



Hegemony and Resistance in The Hunger Games (2012): A Gramscian Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

This study investigated the representation of social position and hegemonic practices in The Hunger Games (2012) movie. The analysis focused on how the Capitol was portrayed as the ruling class and District 12 as the subaltern class, as well as how resistance emerged through counter-hegemonic actions. The study applied Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony as the analytical framework and used a qualitative descriptive method to examine the characters' dialogues. A total of 55 data points were identified, consisting of 13 related to social position, 38 representing different practices of hegemony, and 4 reflecting counter-hegemonic resistance. The findings revealed that the Capitol sustained dominance not only through political and economic control but also through cultural, ideological, and symbolic practices. At the same time, the acts of resistance performed by Katniss Everdeen demonstrated the possibility of class awareness and a challenge to hegemonic power. Beyond its theoretical contribution, this study also offered practical implications for English language teaching. Film dialogues from The Hunger Games could be used as authentic classroom materials to develop students' critical literacy, encourage awareness of power relations in discourse, and promote reflective engagement with media texts. This highlighted the relevance of discourse analysis and critical pedagogy in fostering socio-political awareness among EFL learners.

Keywords: *Critical Literacy, Discourse Analysis, English Language Teaching, Hegemony, Resistance, Social Position*

INTRODUCTION

Social inequality and class division remain urgent problems that influence how individuals experience life in many areas, such as access to education, employment, healthcare, and political power. These inequalities are not only material, but also deeply embedded in how people are represented and perceived in everyday social life. Power in society is not always exercised through direct violence or law, but often through more subtle means such as the normalization of unequal structures. One of the central concepts used to understand this phenomenon is cultural hegemony, which describes how dominant values and ideologies become widely accepted as natural or common sense. This acceptance allows inequality to persist without much resistance, as it becomes seen as inevitable or deserved. As McNally (2018) explains, cultural hegemony plays a central role in shaping class relationships by promoting ideas that serve the interests of dominant groups while appearing to reflect shared societal values.

The concept of hegemony, introduced by Antonio Gramsci, refers to how a dominant group maintains control not simply through coercion but by shaping public consent. This consent is built when the beliefs and values of the ruling class are accepted by other groups as common sense or as universal truths. As discussed by Streinzer and Tosic (2022), this process is supported by various institutions such as education, religion, and media, which function to disseminate and legitimize the dominant worldview. Zandra (2024) argues that these institutions help normalize inequality by embedding dominant ideologies in everyday life in ways that appear neutral and unproblematic. As a result, systems of domination persist, even when they disadvantage the majority of people.



Similarly, [Fernández-García and Chacón \(2021\)](#) emphasize that media narratives and cultural products play a crucial role in sustaining neoliberal forms of hegemony by framing inequality as an outcome of personal failure rather than structural conditions. Moreover, [Fuchs \(2023\)](#) highlights the concept of “digital hegemony,” where online platforms and algorithms reproduce class hierarchies and reinforce dominant ideologies under the guise of neutrality. As a result, systems of domination persist, even when they disadvantage the majority of people.”

In today’s digital environment, hegemonic power is more difficult to detect because it operates through subtle and everyday cultural practices. Modern hegemony is expressed not through direct force but through carefully curated media content, algorithms, and repeated messaging that normalize dominant values. Social media platforms often promote mainstream ideology while marginalizing alternative voices, which helps create an illusion of neutrality and balance in public discourse. According to [Razick et al. \(2023\)](#), social media have become key instruments of “consumer hegemony,” where dominant market-driven ideas are reinforced through engagement and peer influence across online communities. The authors argue that this form of hegemony shapes consumer behavior by packaging dominant ideologies as personal choice and peer consensus. Because it functions invisibly, consumer hegemony obscures systemic inequality and discourages critical resistance, making opposition appear unnecessary or irrational.

This study was designed to investigate how hegemony works in shaping public consciousness, especially through the lens of popular culture. In addition to cultural analysis, this study situates the discussion in the context of English language education, particularly critical literacy in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learning. The relevance lies in how narratives such as *The Hunger Games* can be used to help learners recognize power relations and dominant ideologies through language and discourse, which are central to ELT (English Language Teaching) goals. The title of this study, which focuses on the representation of social position and hegemony, reflects the urgency to uncover how dominant ideologies are maintained and legitimized. In particular, it aims to analyze how stories presented in popular media can reflect, reinforce, or challenge structures of power and inequality. By choosing this title, the study emphasizes the importance of interpreting cultural products not only as entertainment but also as ideological tools.

