



# PROCEEDINGS

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENGLISH  
LITERARY STUDIES AND CULTURAL STUDIES

# ICELSCS 2018

RECENT TRENDS IN ENGLISH  
LITERARY STUDIES AND CULTURAL  
STUDIES 2018

OCTOBER 2-3, 2018  
SURAKARTA, INDONESIA

Organized by:  
**English Department**, Faculty of Cultural Sciences  
in collaboration with **UNS Language Center**  
UNIVERSITAS SEBELAS MARET

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# Proceedings

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Cover</i> .....	<i>i</i>
<i>Forewords</i> .....	<i>iv</i>
<i>Table of Contents</i> .....	<i>v</i>
<b>Keynote Speeches</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Doing Cultural Studies: Problematizing Popular Culture Texts as English Studies Scholars in Indonesia <i>Shuri Mariasih Gietty Tambunan, S.Hum., M.Hum., Ph.D.</i> .....	<b>2</b>
The Cultural Work of National Literature Courses: Teaching American Literature in Taiwan <i>Prof. Li Hsing-Ying, Ph.D.</i> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Part I Cultural and Media Studies</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<i>Tebing Breksi</i> as Alternative Tourism Attraction: Impacts of Commodification for Society in <i>Sambirejo</i> Village <i>Bayu Pamungkas, Wardo, Mugijatna</i> .....	<b>17</b>
Charismatic Leadership of Hastabrata and The Power of Mass Media in Jokowi’s Government <i>Bayun Marsiwi, Susanto, Supana</i> .....	<b>22</b>
<i>Bukan Musik Biasa (BMB): Breaking Down the Logo centrism in Music</i> <i>Dolly Nofer, Titis Srimuda Pitana, Dwi Susanto</i> .....	<b>29</b>
Torry Grey’s Struggle to Face Cyberbullying from Social Media in <i>Can’t Look Away</i> Novel by Donna Cooner <i>Prita Setya Maharani, Rachmattya Garnasih</i> .....	<b>37</b>
Food and Social Media: Measuring Happiness through What You Eat (?) .....	<b>43</b>
<i>Festa Kurnia Ramadhani, S.K. Habsari, Wakil Abdullah</i> .....	<b>43</b>
The Voice of Fans: Representation of Hyperreality in Fandom through Fanfictions and Fan Activities .....	<b>49</b>
<i>Irana Astutiningsih</i> .....	<b>49</b>



Influence of Local Culture towards Journalism Culture of Local Journalists Who Work for Foreign-language Media <i>Sri Syamsiyah L.S., Sri Hastjarjo, Widodo Muktiyo, Pawito</i> .....	56
The Constructive Image of Hayley Williams as the Winner of Billboard Women in Music Award: Studying the Supportive Comments of Audiences on Twitter <i>Monika Rindang Nur Fitriana, S.K. Habsari</i> .....	61
<b>Part II Gender Studies</b> .....	68
<i>Puteri Muslimah Indonesia: The Commodification of Piety in Beauty Pageant</i> <i>Fatkhu Rohmatin, S.K. Habsari, Istadiyantha</i> .....	69
Feminism Representation behind the <i>Moana</i> Movie <i>Raras Pramesthi K., Mahendra Wijaya, S.K Habsari</i> .....	74
Gender and Migration: The Lack of Response on Forced Migration in ASEAN <i>Edithea S. Lopian, Ismi Dwi Astuti Nurhaeni, Mahendra Wijaya</i> .....	83
Changes in the Stigma of the Javanese Woman <i>Gregorius Arnata Kalatian</i> .....	89
Women in <i>Lalakon Awon</i> by Godi Suwarna <i>Resti Nurfaidah</i> .....	93
<b>Part III Language, Translations, and Literary Studies</b> .....	100
Interactional Meaning of Flouting Maxim on the Casual Vacancy Novel <i>Mega Yuwarisna Widianingrum, Winantu Kurnianingtyas Sri Agung</i> .....	101
Translating Literary Dialect: the Case of Transferring Ethnic and Social Backgrounds <i>Ida Kusuma Dewi, M.R. Nababan, Riyadi Santosa, Djatmika</i> .....	111
Magic in Literary Works: From Enchantment to Re-enchantment of the World and to Hyperreality as the Postmodernist Aesthetics <i>Hat Pujiati</i> .....	120

In Search of Black Maids' Subjectivity in The Help Movie <i>Mike Wijaya Saragih, S.S., M.Hum</i> .....	127
<b>Part IV Postcolonial Studies</b> .....	135
Hawaii's Ecological Imperialism: Postcolonial Ecocriticism Reading on Kiana Davenport's Shark Dialogues <i>Kristiawan Indriyanto</i> .....	136
Authorial Silence in Selected Postcolonial Texts <i>Tirzah Zubeidah Bt. Zachariah</i> .....	142
Adibah Amin's <i>This End of the Rainbow</i> : The Portrayal of Modern Women in a Traditional Political Setting <i>Eda Suhana Sharudin</i> .....	148

# In Search of Black Maids' Subjectivity in *The Help* Movie

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Keywords: subjectivity, black maids, consciousness.

