

**POWER RELATION AMONG CHARACTERS
IN *HEAVEN* BY MEIKO KAWAKAMI**

THESIS

By:

Windi Indriani
NIM 210302110009



**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM
MALANG
2025**

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THESIS

Presented to
Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S.)

By:
Windi Indriani
NIM 210302110009

Advisor:
Hafidhun Annas, M.Hum
NIP 198807292019031009



**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
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UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM
MALANG
2025**

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I state that the thesis entitled "*Power Relation among characters in Heaven by Meiko Kawakami*" is my original work. I do not include any materials previously written or published by another person, except those cited as references and written in the bibliography. Hereby, if there is any objection of claim, I am the only person who is responsible for that.

Malang, September 9th, 2025

The Researcher



Windi Indriani

210302110009

APPROVAL SHEET

This is to certify that Windi Indriani's thesis entitled "*Power Relation among characters in Heaven by Meiko Kawakami*" has been approved for thesis examination at Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, as one of the requirements for the degree of *Sarjana Sastra* (S.S.).

Malang, September 9th, 2025

Approved by
The Advisor,



Hafidhun Annas, M.Hum.
NIP 198807292019031009

Head of Department of English
Literature,



Dr. Agwin Degaf, M.A.
NIP 198805232015031004

Acknowledged by
The Dean,



Drs. Faisol, M.Ag
NIP 197411012003121003

LEGITIMATION SHEET

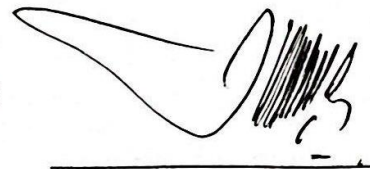
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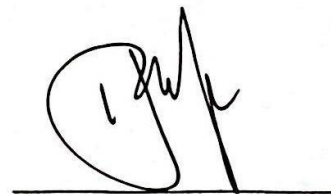
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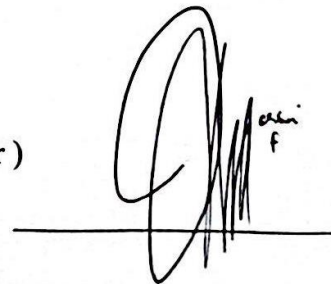
1. Dr. Siti Masitoh, M. Hum. (Main Examiner)
NIP. 196810202003122001



2. Hafidhun Annas, M.Hum. (Advisor)
NIP. 198807292019031009



3. Asni Furaida M.A. (Second Examiner)
NIP. 198807112023212027



Approved by

The Dean Faculty of Humanities



Dr. M. Faisol, M.Ag.
NIP. 197411012003121003

MOTTO

*“Allah tidak mengatakan hidup ini mudah. Tetapi Allah berjanji, bahwa
sesungguhnya bersama kesulitan pasti ada kemudahan.”*

(QS. Al – Insyirah: 5 – 6)

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved parents, my supervisor for their sincere guidance, my older brother and my twin sister who have provided support and motivation, and my friends who have helped me throughout the process of writing this thesis.

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Firstly, the researcher would like to express her gratitude to Allah SWT for all blessings and guidance, enabling her to complete her thesis entitled *Power Relation among Characters in Heaven* by Meiko Kawakami. Secondly, may blessings and peace always be upon the Prophet Muhammad, our role model.

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The Researcher

Windi Indriani

ABSTRACT

Indriani, Windi (2025) Power Relation among characters in *Heaven* by Meiko Kawakami. Undergraduate Thesis. Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor: Hafidhun Annas M.Hum.

Keywords: *Power relation, bullying, sociology of literature*

This study aims to analyze the forms of power relations and resistance in the novel *Heaven* by Mieko Kawakami. The focus of the research is on the power exercised by Ninomiya, Momose, and Eyes' school environment, as well as the forms of resistance shown by Eyes against that power. This study applies Michel Foucault's theory of power relations. The research is classified as literary criticism with a sociology of literature approach. The primary data source is the novel *Heaven* by Mieko Kawakami. The data collection was conducted through close reading by identifying and recording relevant quotations. Data analysis was carried out in several stages, namely classification, interpretation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study show that power in the novel appears in various forms. Ninomiya and his friends exercise disciplinary power through repeated humiliation and physical violence. Momose uses discursive power with language and logic to normalize violence and deny responsibility. Surveillance and normalization are also visible in the way Eyes is forced to remain silent and accept his difference as something natural. Despite these pressures, Eyes shows resistance, such as rejecting Momose's arguments, questioning the morality of the bullies, and verbally confronting domination. This study concludes that power relations in the novel are not fixed or one way. It reflects Foucault's idea that wherever power exists, there is always a chance for resistance, even from those in a weak position.

مستخلص البحث

إندرياني، ويندي (2025) علاقات القوة بين الشخصيات في رواية "الجنة" لميكو كاواكامي. أطروحة جامعية. قسم الأدب الإنجليزي، كلية العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة مالانغ الإسلامية الحكومية مولانا مالك إبراهيم. المشرف: حافظ أناس م. هوم

الكلمات المفتاحية: علاقات القوة، التنمر، علم الاجتماع الأدبي

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل أشكال علاقات القوة والمقاومة في رواية "الجنة" لميكو كاواكامي. تركز الدراسة على القوة التي يمارسها نينوميا وموموسي وبيئة مدرسة آيز، بالإضافة إلى أشكال المقاومة التي أبدتها آيز ضد تلك القوة. تطبق هذه الدراسة نظرية ميشيل فوكو حول علاقات القوة. تصنف الدراسة على أنها نقد أدبي مع نهج علم اجتماع الأدب. المصدر الرئيسي للبيانات هو رواية "الجنة" لميكو كاواكامي. تم جمع البيانات من خلال القراءة المتأنية عن طريق تحديد وتسجيل الاقتباسات ذات الصلة. تم تحليل البيانات على عدة مراحل، وهي التصنيف والتفسير واستخلاص النتائج. تظهر نتائج الدراسة أن السلطة في الرواية تظهر في أشكال مختلفة. يمارس نينوميا وأصدقائه سلطة تآديبية من خلال الإذلال المتكرر والعنف الجسدي. يستخدم موموسي سلطة الخطاب باللغة والمنطق لتطبيع العنف وإنكار المسؤولية. تظهر المراقبة والتطبيع أيضاً في الطريقة التي يُجبر بها آيز على الصمت وقبول اختلافه كشيء طبيعي. على الرغم من هذه الضغوط، يُظهر آيز مقاومة، مثل رفض حجج موموز، والتشكيك في أخلاق المتنمرين، ومواجهة الهيمنة لفظياً. تخلص هذه الدراسة إلى أن علاقات القوة في الرواية ليست ثابتة أو أحادية الاتجاه. وهي تعكس فكرة فوكو القائلة بأنه حيثما توجد القوة، هناك دائماً فرصة للمقاومة، حتى من أولئك الذين هم في موقف ضعيف.

ABSTRAK

Indriani, Windi (2025) Relasi kuasa antara karakter dalam novel *Heaven* karya Meiko Kawakami. Skripsi. Progam Studi Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Dosen Pembimbing: Hafidhun Annas, M.Hum.

