSION IN BERNARDINE EVARISTO'S NOVEL
GIRL, WOMAN, OTHER (2019)**

THESIS

*Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement to Obtain the Strata One
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BUNGA DEWARA ASIH

17019072/2017

Advisor:

Dr. Muhd. Al-Hafizh, SS, MA

NIP. 19791006 200212 1 008

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

LANGUAGE AND ART FACULTY

UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG

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HALAMAN PERSETUJUAN SKRIPSI

Judul : Structural Oppression in Bernardine Evaristo's
Novel *Girl, Woman, Other* (2019)
Nama : Bunga Dewara Asih
NIM : 17019072/2017
Program Studi : Sastra Inggris
Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

Padang, November 2021

Disetujui oleh,

Pembimbing



Dr. Muhd. Al-Hafizh, S.S., M.A
NIP. 19791016.200212.1.008

Mengetahui
Ketua Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris



Desvalini Anwar, S.S., M.Hum., Ph.D.
NIP. 197105251.998022.002

HALAMAN PENGESAHAN LULUS UJIAN SKRIPSI

Dinyatakan lulus setelah dipertahankan di depan Tim Penguji Skripsi
Program Studi Sastra Inggris Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni Universitas Negeri Padang
dengan judul

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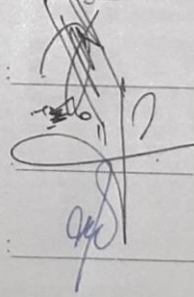
Nama : Bunga Dewara Asih
NIM : 17019072/2017
Program Studi : Sastra Inggris
Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

Padang, November 2021

Tim Penguji

Tanda Tangan

1. Ketua : Devy Kurnia Alamsyah, S.S., M.Hum. :
2. Sekretaris : Delvi Wahyuni S.S., M.A.
3. Anggota : Dr. Muhd Al-Hafizh, S.S., M.A.





UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG
FAKULTAS BAHASA DAN SENI
JURUSAN BAHASA DAN SASTRA INGGRIS
Jl. Belibis, Air Tawar Barat, Kampus Selatan FBS UNP, Padang Telp/Fax: (0751) 447347

SURAT PERNYATAAN TIDAK PLAGIAT

Saya yang bertandatangan di bawah ini:

Nama : Bunga Dewara Asih
NIM/TM : 17019072/2017
Program Studi : Sastra Inggris
Jurusan : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris
Fakultas : Bahasa dan Seni

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Diketahui oleh,

Ketua Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris

Desvalini Anwar, S.S., M.Hum., Ph.D.
NIP. 197105251.998022.002

Saya yang menyatakan,

Bunga Dewara Asih
NIM. 17019072

ABSTRACT

This research is an analysis of the novel *Girl, Woman, Other* (2019) by Bernardine Evaristo. The purpose of the analysis is to reveal the issue of structural oppression towards black women and the struggle against the structural oppression in the novel *Girl, Woman, Other* (2019) by Bernardine Evaristo. The issue of structural oppression refers to the form of structural oppression against black women and the form of struggle that characters do against the oppression towards them. This analysis is using the concept of intersectionality from feminism study which proposed by Kimberlee Crenshaw. The analysis uses of the concept is based on the interpretation of text and context of the novel. The analysis also uses fictional devices such as plot and setting to expose the meaning. The result of this study shows the form of structural oppression against black women and the struggle that black women show against the oppression.

Keywords: Structural oppression, black women, struggle, intersectionality

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini merupakan analisis terhadap novel *Girl, Woman, Other* (2019) karya Bernardine Evaristo. Analisis ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap isu penindasan struktural terhadap perempuan kulit hitam dan perjuangan melawan penindasan struktural dalam novel *Girl, Woman, Other* (2019) karya Bernardine Evaristo. Isu penindasan struktural mengacu pada bentuk penindasan struktural terhadap perempuan kulit hitam dan bentuk perjuangan yang dilakukan karakter melawan penindasan terhadap mereka. Analisis ini menggunakan konsep interseksionalitas dari kajian feminisme yang dikemukakan oleh Kimberlee Crenshaw. Penggunaan konsep didasarkan pada interpretasi teks dan konteks novel. Analisis juga menggunakan perangkat fiktif seperti plot dan setting untuk mengungkap makna. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bentuk penindasan struktural terhadap perempuan kulit hitam dan perjuangan yang dilakukan perempuan kulit hitam melawan penindasan.

Kata Kunci: penindasan structural, perempuan kulit hitam, perjuangan, interseksionalitas

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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Research

Oppression is a social problem that occurs in society and can happen anywhere, even in developed countries. This oppression issue has been the problem from time to time and people who have full awareness have been fighting and trying to stop this for a long time According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, oppression is "an unjust or cruel exercise of authority and power". This act of oppression cannot be separated from power and authority. . Oppression has a negative impact on individuals, even on a larger scale. The oppressor is a person, group or constitution that has the power to suppress and control the oppressed who are considered to have no power or privilege. The most suffer target of the oppression is black women.