Abstract: This article aims to show the journey of two black maids in the film *The Help* (2011) in finding their own subjectivity as independent black women. The film portrays the hardness of many black maids' lives in the middle of patriarchal and interracial issues happened in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1963. This research will use race and class concepts to show the multiple layers of discrimination occurred to the black maids, Aibileen Clark and Minny Jackson, as well as the subjectivity theories to show the process of finding their subjectivity and the forms of the subjectivity itself. The results show both of the black maids reach their self-consciousness before being able to state their subjectivity. In addition, the forms of subjectivity portrayed in the film can be found in both women's verbal and non-verbal languages.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The issue of racial and gender discrimination in America has still been heard until the 21st century. The difference of skin colors, white and black, previously became the main reason of the distinction of one's class and status in receiving his right as an American citizen. The identity of Black America formed from a memory of hundred-year slavery became a reason why white citizens treated Black America as second-class citizens. Negative stereotypes addressed to the attitude of a black slave, such as "lazy, lack of discipline, no responsibility, like violence or aggressive" (Peffley, 1997), tended to be used to label the blacks in general.

Besides, the position of black women tended to experience double discrimination, as a black and a woman. This position became very impartial because they got the treatment of discrimination not only from whites but also from black men influenced by the dominance of patriarchy. This circumstance made black women feel not empowered to voice their aspirations as parts of American citizens.

The issue of racial and gender discrimination in America can also be found in *The Help* movie. *The Help* is an adaptation movie from Kathryn Stockett's famous novel entitled *The Help*. The movie was directed by Tate Taylor and released by Dream Works Pictures in August 2011. *The Help* is a story that shows black women's lives working as maids and nannies in white families in the region of the South America. Taking the place and time setting in

Mississippi and 1960's, the movie becomes a reflection of the social condition of black maids in the South America suffering prolonged discrimination. Even, after the American Civil War, a movement fighting for equality and freedom as American citizens had already ended 100 years before. This movie becomes more interesting because the setting chosen by the director was in 1954-1968, the period of the Civil Rights Movement.

The movie highlights the friendship of two black maids, Aibileen Clark and Minny Jackson, who support each other in a society that is racist towards blacks. At the beginning of the story, the two main characters are portrayed to experience various forms of racial and gender discrimination without giving any resistance. Although their hearts speak differently, both Aibileen and Minny are depicted powerless to show their true feeling to their employers. They are treated as "objects" by their employers. However, in the middle to the end of the movie, the two main characters are depicted to change their self positions from "object" to "subject" showing the synergies between their hearts, thoughts, and actions. This self-position change makes the researcher interested in analysing the movie deeper.

Previous studies related to this movie have discussed racial discrimination issues occurred in *The Help* movie (Daik, 2013; Ariesta and Muliatuti, 2017) with different approaches. Daik (2013) focused his research on some forms of racism such as personal and institutional racism, while Ariesta

and Muliatuti (2017) focused their research on the analysis of intrinsic elements and racial discrimination occurred in this movie using Philips Layli's womanism theory. In addition, Afidah (2013) also discussed the representation of ideological conflicts between classes by showing the forms and symbols of resistance carried out by black maids using John Fiske's analysis method. In general, the three previous studies above only focus on the issue of racism experienced by black maids and the general form of resistance carried out by the black maids. None of the above studies has discussed the subject position and the process of forming self-subjectivity of the two main female characters, Aibileen Clark and Minny Jackson. Therefore, this research fills out the gap by focusing on the subject position of the two black main characters in this movie. The purpose of this study is to find out the process of forming the subjectivity of the two main black maids as well as to find the forms of the subjectivity of the black maids shown in the movie.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Fredricson (2002), "race" as a modern concept distinguishes basic human types based on physical characteristics, especially skin color. Kathleen Cross (1996) adds that the word "race" refers to "a powerful social construction, used to position groups of people as dominant or dominated globally and within individual societies". In the context of the United States, the social construction of race produces two categories of race, white and black race. White race becomes a dominating group, while the black race becomes a dominated one. Talking about race will be closely related to the ideology of racism. Racism, according to Lorde (1998), was a confidence over the inherent superiority of one race over all other races and therefore has the right to dominate.