Kata kunci: *Relasi kuasa, perundungan, sosiologi sastra*

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bentuk-bentuk hubungan kuasa dan perlawanan dalam novel *Heaven* karya Mieko Kawakami. Fokus penelitian ini adalah pada kuasa yang dijalankan oleh Ninomiya, Momose, dan lingkungan sekolah Eyes, serta bentuk-bentuk perlawanan yang ditunjukkan oleh Eyes terhadap kuasa tersebut. Penelitian ini menerapkan teori hubungan kuasa Michel Foucault. Penelitian ini diklasifikasikan sebagai kritik sastra dengan pendekatan sosiologi sastra. Sumber data utama adalah novel *Heaven* karya Mieko Kawakami. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui pembacaan mendalam dengan mengidentifikasi dan mencatat kutipan-kutipan yang relevan. Analisis data dilakukan dalam beberapa tahap, yaitu klasifikasi, interpretasi, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kekuasaan dalam novel muncul dalam berbagai bentuk. Ninomiya dan teman-temannya menjalankan kekuasaan disiplin melalui penghinaan berulang dan kekerasan fisik. Momose menggunakan kekuasaan diskursif dengan bahasa dan logika untuk menormalisasi kekerasan dan menolak tanggung jawab. Pengawasan dan normalisasi juga terlihat dalam cara Eyes dipaksa untuk diam dan menerima perbedaannya sebagai sesuatu yang alami. Meskipun menghadapi tekanan ini, Eyes menunjukkan perlawanan, seperti menolak argumen Momose, mempertanyakan moralitas momose, dan secara verbal menantang dominasi. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa hubungan kekuasaan dalam novel tidak bersifat tetap atau satu arah. Hal ini mencerminkan gagasan Foucault bahwa di mana pun kekuasaan ada, selalu ada peluang untuk perlawanan, bahkan dari mereka yang berada dalam posisi lemah.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter, the researcher explains the background of the study, the problem of the study and previous studies. In addition, this chapter explains the significance of the study, scope limitations and definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

Humans are social creatures who live side by side with each other (Sari & Pasaribu, 2023). In everyday life, humans are always involved in social interactions that form relationships, both individually and in groups. These social relationships are not neutral, but are influenced by various factors such as culture, economy, and technology. In addition, social relationships often form patterns of domination and subordination that mark the existence of power relations. One form of power relations that often occurs in the educational environment is bullying in schools.

Bullying is a complex social phenomenon, where one party or group positions itself as stronger or more powerful and then suppresses another party who is considered weak (Kapile et al., 2023). This phenomenon is not only a form of physical violence, but can also be verbal, psychological, and social violence. In this context, bullying is a form of power relations that contain social inequality between the perpetrator and the victim. This relationship reflects how power works not only at large structural levels such as politics and economics, but also in everyday interactions, including in social spaces as small as schools.

Power itself is not a single concept. According to Foucault (2005), power is not only seen as something that is owned, but as something that works through a network of relationships. Power is both productive and repressive. In the practice of bullying, power is exercised through speech, attitudes, actions, and even silence, which creates domination over other individuals. When power is abused, it not only causes physical harm, but also damages the victim's identity, self-esteem, and mental health. Therefore, it is important to understand how power works in social interactions such as bullying, especially through the medium of literature that can represent social reality symbolically and imaginatively. In this context, bullying depicted in literary works is not only a story about violence, but also a medium for understanding power relations in the lives of adolescents and educational environments.

Meiko Kawakami's *Heaven* depicts the power characters between Eyes, Ninomiya, Momose, and his friends in the novel. This novel shows how power relations envelop the story in the novel. Power relation are an issue represented in *Heaven*, it depicts the bullying experience depicted in the main character. Eyes is a cross-eyed student who is always bullied by Ninomiya and his group. The conflict begins when the character faces continuous physical and psychological abuse from his classmates. In short, Ninomiya bullies Eyes to show that he has power. Based on this conflict, the power relation analyzed.

Applied to examine the exchanges in the book, Foucault's theory states that power is distributed and functions strategically in networks. From this perspective, Foucault (1982) argues, power can be thought of as highly variable and easily

distributed network-like connections with strategic reach. Examining the processes and ways in which power is used helps one to understand it. Power is described as the capacity of an individual or group to influence the activities of others, thereby ensuring that these behaviors are in accordance with the intentions and goals of the person with power (Heriyanti, 2020).

Using the same theoretical framework as Michel Foucault's theory of power, many previous works in literary analysis have been conducted. Research by Bouhadjar (2024), examines from the perspective of power politics the depiction and murder of the figure of the *Angel in the House* in Virginia Woolf's book *To the Lighthouse*. Another study by Aurangzaib et al. (2021), looks at the idea of power in Khushwant Singh's book *Train to Pakistan*, where power relations are seen in the framework of societal conflict. While Kamariah et al. (2020), examine power and the place of women using Foucault's perspective, Raoufzadeh et al. (2020), also investigate Foucault's idea of power in Kate Chopin's book *The Awakening*. In addition, Syah and Aminah (2022), investigate power relations in Mundzir Qabbani's novel *Hukumatu Dzil*, and finally Fadhli and Anwar (2023), investigate power relations displayed in the novel *Everything*.

There are also other studies conducted to strengthen the significance of this issue. By examining how power interactions are created and how power is depicted in the novel, Ranaputri and Noorman (2020), maintain Foucault's ideas about power and identity, Shahzadi et al. (2021), further investigate how power relations function in the novel and how resistance to power arises. Research by Gupta et al. (2021), underlines Foucault's ideas about power, how power is used as a form of social

control in Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *The Pakistani Bride*, while Ningrum (2022), investigates power relations and the protagonist's resistance to power in the book *Normal People*. Finally, there are several studies that use the same novel, namely *Heaven* by Meiko Kawakami. The first is (Putri et al., 2024), who analyzes social class using the concept of Karl Max, in addition (Sa'diyah, 2024), analyzes the types of bullying and the impact of bullying experienced by the main character

These previous studies are used in this thesis because they provide theoretical find methodological foundation to understand how Foucault ideas of power can be applied to literary works in different context. Some studies have shown that Foucault theory is relevant for analyzing power in literature, and there are some studies that discuss social class, and bullying in heaven by Meiko Kawakami. However, these studies have not specifically examined the forms of power relations among characters. Therefore, the contribution in this research lies in filling the gap by analyzing the form of power relation that are exercised and sustained through physical and psychological violence in the interaction among characters. In this wat, this study not only builds upon the foundation of previous studies but also expands the understanding of the power relation in literature, especially in the context of adolescent experiences of bullying.

B. The Problem of the study

From the information that have been explained in the background of the study chapter, the problem of the study are as follows:

1. What is the Form of Power Relations among Characters in Meiko Kawakami's *Heaven*?

2. How is Eyes resistance against Ninomiya and Momose portrayed in Meiko Kawakami's *Heaven*?

C. Significance of the Study

This research is expected to provide significant contributions both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research extends the application of Michel Foucault's theory of power in literary analysis, especially in the context of teenage bullying depicted in the novel *Heaven*. And the practically, this research to increase awareness and sensitivity to the issue of bullying in our environment. This provides a new perspective on how power relation shape social interactions and individual behavior in literary works. In terms of literary analysis, this research highlights the complexity of how power is exercised and contested among the main characters, thereby enriching our understanding of the themes and character development in the novel.

D. Scope and Limitation

This study focuses on the analysis of power relation in Meiko Kawakami's *Heaven* using Michel Foucault's theory of power. This study specifically analyzes the interactions between the characters, namely Eyes, Ninomiya, and his friends, with an emphasis on how power is manifested and maintained through the psychological violence they experience. The scope of this study is limited to the text of the novel in English translation to maintain compatibility with English-speaking readers and ensure the accuracy of interpretation in a global context. The limitations of this study include focusing on only one literary work, which may not reflect all aspects of power relations in other cultural contexts or literary genres.

E. The Definitions of Key Terms

1. Power

Power is a relational dynamic involving mutual influence between individuals or groups. It is not limited to domination, but also includes persuasion, influence, and exchange (Foucault ,1982).

2. Power Relation

Foucault (2005) explains that power relations are not possessions, but strategic situations within society. They are productive, intertwined with knowledge, and often asymmetrical, where one party dominates and limits the other's choices.

CHAPTER II

PREVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter examine the theory utilized as an analytical instrument for this investigation. The fundamental idea employed in this research is Michel Foucault's concept of power relations, analyzed with a sociological lens.

A. Sociology in Literary Criticism

Sociology is the study of relationships and interactions between social relations, while literature often reflects social reality through characters, stories, and themes (Damono, 1978). This is the common ground between sociology and literature: both focus on humans and society, albeit in different ways. Sociology studies society using scientific, theoretical, and systematic methods. In contrast, literature reveals the life of society in a more imaginative, creative, and emotional way. Although they differ in method, the two complement each other because they both seek to understand humans and life in society.

According to Vana (2020), the sociological approach in literature is an important approach in literary studies that seeks to view literary works not only as products of the author's imagination, but also as a reflection of social life. In other words, literature is considered to be born, developed, and closely related to the society in which the work is written and read. Literature does not stand alone, but is bound by the social, cultural, political, and economic contexts that influence its form and content.

