

The Analysis Power of the Main Character of Film Killers of the Flower Moon

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Abstract

This study analyzes the concept of power as portrayed by the main characters of Killers of the Flower Moon, focusing on how different types of power affect the dynamics of the story. Using French and Raven's (1959) theory of power as an analytical framework, this research examines coercive power, referential power, and expert power as used by William Hale to manipulate and control the Osage tribe. The research uses a qualitative descriptive method, analyzing dialogues and scenes from the film script to identify patterns of power dynamics. The data collected used the killers of the flower moon movie script which focused on King Hale's dialog to identify Power. The findings show that coercive power is used through intimidation, threats, and physical violence to enforce control, while referential power allows Hale to maintain his deceptive influence over the Osage tribe. In addition, expert power was abused by doctors and legal authorities to justify and cover up crimes against the Osage tribe. This analysis highlights the destructive effects of power when exploited for personal gain and shows how language and manipulation play an important role in maintaining authority. Based on the results, there are 30 total powers in the movie, coercive power (10), referential power (10), and expert power (10). Ultimately, this research contributes to the understanding of power relations in media and literature, emphasizing the relationship between social control, language, and oppression in historical narratives.

Keywords: *Power, Coercion, Manipulation, Killers of the Flower Moon, Discourse Analysis*

Introduction

In a linguistic context, “power” refers to the ways in which language use can reflect, produce and maintain unequal social relations between individuals or groups. This power is not only manifested through speech, but also in the way texts and discourses are shaped, which can create and reinforce social hierarchies. As Kim and Angouri (2022) explain, in multinational contexts, language-based interactions become an important arena where power and status are negotiated, suggesting that linguistic structures and word choice can have a significant impact on power dynamics in the workplace (Kim & Angouri, 2023). French and Raven in 1959, divided into five primary types of power that leaders or individuals use to influence others. They suggested that power is not limited to the ability to impose one's will through physical control or threats, but can also involve more subtle aspects, such as social relationships and information resources (Raven et al., 1998). Some scholars conducted the research such as , Tedeschi, J. T., & Bonoma, T. V. (2017). Power and influence: An introduction, the result of research is “The concept of power, or Macht, has generated a great deal of controversy among social scientists of all disciplines. One reason is that the concept includes so much of the content

of interest to each discipline. The concept of power was described as something full of controversy among social scientists (Anisa et al., 2024). This happens because the concept of power touches many relevant aspects in various disciplines. Some authors argue that the study of power and influence may be the main scope for various fields of science because of its broad relevance in human social life. Power is not only related to relationships between individuals, but also to larger social, political and cultural structures (Nuristani et al., 2024) *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*. Omisore added that in a study by Power and Influence in Organizations in a study by Omisore & Nweke (2014), it is said that organizational politics and power plays are inevitable in every organization. According to them, the existence of power in organizations is highly dependent on the interaction of people and resources. They underline that organizational politics and power plays are not negative, but are part of the natural social dynamics, which affect relationships between individuals and groups in organizations. The research further is Power and influence are fundamental human phenomena that are deeply ingrained on the psyche and conscious personality of individuals. Organizational power in perspective *Leadership and management in Engineering*. Power as a Fundamental Human Phenomenon emphasizes that power and influence are fundamental phenomena in human life, closely linked to individual personality and consciousness (Ramesh, 2023). In this context, the influence of power is not only external or structured, but also strongly related to the way individuals construct identities and view themselves in social relationships. Power is a part of social psychology that shapes interactions and leadership at various levels, be it in organizations, families, or society in general. Some scholars conducted about power such as (Rahmawati & Dermawan, 2023) with a titled "Critical Discourse Analysis of language and Power in EFL Classroom Interaction". They found that the use of language and the power strengths possessed by teachers in interacting with students in the classroom on students' perceptions and their contribution to students' learning outcomes. The results showed that the teacher's language in classroom interaction is used not only to interact with the students but also to provide the materials and information, to the highest frequency of use produced by the teacher during the learning process is expert power, reward power, referent power, legitimate power and the last is coercive power.