As an ideology, racism is impartial and elevates the position of a certain race towards other races as affirmed by Gordon (2000) saying that because whites serve as a normative point of normality, whites usually live as citizens without race. On the other hand, it also confirms that the existence of blacks means the existence of a race. Racism during a period of slavery gave different impacts to both male and female slaves. Gillespie adds that racism turns out to be sexed (1998), "the men from an oppressed race are exploited as slaves, while-women are exploited as slaves, sexual service providers, and producers of children" (Lerner, 1993). Female slaves

bear the additional burden of sexual exploits under the system of racism and slavery.

Speaking of women, regardless of race, cannot be detached from the relationship with men that tend to be unbalanced and unfair in which men dominate and women are dominated due to the influence of patriarchal system. The relationship between men and women in the patriarchal system is not described as a relationship in each entity. One of the entities (female) shows her identity in her relation to men. This is in line with Simone de Beauvoir's opinion in *The Second Sex*.

Thus humanity is male and man defines woman not in woman reports herself but as relative to him; She is not regarded as an autonomous being.... She is the incidental, the U.S. an inessential to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute — she is the Other. (Bem, 1993)

The position of women is considered insignificant if it is compared to the position of men as the heads of households. The identity of women is determined and controlled by the power of men. A man can define himself, so he becomes "self" or "subject" upon himself, while a woman is considered as "other" who does not become "subject" for herself. Related to this, there exist gender stereotypes and gender roles differentiated for men and women. In general, the gender stereotypes given to males are always be positive and show that men are more superior in all things against women. The stereotypes also put a woman not to be a subject upon herself. However, this social construction of gender hasn't been able to cover the social construction of race and class. It means that if gender is combined with racism, gender roles aim to bow and treat black women arbitrarily (Gillespie, 1998). Here is shown that black maids experience multiply discriminations that come from not only the white and black men, but also from the white women who employ them as maids or nannies in white family.

Collin (2000) adds that the gender construction of black women working as "nanny" in white family is "the faithful, obedient domestic servant". This social construction really puts black maids not as subjects upon themselves. On the other hand, they are naturally forced to accept their borders that are black in a white society, slave in a free society, women in a society ruled by men" (White in the Healey, 1998). They got three layers of discrimination, such as, racism, sexism, and clasism. The position of black maids is more and more far from the position of "subject".

According to Beauvoir (in Tong, 2004), there are four strategies that women could do to stop their



condition as “others” in society. First, women can work. By working outside the home, women can reclaim their transcendence. Women will concretely confirm their status as a subject, as one who actively determines the direction of her fate. Second, women can become a member of a group of intellectuals who will work for the changes for women. Third, women can work to achieve the transformation of society. Beauvoir believed that one of the keys for the women's liberation is the strength of the economy. The last one is women should refuse to internalize their difference.

Finally, talking about one's subjectivity means talking about a condition of being a person and/or a process that makes us, or in other words, how we are formed as the subject and able to experience yourself (Barker, 2014). It shows that there is a dynamic process in forming one's subjectivity.

### 3 METHODS

This research used a qualitative descriptive method with several phases of research. First, this study used a textual approach to analyze the intrinsic elements in the movie, especially the elements of characters as well as the conflict in the story line. The result was necessary to see the position of the main black characters in the movie who experienced racial and gender discrimination. After that, the study was continued by highlighting the main characters' behavior, either through verbal or non verbal, in responding to the racial and gender discrimination they experienced. The behaviors collected were then grouped and then analyzed in order to see the process of the black maids' struggle in taking a subject position in the society. The analysis was done by using the feminism approach and the theory of subjectivity in order to find the forms of subjectivity experienced by the two main black characters in *The Help* movie.

### 4 DISCRIMINATION OF RACE, CLASS, AND GENDER

The movie showed the portraits of discrimination based on race, class, and gender occurred on black maids in Mississippi in 1963. In this movie, the black women worked outside as housekeepers as well as nannies in white family. They were then referred to "the maids" in this analysis. They came in the morning and worked until the afternoon with only a minimum wage. They were only paid 95 cents/hour or \$182/month to be not only responsible

for domestic work, but also fully accountable for their employers' children.

The maids in the movie got some forms and layers of discrimination because of their status as blacks, women and maids (slaves). Born as a part of blacks, the maids would be automatically put into an inferior level or second-class citizens in the United States. In addition, being women and maids would widen the gap between them and their white employers. The clear gap was initially seen when all maids in the movie called all white women, either younger or older, using “Miss” or “Mrs”, whereas all white women, either younger or older, directly called the maids' names.