The sociological approach in literature usually departs from the view that literary works are social documents (Longo, 2016). Literature does not only function as entertainment or art, but also records, documents, and comments on certain social conditions. According to Milton C. Albrecht (1954), literary works cannot be separated from their authors. Every writer is part of society, and their social, cultural, educational, and social class backgrounds will influence what they write. This is why sociological analysis in literature often highlights the relationship between the author or characters in the story and the society within it. Thus, through a sociological approach, readers can explore the deeper meaning of literary works, because literature is understood as a social representation of its time.

In addition, the sociological approach does not only focus on the content of literary texts, but also pays attention to how the work is produced, published, and received by society (Khairanis, 2025). This aspect is often referred to as the institutional dimension in the study of literary sociology. One of the advantages of the sociological approach is its ability to help understand complex social issues through literary works. Literary works, with their narrative power, are able to capture things that are sometimes difficult to explain with data or pure sociology. For example, moral tensions, emotional conflicts, or a person's inner suffering may be easier to understand when told in the form of a novel or drama than when explained scientifically. On the other hand, the sociological approach provides a more systematic framework for interpreting literary works so that the analysis becomes more focused.

According to Milton C. Albrecht (1954), in its practical application, the sociological approach usually covers several important aspects. First, analysis of the social context at the time the work was written. For example, works produced during the colonial period often contain conflicts between the colonizers and the colonized. Second, attention to the author's background, because their life experiences will influence how they describe the world. Third, analysis of the content of the work itself, namely the themes, characters, conflicts, and messages related to social life. Fourth, the reception or acceptance of the work by society, which shows how the work is understood and used in social life.

In short, the sociological approach in literature is a way of understanding literary works as part of society. Literature not only tells stories, but also preserves historical traces, describes social conditions, criticizes injustice, and even influences social change. By combining literary sensitivity and a sociological framework, literary works can be viewed more comprehensively. That is why this approach is important in literary research, especially when examining the relationship between a text and the social reality that informs it..

B. Michel Foucault's Theory of Power Relation

Power is a person's ability to control something (Ningrum, 2022). In this context, power arises because of the existence of an organization, expertise, wealth, popularity, or physical strength. Not only that, power is not only something related to the visible form of power. However, power is also related to how someone is able to shape or control the way other people think without realizing it. However, power is not only about the ability to give orders, but also how someone builds trust so

that others are willing to follow directions without coercion. In this context, power can take the form of persuasive abilities that make people willing to follow without feeling forced. Conversely, power that is misused can lead to injustice and exploitation.

According to Foucault (2005), in his book *Power/Knowledge*, argues that the power relation consists of a series of actions by one entity in response to the actions of another entity through social interaction. Foucault argues that every relationship in society is a power relationship. According to him, power is not something that is owned or fought over by individuals or groups, but rather something that flows through all social relationships. Therefore, every social interaction in society can be understood as a form of power relationship, where the actions of one entity always influence the actions of another entity.

Foucault as cited in Ballan 2013, offers a dual approach to understanding power relations. There is power that is exercised within the network of society. Power creates a connecting mechanism between people. Second, rather than being mere objects, people become the focus of attention for exercising power and opposition. According to Foucault, the sphere of power relations is an uneven field with ongoing tensions, fragile alliances, flexible movements, and ever-changing power relation and resistance.

Every power relation limits the controlled entity and the authority that holds the power. power produces meaning in society, shapes knowledge, and creates reality power is not only repressive (Foucault, 2005). Therefore, knowing the power

relations helps one understand how power functions in and through social structures and how people and groups are always engaged in processes of negotiation and contestation within those environments.

In the context of bullying, freedom is a crucial element of power relations. Foucault (1982) explains that *“power is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are free”*, which means that power relations exist only when individuals maintain the capacity to act or refuse. This implies that victims of bullying, even in risk position, are not entirely passive and still have the possibility to resist or seek help. As Foucault (1978) argues, *“where there is power, there is resistance”* indicating that every form of power is always accompanied by potential resistance, including in cases of bullying.

The effectiveness of a bully's power depends on the victim's perception of having no alternatives once victim finds ways to defend themselves or gain support, the power relation on shift. This aligns with Foucault's (1991) idea that power is never absolute but always exercised through unequal and shifting relations. Therefore, unlike slavery which eliminates freedom entirely, bullying still leaves space for victims to act, resist or seek escape. In this sense, power relation remain dynamic and open to change, even when the perpetrator appears dominant.

Michel Foucault explains that power is not only about control or oppression. He believes that power also creates rules, behaviors, and ways of thinking in society (Mills, 2003). In his theory, Foucault identified several forms of power that operate in society. The following are the forms of power according to Foucault:

1. Disciplinary Power

This type of power controls people by organizing their time, space, and actions. It is used in places like schools, prisons, and hospitals to create disciplined and obedient individuals (Foucault, 1977).

2. Surveillance Power

This is a form of disciplinary power where people feel they are always being watched. Foucault uses the example of the Panopticon, a prison where the guard can see every prisoner, but the prisoners never know when they're being watched. This makes them control their own behavior (Mills, 2003).

3. Normalization

Normalization is the process of making certain behaviors seem "normal" or acceptable. Society creates standards, and people are expected to follow them. These rules are not always written but are learned through daily life (Mills, 2003).

4. Biopower

Biopower is power over life and the human body. It controls things like health, birth, and death. For example, society might expect women to have children, especially boys. These expectations are not laws, but they still influence how people think and act (Foucault, 1977).

5. Discursive Power

This power comes from language and ideas. It controls what people can say or think and who has the right to speak about certain topics. It spreads through conversations, media, education, and everyday life. Foucault says

that power is everywhere and works through many forms of communication (Mills, 2003).

C. Resistance.

Resistance is a concept that cannot be separated from discussions about power. Michel Foucault asserts that power never exists without the possibility of resistance. In Foucault (1978), he states that “where *there is power, there is resistance.*” This statement shows that power has limits, because it always leaves room for individuals or groups to resist. Resistance itself does not always take the form of open or physical resistance, but can take various forms, both subtle and explicit. This confirms that power and resistance are two interrelated and inseparable aspects.

In literary studies, resistance is an important aspect to analyze in order to show how characters in a story are not just shown as parties who are completely submissive to domination, but also as subjects who have the power to fight back. Foucault (1982) emphasizes that resistance is part of the practice of individual freedom that attempts to negotiate oneself in the midst of power relations. Thus, resistance in literary works can be understood as the subjective strategy of characters to maintain their dignity, freedom, and identity when under the pressure of power.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODS

From the theory that has been discussed in the previous chapter, this chapter discuss research design, data sources, data collection and data analysis.

A. Research Design

This research is categorized as literary criticism because it analyzes and interprets books as research objects. This research uses sociology of literature as the foundation of the research and uses Michel Foucault theory of power relation to see how are power relations depicted in the novel and the forms of power relations in the novel. Using the theory and approach of sociology of literature is also suitable for this research. This research examines the power relation Eyes, and other characters depicted in the novel. This research uses words, quotes, or other conversations for analysis study.

B. Data Sources

Data sources in this study use the object of the novel *Heaven* by Meiko Kawakami as the main object. This novel was originally published in Japanese, then translated into several English and other languages and has received several international best seller awards. The novel *Heaven* by Meiko Kawakami was published in Japan in 2009 published by Europa Editions. and uses the novel in hardfile form. While the English version was published on May 25th, 2021, translated by Sam Bett and David Boyd, this novel consists of 167 pages.

C. Data Collection

In data collection, this researcher started by reading the novel in detail to find out the contents of the novel. And marking some texts, conversations in the novel that are relevant to the research objective. In this study using sentences, conversations and parts of the novel. Then the data is selected to be grouped to research objectives.

D. Data Analysis

In the analysis data, all data is ready to be collected and analyzed in detail. The researcher then analyzes and correlates the data to ensure that the data is interrelated and understandable. Next, the researcher examines the data using Michel Foucault's power relations theory. And finally, the researcher draws some conclusions to answer the research questions.