Several previous studies have examined hegemony and class dynamics in literature and movies. [Citradewi and Tjahjono \(2023\)](#) explored hegemony and counter-hegemony in *Kita Pergi Hari Ini*, showing both oppression and resistance. In the context of *The Hunger Games*, [Rihanggrahita \(2022\)](#) focused on class conflict in the movie series using Marxist and semiotic approaches, and [Yanti and Nadiva \(2023\)](#) examined stages of hegemony and rebellion in *Mockingjay*. While these studies provide valuable insight, they mostly analyze novels or apply broad frameworks. However, little attention has been given to how such analysis can inform English language education, particularly in developing learners’ critical thinking, socio-political awareness, and discourse interpretation skills. This study offers a fresh perspective by using Gramsci’s theory to examine the 2012 movie adaptation, focusing on how ideological power is conveyed through the narrative, dialogue, and the relationship between the Capitol and District 12, as well as the depiction of resistance through Katniss Everdeen.

This study focuses on the movie instead of the novel because the visual format enables a richer interpretation of ideology. Through cinematic elements such as camera work, sound design, setting, and costume, audiences are able to observe how power relations are both displayed and contested. Nonverbal cues such as facial expressions, gestures, and the arrangement of scenes, including lighting and character placement, provide additional depth to the understanding of dialogue, offering layers of meaning that are difficult to capture in written text alone. However, in this study, the primary data analyzed are the characters’ dialogues, with visual aspects like nonverbal communication considered only as supporting context to help interpret those dialogues

more fully. Additionally, movies tend to reach wider audiences than novels, making them especially effective in disseminating and normalizing dominant ideologies. For this reason, analyzing a widely circulated film like *The Hunger Games* not only contributes to cultural studies but also offers pedagogical implications for EFL classrooms, where teachers can use such texts to foster critical literacy and resistance awareness among learners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study by [Fayola \(2022\)](#) examines the movie series *The Hunger Games* (2012–2015), which includes *The Hunger Games* (2012), *Catching Fire* (2013), *Mockingjay Part 1* (2014), and *Mockingjay Part 2* (2015), using Karl Marx's class theory and John Fiske's semiotic model. The findings identify a total of 8 data points that represent the struggle between the bourgeoisie (the Capitol) and the proletariat (the districts). Out of those, 5 data points focus on the lives of the lower class, portraying poverty, forced labor, and limited access to essential resources. The remaining 3 data points highlight the dominance and luxury of the Capitol as the ruling class. Through visual elements, dialogue, and symbolic representation, the study concludes that class conflict is the central issue of the movie, where the capitalist system is depicted as heavily favoring the bourgeoisie while oppressing the proletariat.

In both [Fayola's \(2022\)](#) data and the current findings, the greater number of proletarian or subaltern representations suggests that the movie places stronger emphasis on the suffering, struggle, and survival of marginalized groups such as the people in District 12. Although the two studies use different theoretical frameworks, both arrive at similar conclusions. This indicates a consistent tendency in how the ruling class is portrayed in the movie, showing that those in power rely on various forms of domination to preserve their control over the lower class.

The study conducted by [Citradewi and Tjahjono \(2023\)](#) applies Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony to examine how domination and resistance are portrayed in the story. The findings reveal three main forms of hegemonic practices in the novel, namely popular beliefs, the role of intellectuals, and the concept of an integral state. These strategies reflect how domination is carried out not only through violence but also through ideological and symbolic means that lead the oppressed to accept their position unconsciously.

This study shares some similarities with the research by [Citradewi and Tjahjono \(2023\)](#), particularly in its use of Gramsci's theory as the theoretical framework to analyze the operation of power in society. Both studies emphasize that hegemony can be sustained through consent and cultural influence rather than direct force. However, the main difference lies in the object and scope of analysis. While [Citradewi and Tjahjono \(2023\)](#) focus on a fictional world with symbolic representations of social classes, this study examines a more realistic and concrete setting. Moreover, this study identifies a wider range of hegemonic practices, including ideological, cultural, state, hegemonic, popular beliefs, and intellectual practices, with a detailed distribution of findings. These differences show how the same theory can be applied in various contexts to reveal different dimensions of power and control.