In addition, the system of Jim Crow laws applied in the Southern America put them under the rules of "separate, but equal". However, in the real life, equality was merely a dream because the whites kept being superior to the blacks. In the movie, there were found some different forms of separation that were unfair to the blacks, such as: separation of public transportations, areas of residence, dinner tables, and bathrooms. All of the separation didn't work equally to the blacks. Those forms of discrimination put black maids as “others” from their white employers.

The discrimination experienced by black maids in the movie not only put them as “others”, but also as “objects” who weren't able to express whatever they wanted to. The stereotyping of black maids who were faithful and obedient to their employers forced them to silence their true ideas and feelings. They consciously silenced their voice because they needed the job as house maids and consciously knew that being house maids was the only job that was fit to them to survive.

Skeeter	: Did you know as a girl, growing up, that one day you'd be a maid?
Aibileen	: Yes, ma'am. I did.
Skeeter	: And you knew that because?
Aibileen	: My momma was a maid. My grandmomma was a house slave.

From the dialog above, it was seen the internalization of black maids' identity from one to another generation. It was such a black maid's life circle attached deeply in their consciousness. It symbolized a full acceptance of "fate" as a "house maid" that kept inherited. The form of this acceptance was seen through all silent responses to their employers' treatment. In the first middle of the story, the maids did not show their resistance when their employers treated them bad, such as bullied, slandered, penalized, dismissed, and imprisoned their maids arbitrarily. The black maids were just

treated as "objects" that worked for the needs of the "subjects", the employers.

Aibileen and Minny Jackson were two main characters in the movie who became the representatives of the black maids. They often experienced some forms of discrimination from their employers and white communities. Aibileen (53 years) was a housekeeper as well as a caregiver of May Mobley (2.5 years) in Elizabeth Leefolt family. May Mobley was the 17th child who was cared for and raised by Aibileen. Aibileen had started to become a nanny in the white family since she was 14. Aibileen lived alone because her son already died as a victim of racism occurred in Mississippi. Despite the bitterness she got from the whites, Aibileen kept loving and caring for all of her white employers' children, one of whom was May Mobley. Minny Jackson was a maid in Hilly Holbrook family. Hilly was a white woman married to a rich white man. In addition, she was also active in social activities bringing human right issues for black children. However, in her own life, Hilly ignored her maid's rights in many aspects. Hilly was one of the whites who seriously did a campaign of whites' sanitation. She proposed the idea of bathrooms' separation for black maids. Everything she did was only for the sake of her good image in her community. Her presence in this movie becomes important in terms of finding the subjectivity of both Aibileen and Minny as independent women.

Besides Hilly, the presence of Skeeter Phelan was also very helpful to bring out Aibileen and Minny's consciousness in order to take subject positions. Skeeter was a white woman who successfully showed her subjectivity as an independent woman. Born as a white woman, she decided not to follow the social construction of a white woman in the patriarchal system. She took the higher education and went to work that she loved to. No one was able to change her principles of anything. The movie constructed her identity as an independent, intelligent, and strong-willed woman. Her subjectivity and true love to black maids made her brave enough to work against the white rules to defend black rights.

## 5 FINDING SUBJECTIVITY

The subjectivity of two main characters, Aibileen Clark and Minny Jackson, could be found and seen through the narratives and images in the movie. The role of the cinematography was very helpful to show their position as "subjects" for themselves.

### 5.1 Aibileen Clark

Aibileen was a character who was gentle, compassionate, patient, kind, and care for those around her. She was portrayed as one who has some bitterness due to the racism and classism. The bitterness in her life sometimes became a burden for her in order to be a subject for herself. However, at the end of the story, her bitterness also gave her strength to survive in her life.

Being a black woman maid, she experienced multiple layers of discrimination. She lived alone without her husband and son. She only had Minny Jackson as her best friend instead. Being a maid for almost entire of her life, she was trapped not only physically but also mentally. She was trapped in the patriarchal and racist hierarchy that successfully made her very inferior and unable to express her true feeling towards whites. When Skeeter firstly asked her favor to share her experience working as a black maid for white employers, Aibileen refused her strictly for she really knew the risks of working against white rules. Aibileen consciously rejected the opportunity to be a subject for herself.

Aibileen: 'cause they's a reason. I do this with you; I might as well burn my own house down.

Skeeter : I promise we'll be careful.

Aibileen :This already ain't careful, Miss Skeeter Skelton! You not knowing that is what scare me the most. Scare me more than you "Jim Crow".