CHAPTER IV

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The analysis in this chapter is based on the problem formulation in the first chapter. This chapter discusses several forms of power relations in the novel *Heaven* by Meiko Kawakami. This analysis aims to determine what are the forms of power relations among characters in *Heaven*. This approach uses Michel Foucault's concept of power relations.

A. The Form of Power Relation among Characters

The novel *Heaven* by Meiko Kawakami portrays the complex reality of bullying experienced by Eyes, the main character, and reveals how such acts are deeply connected to unequal power relations among students. The bullying depicted in the novel is not merely a series of physical assaults but reflects how power operates at multiple levels controlling the body, shaping perceptions, and influencing social behavior. Through the interactions between Eyes, Ninomiya, Momose, and their peers, the novel demonstrates how domination is constructed and sustained, both explicitly and implicitly. By applying Michel Foucault's concepts of disciplinary power, surveillance, normalization, and discursive power, this analysis examines the different forms of power relations that emerge in the story.

1. Power Relation Eyes, Ninomiya and His Friends.

The power relationship between Eyes and Ninomiya in Meiko Kawakami's *Heaven* demonstrates a highly unequal power structure, with Ninomiya portrayed as a dominant figure who dominates the interaction. Ninomiya not only relies on

physical strength to subdue Eyes but also uses psychological violence in the form of insults, threats, and social pressure, further isolating Eyes. This power isn't exercised once or twice, but rather systematically and repeatedly, forming a mechanism of domination inherent in Eyes' daily life.

Furthermore, in the novel, Ninomiya is also depicted as a charismatic and manipulative figure capable of controlling group dynamics. He doesn't often commit violence alone, but rather involves his friends in intimidating Eyes. This shows that Ninomiya's power does not only stem from his position as a powerful individual at school, but also from his ability to build a network of influence that expands the reach of his dominance.

In this case shown in the following quote:

Ninomiya was in the middle of the room, sitting on a desk. That was his style. When he noticed me, he laughed, then said, "Hey buddy." He told me to shove a stick of chalk up my nose and draw something hilarious on the blackboard with it, something that would make them shit their pants. His friends all cracked up. One of them dragged me to the blackboard and the rest of them circled around to watch. (p.7)

This quote illustrates that Ninomiya has dominant power in his social relationship with Eyes. The form of power described in the quote is disciplinary power. Disciplinary power serves to regulate, supervise, and control a person's body so that they submit to the norms and will of the dominant person. In this case, Ninomiya plays the role of the dominant figure who orders Eyes to perform unusual actions, such as putting chalk in his nose and drawing something funny on the blackboard. All of this is done solely to entertain Ninomiya and his friends. These actions are not only humiliating commands but also a form of control over Eyes

body. He is forced to do something not out of his own volition but to fulfil others' requests.

On the other hand, Eyes also has no control over himself because his body has become a tool for others' entertainment, indicating that this power has stripped Eyes of any freedom he may have experienced. From the quote above, Eyes is dragged to the blackboard, and his friends surround him, laughing. In this context, the use of humor in the situation reflects the power dynamics at play. The jokes and laughter that accompany them are not signs of friendship, but rather a strategy to normalize the humiliation and disguise the violence as entertainment. Additionally, Ninomiya's actions are considered normal and funny in the eyes of Eyes and her friends. Therefore, through humor that masks the violence of these actions, domination can be exercised without resistance.

This humiliating command is just one of many actions Ninomiya takes to control Eyes' body and behavior. This dominance resurfaces in the form of a game that appears entertaining to the perpetrator but actually contains more subtle and manipulative physical violence.

This is illustrated in the following quote:

"I did this for all three pieces. One of them yelled, "Lemonade! Lemonade!" and brought me a plastic cup streaked with paint and full of a dirty milky liquid. Chalk dust dissolved in water. Pushed against the wall, cup pressed into my face, I drank it all." (p.10)

In the quote, Eyes experiences bullying disguised as a game that seems funny to the perpetrators. He is forced to drink dirty lime juice, which his friends call "*lemonade*." This act is accompanied by physical violence, as Eyes is pushed

against the wall and his face is pressed against a plastic cup until the liquid enters his mouth. Furthermore, Eyes response of drinking without protest, without pleading, and without tears reflects a body trained to submit. This aligns with the concept of disciplinary power, which creates docile bodies that are submissive and silent. Therefore, this illustrates dominance over the body and submission of will.

Violence wrapped in humor shifts into direct physical attacks, repeated until it becomes a routine that internalizes fear and obedience within Eyes.

This is illustrated in the following quote:

“They kicked me in the knees and thighs, but never hit the same place twice. One of them booted me in the chest, like he was checking to see how soft I was. They pushed me, threw me into a wall. I staggered and crashed into a desk. Happens all the time, P 11

From the excerpt, Eyes suffered repeated physical abuse from Ninomiya and his friends. Eyes were kicked in the knees and thighs. Not only that, one of Ninomiya's friends kicked Eyes in the chest as if testing his physical resilience. Additionally, they pushed Eyes' body until it collided with the wall and eventually fell, hitting the table. The phrase *“happens all the time”* indicates that the violence Eyes endured was not a one-time occurrence but had been ongoing multiple times. Furthermore, this statement also suggests that the power in question not only succeeded in controlling Eyes body but had also penetrated their consciousness.

In the context of the story, this aligns with the concept of disciplinary power, which creates compliance through the internalization of violence. The intensity of

violence against Eyes continues to escalate. From mere beatings and shoving, Ninomiya's actions escalate into confinement and total restriction of movement.

This is illustrated in the following quote:

“They tied my hands with a jump rope, stuffed a rag in my mouth, and shoved me in the locker. “Don’t go anywhere,” Ninomiya said, “or you’ll be in there all week. “One of the guys pushed me to make me fit. The door clanged shut.” (p. 15)

The story depicts physical violence committed by Ninomiya and his friends against Eyes. Their actions not only inflict physical harm but also restrict freedom of movement and deprive Eyes of the ability to speak. Furthermore, actions such as binding the hands, gagging the mouth, and confining the body within the victim constitute forms of control over the victim's body. The gagging of Eyes' mouth not only silences them physically but also suppresses other potentials such as resistance and forms of expressing suffering.

Furthermore, the statement *“don’t go anywhere or you’ll be in there all week”* indicates that Ninomiya's control is continued through ongoing threats. This aligns with the concept of disciplinary power, which treats Eyes body as an object of manipulation forced into a confined space. Disciplinary power does not originate solely from formal institutions but also from oppressive social relationships among friends.

In addition to the act of confining Eyes inside the locker, which illustrates physical violence against Eyes, there is also violence in a more subtle context, namely through actions disguised as games or projects.

This is illustrated in the following quote:

“During art class, Ninomiya said let’s make a railroad, and told his friends to hold me down and spread my fingers while he shot staples into my palm. The little holes they left stung worse than bees.” (p.24)

In the above excerpt, this incident occurred in the classroom during an art lesson. The teacher's absence illustrates how informal power among peers can take over in a school environment. The quote shows how power is not only direct physical violence, but also symbolic actions such as Ninomiya forcing Eyes to use her hands as train tracks in a self-made art project, which is a form of violence that has been manipulated into a game.

Furthermore, Eyes hands were forced to spread their fingers, causing pain that was clearly described. This shows that power is no longer crude and overt but can infiltrate the educational context, which should be a safe space. In the phrase *“let's make a railroad”* by Ninomiya, there is an attempt to disguise violent actions as something creative and harmless. In this context, acts of violence are portrayed as normal, even humorous.

This illustrates how power can manifest not only through direct violence but also by turning the eyes body into an artistic experiment. Symbolically, it is turned into a performance object, showing that the Eyes have lost control over themselves. In this case, it aligns with the concept of disciplinary power that makes the body docile, that is, a body accustomed to accepting violence in daily life.

Besides disguising violence, Ninomiya also uses power to reaffirm his position as the full controller of the Eyes' body.