The study by [Yanti and Nadiva \(2023\)](#) analyzes the novel *Mockingjay* (2010) to examine hegemonic power and internal resistance during and after the rebellion. Using Gramsci's theory of hegemony, their research shows how Katniss Everdeen challenges the emerging authority of President Coin, whose leadership begins to mirror the previous oppressive regime. This resistance culminates in Katniss's decision to kill Coin, preventing a repeat of authoritarian control under a new figure. This act also confirms that Katniss, who initially expressed doubt and hesitation, ultimately embraces active opposition toward any form of unjust rule.

The current study, which focuses on the movie *The Hunger Games* (2012), examines an earlier phase in Katniss's journey, where counter-hegemonic actions are more subtle and symbolic.

Both studies demonstrate that counter-hegemony often begins with personal and symbolic acts before evolving into broader political movements. A key difference lies in the stage of resistance being analyzed. [Yanti and Nadiva \(2023\)](#) explore the culmination of Katniss's rebellion and the fall of hegemonic authority, while the current study focuses on the initial cracks within the dominant system, where resistance is still emerging and shaped by individual consciousness rather than organized revolution. The comparison between the two reveals how counter-hegemony functions as a gradual process, developing from internal awareness to collective transformation.

Taken together, these previous studies highlight three recurring themes in the analysis of *The Hunger Games* and related works: (1) hegemonic practices that maintain domination, (2) counter-hegemonic resistance that emerges through symbolic or political acts, and (3) the role of medium (novel vs. film) in shaping representation. Synthesizing these insights shows that while class conflict and resistance are consistently addressed, few studies connect these discussions directly to language use, discourse, or pedagogical implications for English language education.

This study offers a fresh perspective by applying Gramsci's theory of hegemony to the movie adaptation of *The Hunger Games*. While most previous studies focused on the novel or employed broad Marxist frameworks, this research provides a more focused analysis by examining how hegemonic power is constructed through the characters' dialogues and the movie's storyline. By narrowing the scope to the Capitol and District 12, the study explores in greater detail how class structure and ideological control are represented. Moreover, this study contributes to EFL pedagogy by showing how film analysis can be used in classrooms to foster critical literacy, helping learners identify power relations and reflect on socio-political issues through English discourse.

The relevance of this research lies in its exploration of movies as more than mere entertainment. In today's media-saturated society, popular culture shapes how people perceive the world, including concepts of class, power, and authority. By analyzing how hegemonic values are communicated and contested in mainstream films, the study encourages critical thinking about the media's role in shaping public beliefs. This contribution is especially significant in EFL contexts, where media texts like *The Hunger Games* can serve as tools to develop students' critical discourse awareness and socio-political interpretation skills in English.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach to analyze how social class and This research employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach to analyze how social class and hegemonic power are portrayed in *The Hunger Games* (2012). The qualitative method is selected because it explores social phenomena through participants' meanings, experiences, and interactions rather than relying on numerical data. According to [Lim \(2022\)](#), qualitative research constructs rich descriptions of complex phenomena by using naturalistic data such as dialogue, images, and context-based observations. The descriptive approach, as described by [Hall and Liebenberg \(2024\)](#), allows researchers to stay close to the data while organizing key patterns into coherent categories without requiring deep theorization.

The descriptive-qualitative design is chosen because it is most suitable for analyzing hegemony and resistance in film discourse, as it enables researchers to examine symbolic representation, ideology, and power relations in context. Recent theoretical contributions, such as post-qualitative cinematic analysis ([Menning & Murris, 2024](#)), critical socio-epistemic structuration ([Fernández Salguero, 2025](#)), and Bourdieu's theory of capital, habitus, and field ([Aini et al., 2024](#)), add further depth. Unlike critical discourse analysis, which requires a broader socio-historical scope, or quantitative content analysis, which focuses on frequency counts, this approach provides nuanced insights into meaning-making and ideological control.

By combining these methods, this research grounds its analysis in the dialogues and visual scenes of *The Hunger Games* (2012). The sampling strategy follows purposive sampling, where only dialogues and scenes that explicitly represent domination, ideology, resistance, and class struggle are selected. Inclusion criteria include scenes involving the Capitol's policies, symbols of power, and acts of defiance by District 12, while exclusion criteria omit neutral or purely aesthetic moments that do not contribute to the analysis.