Method

In this research, the method used is descriptive qualitative. This method focuses on an in-depth understanding of social phenomena through the collection and analysis of narrative data, which can provide contextual insights and is rich in meaning. Qualitative research emphasizes the interpretation of human experience, so that the results can reflect the complexity of social interactions (Whiffin et al., 2022). The subject is the main character in the movie killers of the flower moon is king Hale, selected by purposive sampling based on the dialogue in the movie to identify power. The data source is from script film. The researcher was analysing the data by note taking to identify a corpus data based on indicator of power based on French Raven Theory 1959. Analysing a data apply a theory Mile and Huberman (2013) namely display data, reduction and conclusion. Data collection in this study is by note taking technique. note taking technique is a technique or documenting important pieces of information that are indispensable in the research process. note taking technique is used to collect data from a movie entitled Killers of the Flower Moon which airs on Apple Tv. The researcher provides a laptop, notes, and a pen to use this technique. next, the researcher carefully watches the movie to gain a thorough knowledge of the challenges posed by the research topic. this technique is used to record

and collect all data from Apple Tv, killers of the flower moon. The script of the movie Killers of the Flower Moon from the website, then reading the script carefully to ensure its compatibility with the movie. Next, the data were presented in the form of descriptions of relevant dialogues and scenes. After that, the data was summarized and arranged according to the research questions. In the final stage, the researcher draws conclusions based on the results of the analysis that has been done. Data analysis include: The first, start from retrieving Killers of the Flower moon Women movie script from the website. Secondly, read carefully to ensure that nothing is missed and that the script matches what is in the movie. Presentation of data involves descriptive explanations of dialogue and scenes that have been selected and focused on. Third, Conclusions are the final step in the data collection process and must be made after the data has been summarized and presented. Researchers complete the data according to the existing research questions. Next, the researcher draws conclusions from the answers or results of the analysis carried out.

Results

Based on research by Tedeschi and Bonoma (1972), the concept of power or Macht has been a topic of debate among social scientists from various disciplines (Hay, 1997). This difference of view occurs because power covers many aspects that are relevant to various fields of study, including sociology, psychology, and political science. Researchers highlight that power is not only limited to direct influence such as threats or physical control, but also includes more subtle forms, such as social influence and access to information. Moreover, some scholars argue that the study of power and influence is wide-ranging, making it relevant to a variety of disciplines. Assert that power and organizational politics are inevitable phenomena in every organization. They explain that interactions between individuals and resources create power dynamics that influence relationships within organizations. In this sense, organizational politics is not something entirely negative, but rather a natural part of the social structure that determines how individuals and groups interact (Awal, 2023).

Furthermore, highlights that power and influence are fundamental phenomena in human life that are closely related to individual personality and consciousness. The influence of power does not only occur in formal social structures, but also in the way individuals form identities and interact in society. This suggests that power is not just a means of domination, but also a factor that shapes social dynamics at various levels, including in families, organizations and society at large (Ahmed et al., 2023).

Power is a multifaceted concept that can be defined as the ability or authority of individuals or groups to influence, control, or direct the actions, decisions, and policies of others within various environments, such as social, political, and organizational contexts (V, 2024). This definition aligns well with scholarly perspectives that illustrate power as not merely a tool for dominance, but also as an integral part of social dynamics that contribute to decision-making processes and interpersonal relations .Power can stem from a variety of factors, such as position or title, wealth, knowledge, social influence, or the ability to provide incentives and sanctions. In the context of governance, power is often related to legitimacy and authority granted by law or constitution. However, power can also arise in informal relationships in society, where individuals or groups with greater influence can determine the direction of policy or the behavior of others (Abalkheel & Sultana, 2021)

Table of Power in the Movie Killers of the Flower Moon

Types of power	Frequency
Coercive Power	10
Expert Power	10
Referential Power	10
Total	30

Discussion

Data 1: Coercive Power in the Movie Killers of the Flower Moon

Coercive power represents one of the fundamental bases of power utilized in various contexts, particularly within organizational and interpersonal dynamics. In Killers of the Flower Moon, coercive power is seen in the way white people, especially William Hale, use threats, violence, and murder to control the Osage tribe and deprive them of their wealth from land and oil ownership, as follow the data below;

William Hale intimidates an Osage tribe member

Hale: *"You know, this place can be dangerous for people who don't have protection. I just want to make sure your family stays safe".*

Osage: *"I'm not selling my land"*

Hale: *(smiles coldly) "only a fool would turn down a good offer. This word id full of accidents, isn't it?"*

The quote above shows that Hale tried to intimidate the Osage Tribe by threatening that they were in danger if they did not hand over or sell the oil. Intimidation is an action or behavior carried out by individuals or groups with the aim of frightening or making others feel depressed, anxious, or uncomfortable.