This is illustrated in the following quote:

One of Ninomiya's friends walked by and smacked me on the back of the head. My teeth sank into my tongue. Deep. My molars bit the thick part at the back so hard it made a sound. My tongue stung to the point I thought that I could hear it pulsing. The pain tugged at the muscles of my neck. I couldn't close my mouth, but I could taste the blood in my saliva. (p.28)

According to Michel Foucault, disciplinary power is the power that makes the body the main object of control over a person. This power has become routine and repetitive. In the conversation, Eyes received sudden violence in the form of a hard slap on the head. Because of this incident, his back teeth bit his tongue and blood flowed, and his neck muscles tensed up due to the pain of the incident.

Furthermore, this action appears to be ordinary but illustrates how power over the body does not always come from a great authority but also from those around us who have the right to harm. On the other hand, Eyes did not resist and only accepted the pain and remained silent. In this case, it reflects a body that has completely submitted to the power that has shaped it.

Although Eyes attempts to resist the domination imposed by Ninomiya and his group, their complete control renders any effort by Eyes to escape the situation meaningless. One such attempt to escape the bullying escalates into even more brutal physical violence.

This series of violence culminates in the moment when Ninomiya turns Eyes' body into an object of play. In this case, Eyes' body is considered a *ball*, as described in the following quote:

I shook my head like a maniac and tried to run, but one of them kicked me in the leg and yelled at me to stand still. The skin of the ball stopped before my chin, leaving my bottom lip open to the air.

I moved my legs, trying to escape, but lost my balance and fell flat. Back on my knees, I tried to stand, but they knocked me down onto my back. Wading through their choked laughter and their breathing, I did the same things over and over and was knocked down every time.

"You're not the best ball I've ever seen," said Ninomiya, "but you'll do."

One of them grabbed me by the arms and hoisted me up, dragging me as I kicked. They yelled at me to stand up straight.

"Come on, let's do this. When I say go. Just like soccer, alright? Proper kicks, boys." (p.83)

The quote above describes one of the peaks of power exercised over Eyes. When Eyes tries to escape, he is immediately kicked and ordered to stand still, as in the phrase "*stand still.*" This not only illustrates that control over the body is not only exercised through violence, but also through commands that regulate the body's position and response.

Beyond this incident, the violence inflicted by the Eyes transforms into a prearranged *game*. They repeatedly knock the Eyes down every time it tries to rise. Ninomiya's statement, "*Just like soccer*" and "*Proper kick, boys,*" turns Eyes' body into a ball. He is no longer seen as a human being but as an object of the game, legitimate to be hit, knocked down, and directed according to the perpetrator's wishes.

Furthermore, the statement, "*You're not the best ball I've ever seen, but you'll do,*" illustrates that Eyes has no freedom in any aspect; he is regarded as an object that can be exploited for the perpetrators' amusement and laughter. This incident aligns with the concept of disciplinary power, which treats Eyes' body as a tool in a repetitive power game. In this incident, power is exercised in a structured manner by many people collectively, which reinforces the perpetrators' dominance.

In addition to experiencing physical power through coercion and violence, the Eyes also experience power through surveillance. In the Eyes' surroundings, specifically at school, the violence they experience is no longer seen as an anomaly but as a daily routine. Eyes' wounded and bleeding body is not something surprising or concerning, but rather something “ordinary” in this context. Power is not only exercised through punishment but also through the establishment of norms that justify inhumane treatment as acceptable.

This physical power is reinforced by Ninomiya's surveillance, ensuring that Eyes does not report the abuse and continues to follow instructions quietly, so that the violence is not known to outsiders. This is illustrated in the following quote:

“Eyes, don’t let anybody see you on the way home. We’re out of here. You wait here thirty minutes, got it? Thirty minutes. The faculty meeting probably won’t be over yet, but you still need to be careful. I know I don’t have to tell you this, but you better not tell anybody about this. That goes double for your family. Wait, hold on.”

He gave himself a chance to think”

“Listen,” he said. “In thirty minutes, go out the way we came in and head over to the AV room. Behind it, there’s a part of the wall that’s lower than the rest. Climb over that and get the hell out of here. We got to be sure. You can hop it if you actually try. Not like you have a choice. Okay?” (p.86)

After the head was kicked and turned into a soccer ball, Eyes was ordered to wait 30 minutes after Ninomiya and his friends left school. Eyes were not allowed to be seen by anyone, was not allowed to speak, and had to follow Ninomiya's instructions to climb over the fence so that no one would find out about what had happened.

Additionally, the perpetrator-controlled Eyes' communication, even before Eyes spoke. In the statement, *“You better not tell anyone about this, and that goes double for your family,”* the perpetrator also sought to control how Eyes spoke to

anyone. This was a form of internal surveillance that instilled fear in Eyes toward the perpetrator.

In the concept of the panopticon, power is exercised through surveillance that is not always visible. Eyes knows that he is being watched, even though no one is directly observing him. He is told to remain silent, not to report anything, and to move around secretly. This power aligns with the concept of surveillance, which continuously monitors the victim to ensure that the power being exercised remains unknown to others.

The discussion of the power relations between Eyes, Ninomiya, and his friends shows that the form of domination exercised by Ninomiya and his friends is domination through disciplinary power and surveillance that is direct and visible. This power is exercised through physical violence, threats, humiliating games, and repeated restrictions on freedom of movement, ultimately shaping a compliant body.

Additionally, the surveillance and instructions regulating Eyes' movements even after the violence occurred reinforced control to keep the perpetrator's actions hidden from outsiders. From Michel Foucault's perspective, this pattern of power demonstrates that control over the body can be exercised through physical punishment and surveillance, keeping the victim constantly under the shadow of the perpetrator's power.

2. Power Relation Eyes between Momose

Different from Ninomiya's physical power, Momose exercises her power through speech, narrative, and logical thinking that attempts to shape Eyes' awareness of himself. In the relationship between Eyes and Momose, power no longer takes the form of physical violence but is manifested through the production of discourse that subjugates the victim's mind. This aligns with Michel Foucault's concept of discursive power, where language, knowledge, and narrative serve as the primary tools of power.

In this case, as seen in the following quote, Momose exercises power through language and discourse. He shapes Eyes' view of the world and himself with logic that erases moral responsibility and justifies injustice. This is illustrated in the following quote:

"All that matters is that you can't do it. You can't. That's why you've never said you'd kill us or whatever, even after we made you into a soccer ball. You've never done anything, because you can't. Some people in this world can do things, others can't. At cram school, there's this rich kid, and some of the other kids make him bring money from home every day. Some people get a kick out of making people jerk off in front of them. We're not like that. I'm not saying one's better than the other. It's just that some people can do things, and others can't. There are things that they want to do and things that they don't. Everyone has their own likes and dislikes. It couldn't be any simpler. People do what they can get away with."

Momose suppressed a yawn.

"None of it happens for any reason, though. We can do those things, for no reason. We can. We do. And you can't. There's no reason for that, either. That's how it is, at least for now. Six months from now, a year? Who knows? Who cares?" (p. 121)

Physical power is often exercised through acts of torture and control over the body, whereas discursive power, often referred to as discursive power, is exercised subtly through language, logic, and ways of speaking that can shape a new social order. In this context, Momose does not merely speak through "eyes,"

but explains that the world and himself are governed by relationships of who can and who cannot.

Additionally, Momose equates “eyes” with his oppressed friends, who are deemed incapable of resisting. On the other hand, he positions himself as someone who can, and therefore justifies the use of violence. In this context, it is a form of discourse that erases moral responsibility and replaces it with the logic of ability. The statement *“We can't do things for no reason. We can. We do, and you can't”* reflects this. Momose creates a discourse that the world is divided into two types of people: those who can do something and those who cannot. Eyes are portrayed as someone without the capacity to act, making the violence he experiences seem justified.

After Momose successfully establishes the discourse that Eyes is a weak individual who is unable to retaliate, the next form of power is exercised through the manipulation of moral logic. In his relationship with Eyes, Momose not only expresses his personal opinion, but also creates a new meaning of violence, desire, and rights. In this case, the operation of discursive power is made clear, whereby language is used as a tool to justify power.

After presenting the view that the world is divided between those who can act and those who cannot, Momose continues to shape discourse by asserting that human actions are not based on rights but on desire alone.