The data collection process includes transcribing relevant dialogues verbatim, capturing visual elements through detailed scene descriptions, and coding them manually. To ensure rigor, the transcription and coding were cross-checked twice, and ambiguous data were re-examined until consensus was reached. The process includes collecting relevant data from the movie, transcribing and coding the data, categorizing it into recurring themes (e.g., ideological domination, poverty, resistance, symbolic rebellion), and then interpreting those themes through the lens of Gramsci's theory of hegemony.

To strengthen validity and trustworthiness, triangulation was conducted by cross-checking themes against both dialogues and visual symbols, while peer debriefing was used to minimize researcher bias. The descriptive-qualitative design enables a structured yet flexible exploration of how the Capitol's hegemonic strategies and the resistance of the subaltern class and their class positions are portrayed throughout the narrative.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The writer has analyzed class position and hegemony in *The Hunger Games* (2012) by using Gramsci's theory of hegemony, with the data taken from dialogues in the movie. In total, there are 55 data points identified throughout this research.

Table 1. Data of Social Position in *The Hunger Games* (2012)

No.	Types	Data
1	Subaltern class	8
2	Cultural practice	10
3	Hegemonic practice	9
4	Ideological practice	11
5	Practice of popular beliefs	3
6	Practice of intellectuals	1
7	State practice	4
8	Counter-hegemony	4
9	Ruling class/dominant group	5
Total		55

The data analysis of *The Hunger Games* (2012) shows a total of 13 findings related to social positions based on Gramsci's theory, with 8 belonging to the subaltern class and 5 to the ruling class. The larger number of subaltern data indicates that the movie places greater emphasis on the lives of District 12, who are depicted as struggling with limited access to power and basic needs. Characters such as Katniss and Gale serve as representations of the subaltern class attempting to survive within a repressive system, while the ruling class is represented through the Capitol, which maintains its dominance through wealth, luxury, and influence. The numerical contrast highlights social inequality as the central conflict of the narrative.

The analysis also identifies 38 findings related to hegemonic practices in the movie. The most frequent category is ideological practice with 11 data, followed by cultural practice with 10 data, and hegemonic practice with 9 data. These findings demonstrate how the Capitol enforces control through ideas, cultural influence, and leadership. The remaining categories include state practice (4 data), practice of popular beliefs (3 data), and practice of intellectuals (1 data), which, though fewer in number, still illustrate the mechanisms of social control. This distribution reflects Gramsci's notion that power is primarily maintained through the shaping of beliefs and everyday life rather than through direct coercion.

In addition, the analysis identifies 4 findings that represent forms of counter-hegemony, particularly through Katniss Everdeen's actions. Counter-hegemony is understood as attempts by the subaltern class to resist or challenge the ideology imposed by the ruling class. Katniss embodies this through symbolic acts such as volunteering in place of her sister, showing compassion to other Tributes, and refusing to conform fully to the Capitol's expectations. Although these acts do not directly overthrow the system, they reveal cracks in the dominant ideology and signal the emergence of class awareness. This aligns with Gramsci's concept that counter-hegemony often begins with individual and symbolic gestures, which may later develop into collective resistance.

Discussion

Social Position

Based on the analysis of the movie *The Hunger Games* (2012), a total of 13 data points were found to represent social positions according to Gramsci's theory, with 8 categorized as the subaltern class and 5 as the ruling class. The higher number of subaltern data shows that the movie focuses more on the lives of people in District 12, who are shown as having limited access to power and basic needs. Characters like Katniss and Gale from District 12 represent the subaltern class who try to survive in a difficult system. Meanwhile, the ruling class data show how the Capitol controls the social system through wealth, luxury, and strong influence. This difference in numbers supports the idea of social inequality as the main conflict in the movie.

Subaltern class

According to Gramsci, the subaltern class consists of marginalized groups that lack access to institutional power and remain excluded from decision-making structures (Fifi, 2020).

"Oh, I forgot. Here." – Gale

"Oh, my God! Is this real?" – Katniss

"Yeah. Better be. Cost me a squirrel." – Gale.

Gale offers Katniss a piece of bread, and her shock reveals how rare food is in District 12. This shows the daily deprivation of the subaltern class, who, as Gramsci describes, are excluded from resources and power, forced into constant hardship (Jensen, 2023). That such a simple gift feels extraordinary reflects how scarcity shapes basic needs. By controlling essentials like food, the ruling class keeps inequality seeming natural and fixed (Jensen, 2023), showing how hegemony works through the quiet normalization of material inequality in everyday life.