Data 2: Expert power in the Killers of the Flower Moon

Expert power is the power that someone gains based on their knowledge, skill, or expertise in a particular field. In Killers of the Flower Moon. Expert power is seen in the way some characters use their knowledge to influence or control situations, either for good or evil.

Mollie Burkhart understands the culture and rights of the Osage tribe

Mollie tries to explain to Ernest about the importance of oil to the Osage tribe

Mollie: *This oil isn't just about money, Ernest. It's about our land, our history. We've lost so much, and this is the only thing we have left.*

Ernest: *But the money is still yours, right?*

Mollie: *If we're not careful' they'll find a way to take it too*

The quote above shows Mollie trying to explain to Ernest that oil is not just about money, but also part of the Osage tribe's heritage and history. She felt that they had lost a lot, and the oil was the only thing left to them. Ernest, who is more focused on the material aspect, asks if the money from the oil is still theirs. Mollie warns that if they are not careful, others will find a way to take it as well.

Data 3: Referential Power

Referential Power is the power that someone gains based on charisma, influence, or respect and admiration given by others. In Killers of the Flower Moon, several characters have referential power, which allows them to influence others

because of their social status, reputation, or emotional relationships they have built.

William Hale as the “friend” of the Osage people

Hale: *“I’ve always loved the Osage people. They’re like family to me. I just want to make sure they get the best.”*

Osage: *“Mr. Hale, we appreciate you help. You’ve always been there for us.”*
(In fact, Hale secretly planned their murders to gain the oil rights.)

From the conversation above, Hale pretends to care about the Osages, saying that he considers them like family and wants the best for them. The Osages, who believed in Hale, thanked him for his help as he was always there for them. However, in reality, Hale was only pretending to be kind, while he secretly plotted their murder to seize their oil rights.

Based on the analysis, power in *Killers of the Flower Moon* is displayed through various forms, ranging from coercive power to power derived from manipulation and social influence. William Hale as the main character who has dominant power uses threats, violence, and manipulation to control the Osage tribe for his personal interests. In many conversations, Hale does not directly state his intentions, but uses language full of veiled intimidation to instill fear and ensure that those around him remain under his control. He also meticulously utilized the law and loopholes in the justice system to ensure that his crimes were not detected or punished. In addition, the coercive power exercised by Hale and his group reflects how violence is used as a tool to maintain control. Physical violence, death threats, and bribes to law enforcement became the main strategies in silencing resistance and ensuring that the Osage tribe did not have the opportunity to defend their rights. In this movie, victims of coercive power not only come from outside Hale's group, but also from those closest to him, including Ernest Burkhart who is manipulated into following his uncle's evil plan.

On the other hand, other forms of power such as expert power also play an important role in the story. The doctors in charge of treating Mollie Burkhart, for example, use their medical expertise to slowly poison Mollie without raising suspicion. By hiding their actions behind medical authority, they show how knowledge-based power can be misused for harmful purposes. This shows how someone with specialized skills can manipulate situations and create injustices that are difficult to fight against.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of power in *Killers of the Flower Moon*, it can be concluded that power plays a central role in the social, political, and economic dynamics that occur in the story. William Hale as the main character utilizes various forms of power, ranging from coercive, manipulative, to knowledge-based power, to control the Osage tribe and seize their wealth. Violence, threats, and legal and medical exploitation become the main tools in maintaining his dominance. On the other hand, referential power is also used either for manipulative purposes - as Hale and Ernest do to Mollie - or to build trust and fight for justice, as Tom White and the Osage lawyer do.

While power often favors those in dominant positions, the film also shows that resistance is possible through courage, awareness, and legal action. Mollie Burkhart, despite being a victim of a corrupt system, perseveres and seeks justice for her people. With the presence of characters like Tom White and legal activists, Hale's crimes are finally exposed, proving that power is not only a tool of oppression, but can also be used

to fight for the truth. Thus, Killers of the Flower Moon is a profound reflection on how power can shape social reality, both in oppressing and in fighting for justice.

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