This is illustrated in the following quote:

"Nobody does anything because they have the right. They do it because they want to." (p. 10)

The quote shows how Momose argues that human actions are based on rights or justice, but also on mere desire. This statement is conveyed to Eyes in the context of the violence she has experienced. By stating that people act not because they have rights, but because they want to.

Furthermore, this discourse not only draws a line between right and wrong but also shapes Eyes' way of thinking. If Eyes accepts this logic, she will come to accept the violence she has endured as something natural and unquestionable. Thus, Momose's power not only dominates ideologically but also succeeds in subjugating Eyes' moral logic.

Discursive power operates not through physical means but through the formation of thought structures. The discourse created by Momose instills the belief that there is no concept of "rights," meaning there is no basis for Eyes to demand justice. This reinforces the unequal power relationship, as the victim loses the language to challenge the violence they experience.

After arguing that no actions are based on rights or justice, Eyes attempts to erase the causal connection between Eyes' physical condition and the bullying that occurs. Additionally, it presents the view that the world is not governed by moral logic but solely by chance.

Momose then erased the cause-and-effect relationship between the physical condition of her eyes and the violence she experienced. She presented the violence as a coincidence, thereby removing the basis for fighting back or demanding justice.

This is based on the following quote:

"It means you got it wrong. I know you get bullied at school. It's not like I live for it, or even enjoy it. Who cares? Like, I know everyone laughs at you, kicks you, punches you, and I know it happens every day. You're not wrong about that part. And your eyes are messed up, so everyone calls you Eyes. That's true. But it's just a coincidence. Your eyes have nothing to do with what happens at school. That's not why you get bullied." (p.113).

"Coincidence is all there is. That's how the world works. I'm not just talking about you getting bullied. Does anything in the world ever happen for a reason? Pretty sure the answer's no. Yeah, once it's happened, you can come up with all kinds of explanations that look like they make perfect sense. But everything starts from nothing. Always. You were born for no reason, and the same for me. There's no reason for us to be here. But there are these, I don't know, tendencies. Sometimes you just want to do something. You get these, like, urges. Like you want to punch someone, or kick someone, whoever happens to be there. The only reason those things happened to you is that you were around when someone was looking for someone to punch. That's all." (p.114)

In this quote, Momose describes the violence Eyes suffered as something that happened "*by chance*". He states that it is true that Eyes was tortured, laughed at, and even given derogatory names because of the shape of his eyes. However, he denies that any of this happened for any specific reason. Eyes, in this view, was simply a coincidence who happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Thus, Momose eliminates the possibility of a social structure that can be challenged because there is nothing to understand, and therefore nothing to question.

Furthermore, Momose expands his discourse by stating that nothing in this world happens for a reason. Violence occurs simply because someone wants to kick or hit, and Eyes happened to be there. This view eliminates morality, responsibility, and even the meaning of suffering. It is a form of discursive power because it does not prohibit or command, but changes the way a person sees reality.

After forming the view that the world is meaningless and full of coincidence, Momose offers a solution that seems to give Eyes a choice. However, that choice is still within the power he controls.

This is illustrated in the following quote:

“Hear me out, though. There’s no beautiful world where everyone thinks the same way and they all understand each other perfectly. It doesn’t exist. You think it does, but it’s not real. When you really look at what’s going on, everyone’s living in their own world. They come into contact.” (p.116)

In this quote, Momose tells Eyes that *“There’s no beautiful world,”* emphasizing that a beautiful world where everyone thinks the same and understands each other will never exist. According to Momose, each individual has their own world and forms different personal realities, and human relationships are only brief contacts that will never result in complete understanding. Momose posits that all forms of relationships, including the most human ones, are fundamentally futile.

According to Michel Foucault, such forms of power are referred to as discursive power or power that operates through discourse, that is, through arguments and ideas that shape one’s understanding of the world. In this case, discursive power operates by shaping how someone thinks or controlling the victim's way of thinking, thereby limiting their actions through the beliefs that are formed. In this context, Momose uses discourse to restrict reality as something that cannot be changed.

After stating that the world is a place without meaning and without the possibility of empathy, Momose continues his discursive strategy by offering a solution to the violence experienced by Eyes. In this case, power operates through

the manipulation of unequal choices, creating an illusion of freedom for the victim while still keeping them within the framework of domination controlled by the perpetrator.

This is illustrated in the following quote:

“All I mean is, if you want it to stop, your only option is to do something to us. To Ninomiya. Like I said, it doesn’t matter to me. I get nothing out of it. But, in the moment, something comes to me. An idea. An opportunity presents itself. That’s also why we’re standing here talking, right?” (p.116)

From this quote, Momose tells Eyes that the only way to stop the violence is to do something to the perpetrators, including Ninomiya. This statement seems like an offer to Eyes. Momose makes it clear that the problem is not the fault of the perpetrators or injustice, but rather a situation that can only be changed if Eyes fights back, i.e., by resorting to violence.

Besides, Momose emphasizes that he does not personally benefit from the action. He does it because of the opportunity or idea at that moment. In other words, violence is presented as a spontaneous act that does not require moral justification. In this case, Momose positions himself as morally neutral. Yet he is justifying the continuation of violence. Momose produces the discourse that violence will only stop if Eyes themselves become perpetrators of violence.

Furthermore, Momose eliminates the concept of morality and the afterlife by stating that hell is merely a human creation. This perspective is used to justify complete freedom of action, including the use of violence. This is illustrated in the following quote:

“Well guess what, there’s no hell. It’s all made up. They made it up. Nothing had any meaning, so they had to make some. The weak can’t handle reality. They can’t deal with the pain or sadness, let alone the obvious fact that nothing in life actually has any meaning.” He laughed. (p.119)

In this quote, Momose tells Eyes that hell is merely a human creation, something made up to give meaning to a life that is essentially meaningless. According to Momose, humans, being weak, create concepts like hell because they cannot face reality, pain, or sorrow. By eliminating the existence of hell, Momose also eliminates the concept of moral punishment and life after death, which typically serve as the foundation of ethics in the surrounding environment.

Momose's statement not only eliminates moral ideas but also serves to justify complete freedom of action, including violence. If life has no meaning and there are no natural laws, then there is no reason to restrain oneself. This discourse is intended for Eyes to accept that the violence he is experiencing is not only natural but also cannot be judged from any moral standpoint.

Foucault explains that discursive power works by forming “*truth*” through discourse. In this case, Momose constructs a narrative that negates the meaning of life, moral law, and the ultimate purpose of humanity. If Eyes accepts this discourse, they will lose the basis for refusing or resisting violence, as all forms of suffering are deemed meaningless. Thus, power that was initially physical now transforms into ideological power that controls the victim's way of thinking.

In addition to exercising power through discourse and manipulation of thought, the power relationship between Eyes and Momose also demonstrates a form of surveillance that marks the functioning of power as hidden social control.

In this case, power does not only work when it is seen, but also when it is not seen. Momose and his friends apply a form of silent surveillance that strengthens control over the eyes' bodies and actions.

Furthermore, in addition to discourse, Momose applies a form of hidden surveillance, ensuring that the violence committed is not known to outsiders by regulating the eyes' behavior so that they leave no evidence. This is illustrated in the following quote:

"Then why do you guys always do it so nobody finds out?" I asked. "It's because you feel guilty. That's why you always tell me to keep my mouth shut and hide everything from the teachers . . . That's why you never leave any marks on me. If it's a natural urge, why can't you do it in front of everybody? Because you know it's wrong. That's why you can't do it in plain sight." (p.115)

In this excerpt, Eyes realizes that the violence she experiences is always carried out secretly and far from the watchful eyes of teachers and school staff. She accuses Momose and her friends of being aware that their actions are wrong, which is why they tell her to keep quiet, hide the evidence, and not leave any visible wounds. This awareness illustrates that surveillance does not only come from external parties such as teachers or the school system. But it has also been internalized by the perpetrators themselves.

When the perpetrators consciously organize their actions to avoid detection, they become part of a surveillance system that exercises power covertly. This aligns with Michel Foucault's concept of surveillance, which is one of the primary mechanisms of modern power, especially within institutions like schools. Through the concept of the panopticon, Foucault explains that power does not need to be

exercised physically on an ongoing basis; the mere possibility of being monitored is enough for individuals to regulate themselves. In this context, the perpetrators monitor themselves to ensure that their power remains invisible.