Ruling class/dominant group

Gramsci sees the ruling class or dominant group as not only those with economic or political authority, but also those who control cultural narratives and public values. This dominance is

maintained less through force and more through the spread of ideas that society accepts as common sense (Streinzer & Tasic, 2022).

"So, each of the districts gets its own floor. And because you're from District 12, you get the penthouse. So, this is the living room. I know, I know." – Effie.

Effie proudly shows Katniss and Peeta the Capitol penthouse, a brief luxury granted for being District 12's Tributes. This moment reveals how the ruling class controls wealth and privilege, using selective generosity to uphold the social order. As Gramsci explains, dominance endures when conditional rewards foster dependency while real power stays with the rulers (Afkarina, 2021). The Capitol's gift is not equality but a calculated move to maintain class divisions and reinforce its hegemony.

Practices of Hegemony

Based on the analysis, a total of 38 data points were found related to the practices of hegemony in the movie *The Hunger Games* (2012). The most dominant category is ideological practice with 11 data, followed by cultural practice with 10 data and hegemonic practice with 9 data, showing how the Capitol controls society through ideas, culture, and leadership. The remaining categories include state practice with 4 data, practice of popular beliefs with 3 data, and practice of intellectuals with 1 data, which still support how the system maintains control. This result reflects Gramsci's idea that power is mostly preserved through shared beliefs and daily life rather than through direct violence.

Cultural Practice

Gramsci sees culture as a form of material power that can shape society, especially affecting the working class. Culture builds a global hierarchy and should be engaged with through education and daily life (Rohmah & Rengganis, 2023).

"So, tonight they have the Tribute parade. We're going to take you out and show you off to the world." – Cinna

"So, you're here to make me look pretty?" – Katniss

"I'm here to help you make an impression." – Cinna

Cinna explains the Tribute parade to Katniss, a grand televised display that dresses Tributes in elaborate costumes. The event turns the Games' violence into spectacle, concealing brutality beneath glamour. As Gramsci observes, hegemony operates not only through force but through cultural practices that make domination seem normal (Rohmah & Rengganis, 2023). By centering on image and showmanship, the Capitol recasts oppression as celebration, diverting attention and tightening its hold on power.

Hegemonic Practice

According to Gramsci, a social group can rule through domination or moral and intellectual leadership. Hegemony is the organization of consent, achieved not by force but by building agreement among social classes (Rohmah & Rengganis, 2023).

"Shh shh, Prim, it's okay. Shh, okay, they're gonna prick your finger just to take a little bit of blood." – Katniss

"You didn't say- " – Prim

"I know. It doesn't hurt much, just a little. Okay?" – Katniss

Katniss reassures Prim during the Hunger Games registration, telling her the finger-prick blood test is nothing to fear. This routine act reflects hegemonic practice, as the Capitol weaves control into daily life until it feels ordinary. Gramsci notes that hegemony lasts when the ruling class's norms are seen as natural, prompting quiet compliance (Rohmah & Rengganis, 2023). By soothing Prim and accepting the ritual, Katniss unwittingly upholds the system's authority through everyday habits that go unquestioned.

Ideological Practice

Gramsci explains that ideology is not only a set of abstract ideas but also something material that exists in daily practices and social institutions (Rohmah & Rengganis, 2023).

"I think it's our tradition. It comes out of a particularly painful part of our history." – Seneca.

"Yes, yes." – Host Caesar

"But it's been the way we've been able to heal. At first, it was a reminder of the rebellion. It was a price the districts had to pay. But I think it has grown from that. I think it's something that knits us all together." – Seneca.

On live television, Seneca describes the Hunger Games as a tradition born from rebellion and now a unifying ritual. This moment shows hegemonic practice in the form of ideological practice, where the ruling class reshapes public perception to justify its power. As Gramsci explains, hegemony works when the dominant group embeds its values so deeply that they appear natural and beneficial (Rohmah & Rengganis, 2023). By presenting the Games as unity and healing, Seneca hides their violent origins, securing the Capitol's control through consent rather than force.

Practice of Popular Beliefs

Gramsci states that popular beliefs influence and shape people's worldview. These beliefs are spread through language, common sense, and folklore. Language reflects culture, common sense is an uncritical perception of the world, and folklore is a collection of beliefs, opinions, and traditions (Rohmah & Rengganis, 2023).

