

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses a general description of the paper. It covers the background of the research, research questions, aims of the research, scope of the research, significance of the research, research methodology, clarification of key terms, and organization of paper.

1.1 Background of the Research

Young adult literature (often abbreviated to YA) has become one of the most popular genres nowadays. Some of these young adult novels or series, namely *The Mortal Instruments* series, *Harry Potter* series, *The Hunger Games* series and *The Twilight Saga*, have gathered people's attention and been adapted into major motion pictures. Some others become television series, such as *Gossip Girl* and *Pretty Little Liars*. This genre is mostly popular because of its themes which usually deal with coming-of-age problems, such as friendship, getting into trouble, divorced parents, popularity, puberty, and death (Wells, 2003).

Other than those themes mentioned above, young adult novels also usually involve the use of power among the characters. Such power may be desired in order to achieve some position, social status, or any personal interest. To accomplish gaining the power, one has to understand how power is required, know when and how to use it, and be able to anticipate its possible effects (Lunenburg, 2012).

Power usually deals with the relationships among the characters in a fiction. It only exists when it is put into action (Foucault, 1984). Power also has many different types or basic concepts. French and Raven (1959) propose that there are five bases of power: *Coercive power*, *Reward power*, *Legitimate power*, *Referent power*, and *Expert power*. In more recent year, Raven (2008) argues that *Informational power* is also supposed to be included into the bases of power. It is

because if power is defined as “potential influence, and information was a form of influence, then informational influence, in its potential, must be called informational power.” (2008, p.12)

There have been several studies conducted in regard to power relation. Rahmadi (2010), for example, conducted a research on power relations from *The Last Samurai* movie script using the theory of power proposed by French and Raven (1959). He concluded that there are only four types of power found in the script, namely *coercive power*, *legitimate power*, *expert power* and *reward power*. In addition, Peksen (2003) conducted a research on power relations as the consequence and mimicry of British imperialism in Vikram Seth’s *A Suitable Boy*. He concluded that Turkish people may experience some kind of power relations even though they have never been colonized by any country, and that “every relationship is a relation of power in which one dominates the other and therefore these power struggles are universal” (2003, p.81).

This research uses *Pretty Little Liars* as its subject because it is a popular young adult novel which involves power relation as one of its main themes, among other themes like friendship, popularity, and romance. The story revolves around four best friends – Spencer, Aria, Emily, and Hanna – who just lost their fierce yet beloved leader of the group, Alison DiLaurentis. Ever since the mysterious death of Alison, the other four were receiving anonymous messages forcing them to do things and threatening them with their secrets.

Different from the previous studies on power relation, this research employs the theory of power proposed by Raven (2008) which is a more recent and modified version of the one proposed by French and Raven (1959). His theory includes additional subcategories of legitimate power and another classification of power based on the social change that is implemented and the permanence of such change. Power relations are evident among the characters in *Pretty Little Liars*, which can be seen through its narrations and dialogues. Therefore, this research investigates the power exercises in *Pretty Little Liars* and analyzes the reactions of the characters in the novel by employing qualitative method with textual analysis approach.

1.2 Research Questions

This research was conducted in order to answer the following questions:

- 1) What types of power are exercised among the characters in Sara Shepard's young adult novel *Pretty Little Liars* (2007)?
- 2) What reactions do the characters have towards the power?

1.3 Aims of the Research

Based on the research questions above, the aims of this research are:

- 1) To reveal the types of power that are exercised among the characters in Sara Shepard's young adult novel *Pretty Little Liars* (2007).
- 2) To analyze the reactions of the characters towards the power.

1.4 Scope of the Research

This research is limited to reveal the power exercises in Sara Shepard's young-adult novel *Pretty Little Liars* (2007) – which is the first book of the on-going series with the same title – and to analyze the reactions of the characters towards the power that is exercised. This research uses the theory of power proposed by Raven (2008), in which there are six bases of power being mentioned: *informational, reward, coercion, legitimate, expertise, and referent power*.

1.5 Significance of the Research

The findings of this research are expected to provide the significance theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it will provide more information regarding the exercises of power in the novel *Pretty Little Liars* and the reactions of the characters towards the power. Practically, this research is also expected to

help the readers get better understanding of the different bases of power and to be a helpful reference for further research regarding power theories.

1.6 Research Methodology

Using qualitative method with textual analysis approach, the research was conducted by collecting, categorizing, describing, interpreting, and analyzing the textual evidence in order to reveal the types of power and the reactions of the characters towards the power. This is in line with the statement of Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge (2007) who suggest that qualitative research focuses on description, interpretation and data that cannot be expressed numerically. Textual analysis approach is applied in this research because the primary source of data is a novel.

The data were collected from the first book of the series with the same title, *Pretty Little Liars* (2007), written by Sara Shepard in the form of narrations and dialogues which serve as textual evidence for the exercises of power in the whole book. The collected data were then categorized according to the types of power proposed by Raven (2008), the characters involved, and the textual evidence. Then, the data were interpreted and analyzed to find out the reactions of the characters towards the power.

In conducting the research, the following steps have been taken:

1. Reading the book thoroughly to get a better understanding of the characters and plot of the story. Through this step, it is found that there are five main characters in the story and they are involved in relations of power with each other along with other minor characters in the story.
2. Finding dialogues and narrations which can be used as textual evidence related to the types of power between the characters in the book. This was done by marking those dialogues and narrations to make it easier to find and categorize.
3. Categorizing the collected data according to the theory of the six bases of power proposed by Raven (2008). The previously marked textual evidences

are categorized into: coercive power, legitimate power, reward power, referent power, expert power, and informational power.

4. Interpreting and analyzing the collected data to reveal the reactions of the characters in the novel towards the power that is exercised over them. An act of using/abusing power may trigger someone's reaction in one way or another, resulting in whether the target comply or resist the person who has power over them.
5. Drawing a conclusion and making a suggestion for further research.

1.7 Clarification of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, this research provides clarification of key terms as follows.

1) Power

Power is “the ability to influence the behavior of others in order to further our desires and purposes” (Hook, 1979: p. 4). In addition, Haugaard and Clegg (2012, as cited in Lunenberg, 2012) believe that power is a natural process in organizational life.

2) Characters

“Characters are the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as being endowed with particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying it – the dialogue – and from what they do – the action.” (Abrams, 1999: p. 32).

3) Young Adult Literature

Young adult literature – or sometimes called *adolescent literature* – describes texts which are targeted specifically to teenage audience, as well as “anything adolescents are reading of their own free will” (Wilder & Teasley, 2000 in Faulconer, n.d.: p. 1).

1.8 Organization of Paper

Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter discusses a general description of the paper. It covers the background of the research, research questions, aims of the research, scope of the research, significance of the research, research methodology, clarification of key terms, and organization of paper.

Chapter II: Theoretical Foundation

This chapter discusses theories used as the framework in the study to explicate the issues of Young Adult Literature, Character and Characterization, and Power. This chapter also includes other studies in regard to power.

Chapter III: Research Method

This chapter covers the research methodology and procedure applied in the research. It consists of the steps and techniques of collecting and analyzing the data.

Chapter IV: Findings and Discussion

This chapter presents the research findings, specifically the exercises of power in the book and the reactions of the characters toward the power in order to answer the research questions. Further discussion on the data is also represented in this chapter.

Chapter V: Conclusions and Suggestions

This chapter discusses the conclusions drawn from the findings and discussion in previous chapter. It also includes suggestions for further research regarding power.