The command to "*keep my mouth shut*" and the effort to avoid leaving scars demonstrate a specific strategy employed by the bullies to keep their violence hidden. This way, school officials or staff will not be aware that the violence is taking place. The bullies appear to be aware that physical traces, such as wounds, can attract attention, so they attempt to cover them up to avoid jeopardizing their authority.

Furthermore, this strategy also demonstrates how power operates covertly through internal surveillance within the group. Every member of the group participates in enforcing the rules established by the Ninomiya, such as no evidence, no voices, and no reports. In this case, this surveillance mechanism strengthens the bullies' power even without the presence of official authority such as teachers or the school. In other words, they create their own system of control to maintain dominance over the eyes.

In relation to Momose, Eyes not only experiences physical violence, surveillance, and other forms of abuse, but also faces coercion to conform to the "*normal*" standards used to evaluate her. Power in this form is not exercised through physical means but through the process of normalization the establishment of specific social norms used as a measure for individuals. This is illustrated in the following quote:

I swallowed my spit and gritted my teeth and took a deep breath. I wanted to say look, you guys are ruining my life, but it felt like this expression would fail to capture the position I was in, and what Momose and the other guys were doing to me. Unable to come up with anything appropriate, I said nothing.

"Come on," Momose said. His voice was vanilla. "Spit it out."

"You guys," I said, hiding my trembling fingers in the pocket of my blazer, "are hurting me. Like, all the time." "Hurting you?" "Like when you make me do things, and kick me or punch me. You hurt me because of my eye." "And you want it to stop? That's what you're telling me?" "Maybe." "Maybe?" Momose laughed. "What the hell is maybe?" "Why . . ." I said, but I couldn't say the rest. As I sat there, silent, Momose sighed at me and asked me what was up, losing his patience. "Why do you do it? No one has the right to hurt anybody else. No one. "I measured the shape and heft of each word. "I didn't do anything to deserve this." (p.110)

The above quote shows how power works through normalization. The violence experienced by the character Eyes on a daily basis is often considered normal by Momose, even when Eyes insists that she is being hurt. Momose's statement, *"Hurting you?"* illustrates how Momose views violence as something normal. This normalization means that violence is no longer seen as an aberration, but rather as an accepted norm.

Furthermore, Eyes tries to explain, *"No one has the right to hurt anybody else. No one. I didn't do anything to deserve this."* This quote illustrates that violence cannot be justified. However, violence has been normalized in their social environment. Therefore, normalization is one of the mechanisms that allows the power relationship between Momose and Eyes to continue without any successful resistance.

In this context, normalization becomes one of the main mechanisms that allows the power relationship between Momose and eyes to continue without effective resistance. By transforming violence into something considered normal, the perpetrators successfully maintain their dominant position, while the eyes

increasingly struggle to find space to resist or resist. This process demonstrates how power operates not only through physical means, but also through the formation of social perspectives that make violent acts appear legitimate. This is further emphasized in the following quote:

“Nobody does. They either look at me like I’m a freak or turn away. I’m used to that. And you guys can think whatever you want, but I just wish you would leave me alone . . . it’s not like I chose to be born this way. You didn’t choose to be born with normal eyes, either. In that way, we’re the same, you and me. I can’t help it that you think I’m disgusting. And that’s fine. Still, that doesn’t mean you have a right to hurt me, or anybody else.” (p. 111)

This quote shows how the character Eyes realizes his position in a social structure that normalizes his actions. The sentence *“they either look at me like I’m a freak or turn away. I’m used to that”* shows that he is accustomed to being treated differently because of his eyes and that this has become part of his daily life. This proves that the normalization mechanism is in effect. Those around him consider physical differences to be something that is normal to avoid or reject.

Not only that, the sentence *“still, that doesn’t mean you have a right to hurt me, or anybody else”* shows a form of awareness that the violence he experiences is justified by social views of what is normal and abnormal. Normalization works by making others feel justified in hurting someone, while the victim realizes that they are being treated as an object of deviation. Additionally, it illustrates how normalization not only regulates bodies that are considered normal but also makes eyes accept treatment from the perpetrator.

An analysis of the power relationship between Eyes and Momose reveals a more subtle yet effective form of domination. Momose operates discursive power,

normalization, and hidden surveillance to control Eyes thoughts and consciousness. Through language, logic, and narrative, Momose shapes the understanding that violence is something normal and accidental.

The normalization process makes the eyes accept their condition as “*abnormal*” and limits their courage to demand justice. Additionally, hidden surveillance ensures that the violence committed remains unknown to others, reinforcing the unequal power relationship. Momose's power does not work by imprisoning or beating, but by shaping the boundaries of the victim's thinking so that they lose the ability to resist oppression.

B. Eyes Resistance to Power in the Novel *Heaven*

Resistance to power is an important aspect that cannot be separated from the discussion of power relations. Foucault (1982) emphasized that where there is power, there is also resistance. Resistance does not always come in the form of major resistance but can also appear in simple forms, such as verbal rejection, moral expressions, or symbolic actions. In the novel *Heaven*, the character Eyes represents a victim of bullying, still showing various forms of resistance to the dominance of Ninomiya and Momose. Through her attitude, words, and actions, Eyes shows that even seemingly dominant and strong power also always provides the possibility for the oppressed to fight back, even if in a small way.

This is illustrated in the following data:

I looked at him right in the eye.

"What would you do if I killed myself?" Momose laughed out loud again. I didn't let this stop me. "What if I left a note, saying everything you did? Every single thing." (p. 117)

From Eyes and Momose's conversation, Eyes finally asks a question. He asks what Momose would do if she committed suicide and left a record of all the mistreatment, she and Ninomiya had inflicted. This question forces Momose to confront the potential moral and social consequences of her actions. The quote above shows that Eyes, who is used to being silent, dares to challenge the logic of power that has been oppressing her.

In this context, Eyes' statement represents both psychological and verbal resistance. She uses the possibility of suicide as a tool of power. She transforms the victim from a passive victim to one who can pressure and hold the perpetrator accountable. In other words, Eyes alters the power relationship by forcing Momose to consider the potential impacts and consequences beyond her control.

The quote also illustrates that Eyes uses language as a medium of resistance. Her statement about suicide is not only defensive but also offensive because it symbolically places Momose in a position of responsibility for the bullying. This disrupts the stability of power that Momose currently holds, as she is forced to imagine himself as the cause of the tragedy. Thus, Eyes' resistance demonstrates that even in a weak state, the subject can create a gap to resist by redefining the consequences of power relations.

After demonstrating resistance through questions about suicide that pressured Momose, Eyes continued her resistance by verbally refuting Momose's claims of normalizing bullying. This is illustrated in the following quote:

"What difference would it make?" "Because," I said. "If you believe it's right, you should be able to." "I thought I told you, it's not about right and wrong," Momose said. "Are you listening? No one does anything because it's right. That's not why people do things." "That isn't . . . that isn't true." (p.115)

After a lengthy dialogue, Momose tries to convince Eyes that there is no fundamental right or wrong in this world. With this nihilistic logic, Momose attempts to normalize her violence. However, Eyes directly refutes this assertion with a short but emphatic statement *"That isn't true."* This moment is simple but significant, as it demonstrates Eyes' courage to verbally reject Momose's claim to power.

Eyes' statement is an explicit form of verbal resistance. She rejects the moral relativism that legitimizes bullying. By saying *"That's isn't true "* Eyes asserts the existence of ethical boundaries, something Momose's discourse of power attempts to erase. This refusal demonstrates that Eyes does not fully submit to the ideology that seeks to force her to believe her suffering is normal.

Within Foucault's framework, power often operates through discourse that defines truth and shapes individuals' ways of thinking. Momose's enforced moral relativism is part of this mechanism of power. However, resistance always exists where there is power. This scene demonstrates Eyes's ability to resist on a discursive level, even with a brief sentence. This small act is significant because it demonstrates that resistance need not be grand or heroic; even a simple rebuttal can shake claims of power. Thus, Eyes' statement emphasizes that Ninomiya and Momose's domination is never truly total, as there is always room for subjects to resist and maintain their own ethical values.