Oppression of Black Women in England can be seen from police data regarding reporting of acts of domestic violence. In a report by England and Wales Police regarding domestic abuse, it can be seen that there has been an increase in domestic violence-based crimes in England and Wales (including Manchester) from the previous year. Often times the victims are black women from the lower middle economic class or immigrant black women. From the statistical data attached by the England and Wales police, it shows a chart of ethnicity with reports of sexual assaults which are dominated by victims of black or black British and mixed ethnicity. This data is prevalence of sexual assault in

the last few years for adults aged 16 to 74 years, by ethnicity, England and Wales, year ending March 2018 to year ending March 2020 combined. This data can be accessed on the webpage of the England and Wales Police.

The data that is taken by the police is only what has been reported. There are millions of abuse cases towards black women that haven't been reported due to several things such as being threaten or being ignored by the system itself. This can be happen because black women are on the most disadvantages in the place of being a woman, black, and middle class. Always be seen as powerless, black women are also often to be silenced about the oppression against them.

The intersection of gender, race and class has been studied by many scholars. Scholars see these three things not as different factors, but forming each other. Highlighting on Black Women as the most powerless in hierarchy of power, who besides being subordinated as women, who are considered weak, also oppressed because of their race and come from the lower middle social class. This is different from white women who come from the middle social class who still have the privilege of being part of white, a race that is considered to have power, does not receive the same oppression as black women. In fact, in the hierarchy of power white women are in a higher position than black men. Oppression based on gender and race itself, as has been noted by scholars (e.g., Collins 2000; Crenshaw 1989; hooks 1981), are interlocking frameworks of abuse predicated upon the generation of prejudice implications for race and gender. Many black feminist also discuss about this intersections of gender, race and class, one of them is Kimberlee Crenshaw who proposed the term of Intersectionality in her

single-axis framework. Kimberlee Crenshaw is a legal theorist who also sees how race and gender relation affected the Black Women subordination. This opened a new breakthrough in analyzing oppression experienced by black women.

The struggle faced by black women in surviving structural oppression is shown in the novel *“Girl, Woman, Other”*(2019) by Bernardine Evaristo. The novel tells the story of 12 black women's everyday life in England as they faced bad treatment at home and in society because of their race, gender, and class. The twelve characters in this novel have a background as black women from the lower middle social class. They have different lives and not all characters are related to each other. Although these characters have different storyline, each character experiences oppression at home and in the community. One of the characters, Carole is a black woman living in London, England. She's working at the law firm as a vice president of the company, but she is often underestimated or even harassed by her male clients because they think that Carole is just an officer who usually brings coffee. This kind of treatment often happens to her because she is a woman and also black. She was often marginalize and excluded from when she was at university. Bummi, Carole's mother, also gets bad treatment where she can't get a job that matches her title, because she is a black woman from a Third Country. The only job available for her was as a cleaner apart from her previous bachelor's degree. However, these two characters show their struggle in the oppression that they get as black women. Penelope is a mixed racial and a mother of two was forbidden by her husband to work because he thought it would be troublesome for her to have two masters, at home and at school. Penelope is also a

victim of domestic violence by her husband. She was subjected to violence at home. Domestic violence is also experienced by several characters in the novel.

The Novel “*Girl, Woman, Other*” (2019) by Bernardine Evaristo received the 2019 Booker Prize. The author, Bernardine Evaristo is the first black woman to win the Booker Prize, as well as being named one of Barack Obama's Top 19 Books for 2019 and Roxane Gay's Favorite Book of the Year. It is now on numerous prize lists, including a chance to win best fiction book at the 2020 British Book Awards and a spot on The Women's Prize shortlist. The author's attempt to demonstrate the ability of women in combating oppression, as well as the fact that women have knowledge and strength, led to the selection of this work. This novel is deconstructed, and issues relating to the notion of feminism are discussed. This novel is a reflection of what is happening in society..

1.2. Focus of the Research

The focus of the problem is to see the structural oppression in the novel “*Girl, Woman, Other*”(2019) by Bernardine Evaristo and to see the struggle towards structural oppression

1.3. Research Question

Based on the background that is stated, the analysis is helped by two questions:

1. What are the forms of structural oppression in the novel “*Girl, Women, Other*” by Bernardine Evaristo?
2. What are the forms of the struggle against structural oppression shown by the black female characters of the novel “*Girl, Women, Other*” by Bernardine Evaristo?

1.4. Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research is to find out the form of structural oppression faced by black women and how black women show the struggle against structural oppression faced by them.

1.5. Conceptual Framework

This study deals with structural oppression faced by black women in “Girl, Woman, Other”(2019) by Bernardine Evaristo. This study applied theory of gender and race oppression. This analysis focuses on gender, race and class oppression that also known as structural oppression by using Intersectionality theory and concept of power by Robert Dahl. In addition this study also use feminism concept of power by Foucault in seeing act of struggle.