"It's an honor representing my district." – Cato

"You're a fighter!" – Host Caesar

"I'm prepared... vicious. I'm ready to go." – Cato.

In his televised interview, Cato proudly calls it an honor to represent his district and declares himself prepared and vicious, drawing cheers from the audience. This reflects the practice of popular beliefs, where the Capitol's ideology about the Games as a prestigious and honorable

event has been fully embraced. As Gramsci explains, hegemonic ideas endure when they are normalized and woven into everyday attitudes (Rohmah & Rengganis, 2023). By celebrating Cato's readiness, the host and audience reinforce a belief system that glorifies the Games, masking their violence and helping sustain the Capitol's ideological control.

Practice of Intellectuals

Gramsci argues that every person has the potential to become an intellectual, although not all take that role in society. He identifies organic intellectuals as those who emerge from and represent a social class, while traditional intellectuals work beyond class boundaries but remain connected to historical social structures (Rohmah & Rengganis, 2023)

"Claudius, I think those are tracker-jackers. Am I wrong?" – Host Caesar

"Ohh. Those things are very lethal." – Host Claudius

"Mm, very. For those of you who don't know, tracker-jackers are genetically engineered wasps whose venom causes searing pain, powerful hallucinations, and in extreme cases, death." – Host Caesar

During the broadcast, Hosts Caesar and Claudius explain that the tracker-jackers are genetically engineered wasps whose venom causes intense pain, hallucinations, and sometimes death. This reflects the practice of intellectuals, as they act as intermediaries who interpret scientific knowledge for the public. In Gramsci's view, intellectuals are those who shape and spread ideas that sustain the dominant order (Rohmah & Rengganis, 2023) By framing the tracker-jackers as part of the Games' spectacle, the hosts normalize the Capitol's use of science as a tool of control, reinforcing its authority and shaping how the audience perceives both the dangers and the legitimacy of the event.

State Practice

Gramsci describes the state as an institution that maintains the dominance of the ruling class while gaining the consent of the governed. It consists of civil society, where consent is built through institutions such as political parties and religious organizations, and political society, which uses coercion through the police, military, and legal systems (Rohmah & Rengganis, 2023)

"Next." – Peacekeepers

Prim gives her hand to the Peacekeepers.

The Peacekeepers prick Prim's finger and scan her blood to identify her.

"Go ahead." – Peacekeepers.

Prim willingly offered her hand as a Peacekeeper pricked her finger and scanned her blood. This moment reflects state practice, where the Capitol enforces control through formal, institutional procedures. Acting as agents of the state, the Peacekeepers carry out biometric surveillance that both monitors the population and reinforces obedience. As Gramsci notes, the state sustains hegemony not only through ideology but also through structured practices that legitimize its authority (Rohmah & Rengganis, 2023). Here, the blood scan serves as both a technical check and a symbolic act of submission, embedding state power into the routines of everyday life.

Counter-hegemony

Counter-hegemony is a form of resistance against the dominance of the ruling class. Gramsci explains that oppressed groups must first develop class awareness to challenge the hegemony imposed on them (Citradewi & Tjahjono, 2023). When these groups recognize and articulate the injustices they face, resistance or even revolution becomes possible. Understanding their social position and conditions is therefore essential for building an alternative hegemony that can oppose the dominant order.

The analysis reveals that 4 data in *The Hunger Games* (2012) represent forms of counter-hegemony, particularly through the actions of Katniss Everdeen. Counter-hegemony refers to efforts made by members of the subaltern class to question, resist, or disrupt the dominant ideology imposed by the ruling class. In the movie, Katniss performs small yet meaningful actions such as volunteering in place of her sister, showing compassion toward fellow Tributes, and refusing to fully submit to the Capitol's expectations.

Although these actions may not directly dismantle the existing system, they represent cracks in the dominant narrative and open possibilities for class awareness and future rebellion. This reflects Gramsci's concept that counter-hegemony begins with shifts in consciousness, which often emerge through personal and symbolic acts before developing into broader collective movements. The following discussion will elaborate on how these instances represent forms of resistance and the awakening of class consciousness within the narrative.

"Go ahead. One of us should go home. One of us has to die. They have to have their victor." – Peeta.