Verbal resistance then developed further when Eyes touched on the moral aspect, by asking whether Momose did not feel guilty for her actions as seen in the following quote:

"Don't you feel guilty?" I asked. "Guilty?" "I don't mean when you're with Ninomiya and them. When you're Alone, don't you feel guilty about what you've done?" "Nope," he said. "But if you had someone in your family going through this, you'd be hurt." (p. 121)

In a previous conversation with Momose, Eyes attempts to challenge the arguments used to justify bullying. Eyes touch on the moral aspect by asking questions about guilt. He emphasizes that if Momose had a family member who experienced something similar, she would certainly be heartbroken and unable to justify her actions. This scene demonstrates Eyes' attempt to touch Momose's humanity and remind her that bullying is not something that can be normalized.

Eyes' statement can be understood as moral resistance. She rejects discourses that justify bullying by presenting an empathetic perspective. By forcing Momose to imagine her own family as victims, Eyes attempts to disrupt the perpetrator's secure position and demonstrate that the logic of domination lacks moral legitimacy.

From Foucault's perspective, resistance isn't always direct or physical, but can also take the form of counter-discourse, a counter-discourse that challenges the legitimacy of power. This scene demonstrates Eyes' resistance in a moral-discursive form. She not only rejects the logic of domination but also presents ethical values that serve as a counterpoint to Momose's moral nihilism.

By presenting the possibility of empathy, Eyes demonstrates that power's attempts to eliminate the sense of right and wrong are not entirely successful. This resistance is significant because it demonstrates that even in the midst of adversity, subjects can still present alternative narratives to challenge oppressive power structures.

In the previous quote, where resistance was present in verbal and moral discourse, Eyes begins to demonstrate courage through physical action. While it doesn't result in actual resistance, Eyes' attempt to lift the rock is a significant symbol of her shift from passive victim to a subject aware of her potential for resistance. This is evident in the following quote:

Without thinking, I reached for a rock in the dirt by the tires. It was big enough to need both hands. I lifted it. It was heavier than expected. I stared at the rock in my hands.

"What the hell do you think you're doing?" Ninomiya asked.

I didn't answer. I stared at the rock in my hand until its image doubled. Half of the rock was black with moisture. It made me think of blood. The black bottom had a sharp edge. I gripped the dry half and stared at the sharp part. (p.153)

From the quote above, Eyes who is usually portrayed as passive and always being Ninomiya's target, reacts spontaneously by picking up a large rock when he is intimidated again. This scene depicts inner tension. On the one hand, he has a strong urge to physically fight back, but on the other hand, he is still in doubt. Although in the end, Eyes does not throw the rock, the act of lifting it is a significant change. For the first time, he imagines himself not only as an object of suffering, but also as a subject capable of fighting back and injuring the perpetrator.

This action can further be understood as resistance because it demonstrates the potential for rejection of domination. Resistance does not always mean actual success in resistance, but also includes the emergence of a conscious desire to resist and the possibility of action. Although not followed through, Eyes' courage to lift Natsu is a symbol of resistance. This shows that Ninomiya's power is not entirely perfect. Even in a weak state, Eyes has the space to imagine himself as a capable opponent.

From Michel Foucault's perspective, power relations never stand alone as a total and final structure, but rather something that goes hand in hand with resistance. This scene presents this idea, even though Ninomiya appears dominant, his power remains fragile because of the resistance that arises within Eyes. The awareness of lifting the stone marks the starting point of resistance, namely when Eyes moves from a passive position to a subject who is aware of the possibility of resisting the power structure. Thus, this scene emphasizes that resistance does not always take the form of grand resistance, but can also take simple forms.

This awareness of resistance is further strengthened when Eyes rejects the logic conveyed by Momose, namely the over-and-under imposed by Momose. Her rejection marks a form of discursive resistance that challenges the symbolic framework of domination, as illustrated in the following quote:

I don't want to stand on your head, and I don't want you to stand on mine, I screamed. It's not that simple! Momose laughed. This is what makes the world go round. (p. 135)

In this quote, Momose tries to convince Eyes that the world is divided into only two categories the strong and the weak. According to Momose, everyone must accept the reality that there are those in power and those who are ruled, but Eyes rejects this narrative emotionally by shouting loudly, asserting that human relationships are too complex to be simplified into such binary logic. This reaction marks a significant turning point because Eyes first expresses his rejection of the ideology used to justify the bullying.

From the quote above, Eyes' statement constitutes discursive resistance, as it rejects the language and discourse used to enforce power relations. By stating that *"it's not that simple,"* Eyes not only rejects her position as a weak victim but also refuses to be part of an oppressive logic. In other words, she refuses to be identified as either the oppressed or the oppressor. In this case, resistance demonstrates Eyes' ability to reject the symbolic structure that seeks to subjugate her. By rejecting the top-down logic offered by Momose, Eyes is resisting the discursive structure that legitimizes bullying practices.

Thus, Eyes' resistance in *Heaven* demonstrates that power is never truly absolute. Although he is often the victim, Eyes still bravely fights back through words, questions, and even small actions like lifting a rock. This demonstrates that there is still room for resistance and not complete submission to Momose and Ninomiya. Eyes illustrate that even in a weak state, someone can still fight back in their own way.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

This research was conducted to answer the question of the forms of power relations that occur between the characters in *Heaven* by Meiko Kawakami's. apply Michel Foucault's theory of power relations, this study analyzes the interactions between the characters Eyes, Ninomiya, Momose, and their friends.

A. Conclusions

This research was conducted to identify the forms of power relations that occur among the characters in *Heaven* by Meiko Kawakami using Michel Foucault's theory of power relations. The findings reveal that power in the novel is not only manifested through physical violence but also through more subtle mechanisms such as surveillance, normalization, and discourse. The relationship between Eyes and Ninomiya illustrates direct domination through repeated acts of physical violence, humiliating games, restrictions of movement, and constant threats designed to create fear and obedience. Surveillance was also employed to ensure that Eyes remained silent and did not seek help from others.

Meanwhile, the relationship between Eyes and Momose reflects a subtler form of domination. Momose exercises discursive power by shaping Eyes' way of thinking so that he accepts violence as something natural and free from moral considerations. Normalization is also used to stigmatize Eyes' physical condition, while hidden surveillance ensures that the acts of violence remain undiscovered. Despite this domination, the novel also illustrates resistance from Eyes. His resistance is shown through verbal rejection of Momose's arguments, questioning

the morality of the bullies, and expressing his refusal to fully accept the logic of violence. These small acts of defiance highlight that even in situations of extreme oppression, there is always room for resistance. This confirms Foucault's view that power is never absolute and always opens the possibility of opposition, even from the weakest position.

Thus, it can be concluded that *Heaven* portrays bullying not simply as physical violence but as a complex network of power relations that govern both body and consciousness. At the same time, the novel shows that resistance, however small, can still emerge as a response to domination.

B. Suggestions

Based on the findings, several suggestions can be offered. For readers, *Heaven* may serve as a medium to raise awareness of the complexities of bullying and its deeper implications beyond physical harm. The novel highlights how social interactions in schools can reproduce structures of power that shape individuals' behavior and self-perception.

For future researchers, this study can be expanded by comparing *Heaven* with other literary works that explore violence, oppression, or domination. Such comparative studies will provide a broader understanding of how power operates across different cultural and literary contexts. Further research may also integrate additional theoretical frameworks to enrich the analysis of power relations and resistance in literature.

Finally, it is expected that this research will contribute to literary studies, particularly in demonstrating how Michel Foucault's concepts of power can be effectively applied to analyze contemporary narratives. This contribution is significant because it shows how literature does not only tell stories but also reflects, critiques, and questions the operation of power in society.

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CURRICULUM VITAE



Windi Indriani was born in Banyuwangi on November 20th, 2003. She graduated from SMA Darussalam Blokagung, Banyuwangi. She continued her higher education at the Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. During her study, she chose English Language Teaching (ELT) as her academic concentration and participated in forty days internship at MTsN Kota Batu to gain practical experience in language teaching.