"No. They don't. Why should they," taking poisonous berries out of his pocket. – Katniss

"No!" – Peeta

"Trust me. Trust me," gives the berries to Peeta. – Katniss

"Together?" – Peeta

"Together." – Katniss

"Okay. One..." – Peeta

"Two..." – Katniss

"Three." – Peeta

"Stop! Stop!! Ladies and gentlemen, may I present the winners of the 74th Annual Hunger Games?" – Speaker

In the final moments of the Games, Peeta offers to sacrifice himself so Katniss can win, but she refuses and suggests they both eat poisonous berries, denying the Capitol its single victor. This act of defiance is a clear display of counter-hegemony, as it rejects the Capitol's rules and challenges its control. Gramsci's concept of counter-hegemony explains that true resistance emerges when the oppressed disrupt the systems that sustain the ruling class's dominance (Citradewi & Tjahjono,

2023]). By forcing the Capitol to break its own rules to avoid a public scandal, Katniss and Peeta expose its vulnerability and inspire the districts to see that resistance is possible.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examines the representation of social position, hegemonic practices, and counter-hegemony in *The Hunger Games* (2012) using Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony. From the 55 data, 13 show social positions: 8 represent the subaltern class (District 12), which is marginalized and has limited resources, and 5 represent the ruling class (the Capitol), which holds power through material privilege and ideological control. There are 38 findings related to practices of hegemony, including cultural, hegemonic, ideological, popular beliefs, intellectual, and state practices. These show that the Capitol maintains its power not only through force but also by shaping public opinion through media, rituals, and selective privileges. Meanwhile, 4 findings show counter-hegemony through Katniss Everdeen's acts of resistance, such as volunteering for her sister and using symbolic defiance in the arena to challenge the Capitol's ideology.

These findings directly address the research questions by showing (1) how the Capitol and District 12 represent contrasting social positions within the ruling and subaltern classes, (2) how hegemonic practices are reproduced through ideology and cultural means, and (3) how Katniss initiates early resistance that reflects rising class awareness. Each point corresponds to the objectives set in the introduction, ensuring that the analysis is systematically connected to the research purpose. By restating these connections, the study strengthens its coherence and emphasizes the significance of the results.

Theoretically, this study refines Gramsci's concept of hegemony by demonstrating how domination in popular culture is not only sustained through state and ideological practices but also visually reinforced through cinematic techniques such as symbolic imagery and character dialogue. This shows how Gramsci's framework can be extended to film discourse, highlighting the role of media as a site of ideological struggle. The focus on film rather than novel analysis contributes a new dimension to scholarship by linking hegemony with cinematic representation.

Practically, the findings contribute to media literacy by encouraging viewers to critically recognize how films embed ideological messages about power, oppression, and resistance. For applied contexts, this study suggests that films like *The Hunger Games* can be used in EFL pedagogy and critical discourse analysis classrooms, providing authentic materials to explore ideology, hegemony, and symbolic resistance. These applications make the study relevant not only to theory but also to educational and cultural practices.

Overall, this research highlights the novelty of focusing on the film adaptation, rather than the novel, and emphasizes the importance of analyzing the early, subtle forms of counter-hegemonic action. This contributes both to a deeper understanding of Gramsci's theory in media studies and to the promotion of critical awareness in educational and cultural settings. The study, therefore, bridges theoretical contribution and practical significance, offering insights that can inform future research and teaching.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

This study has several limitations that should be considered. First, the analysis is limited to *The Hunger Games* (2012) movie, which may not fully represent how social class and hegemony are depicted in other films or media. Second, the study focuses primarily on Gramsci's theory of hegemony, which might overlook other perspectives on power and resistance, such as feminist or postcolonial approaches. Third, the analysis does not explicitly connect its findings to English language teaching (ELT) or English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, which limits its

pedagogical contribution.

For further research, future studies are encouraged to explore similar themes using different objects, such as other movies, television series, or digital media, to provide a broader understanding of how hegemony and class relations are represented across various cultural contexts. Combining Gramsci's theory with other critical frameworks may uncover more complex dynamics of power and resistance. In addition, future research should include classroom-based studies that integrate media texts into EFL pedagogy, such as using films for discourse analysis, ideological awareness, or critical literacy training.

Additionally, developing a critical perspective when engaging with popular culture is essential, as movies often carry subtle ideological messages. Therefore, future research is recommended to not only analyze media texts but also test pedagogical interventions that encourage EFL students to question dominant ideologies, thereby linking critical media analysis with language learning practices. It is hoped that future research can not only analyze media texts but also encourage critical thinking about the power structures they portray, contributing to social awareness and scholarly discussion.

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