From the dialog above, it was clear that what scared black maids the most was breaking the white rules. It showed the internalization of black maids' stereotypes that were faithful and obedient to their employers. Being scared meant not having freedom. Instead of having problems with whites, Aibileen chose not to take the opportunity to become a subject who had a full control for her life.

However, time changed, situation changed, and Aibileen also changed. There was a time when Aibileen finally decided to be a subject for herself who took full control for whatever she wanted in her life. The movie shows the change of Aibileen's consciousness when the only relative she had, Minny Jackson, was dismissed by Hilly Holbrook only because she used Hilly's bathroom; she was persecuted by her husband for not raising money for her family anymore. All sadness and bitterness occurred due to the whites finally gave Aibileen strength and courage to do something for the needs of her race, especially black women. Aibileen finally accepted Skeeter's offer to become one of the interviewees for the book Skeeter planned to write,

*The Help*, talking about all bad and good things that black maids experienced while working for white family. Knowing that what she did with Skeeter broke the white rules, Aibileen kept working and writing for she was sure the book would be very helpful to raise the readers' awareness and conscience towards the fate of black maids. Her decision shows her subjectivity because Aibileen was able to beat her fear and did all things that she wanted and believed in. All the risks that might come later didn't make her stop to do the right things not only for herself, but also for her community. Aibileen successfully changed her position from object to subject; from the one who always silenced her voice to the one who was brave to express her feeling through writing; and from the one who fully accepted all bad treatments that her employer did to the one who was able to stand against her employer's bad treatment strictly.



Figure 1

Figure 1 was the moment when Hilly came to Leefolt's home and accused Aibileen of having stolen two spoons and a fork lent by Hilly. Hilly threatened to jail Aibileen on charges of stealing. Being accused, Aibileen finally dared to speak up and defend herself. She didn't let Hilly put her as an object anymore. Here is the dialogue between them.

Aibileen : I didn't steal no silver.  
Hilly : Maybe I can't send you to jail for what you wrote, but I can send you for being a thief.  
Aibileen :(quickly) I know something about you. Don't you forget that....  
Hilly : Call the police, Elizabeth.  
Aibileen: All you do is scare and lie to get what you want.  
Aibileen : You a godless woman. Ain't you tired, Miss Hilly? Ain't you tired?

Both the figure and dialogue above showed how dare Aibileen was in taking her position as "a

subject" who wasn't oppressed by anything outside herself. As a black maid, Aibileen finally showed her independence as a "Self" and not as "Other" by doing whatever she believed as right things to do without any fear that would come after that.

A close-up shooting from the front camera angle showed that Aibileen was a "subject" who was free to express whatever she felt and thought to Hilly, the one who accused her. A short distance, not more than 30 cm, became a symbol that Aibileen was already successful to cross the hierarchical boundaries binding her and other black maids all this time. The spotlight of Aibileen's sharp eyes and her upward face that was parallel to Hilly's could be read as the form of her resistance as well as her strength to defend herself from all kinds of discrimination. This parallel position was also read as the idea of equality between white and black women. The projection of Aibileen's face instead of Hilly's shows the director's effort to raise Aibileen's confidence and pride as a part of black maids. The figure shows clearly one form of Aibileen's subjectivity.

Aibileen's subjectivity is not only shown by Aibileen's expression, non-verbal language, but also from her verbal language. The dialogue above shows it clearly. The stereotypes of black maids who were faithful and obedient to their employers seemed to be denied through the dialogue above. It was believed that the employers' statements were considered as God's statements which had to be done by their maids. There weren't rebuttals coming from their maids. However, in the dialogue above, Aibileen showed her rebuttal strictly to Hilly. The statement "I didn't steal no silver" while lifting up her face parallel to Hilly could be read as Aibileen's bravery to defend herself by saying what was right to Hilly. This dialogue shows that Aibileen had her full independence for she didn't need to confess anything that she didn't do. Her subjectivity was shown not only by rebuttaling Hilly's accusation, but also by threatening and insulting Hilly, something that never happened in that time. Her sentence, "I know something about you. Don't you forget that", shows Aibileen's strength to stand against Hilly for she knew Hilly's secret. The statement "All you do is scare and lie to get what you want. You a godless woman. Ain't you tired, Miss Hilly? Ain't you tired?" is a very harsh and rude statement. Not because of the harsh words, but because it came from the black, the lower social class. Hilly lost her self-esteem because she got the worst insult ever, "a godless woman", a woman who didn't have conscience, from a black maid, the lowest social class woman in her community at that time.

Her subjectivity was getting fulfilled when Aibileen got her full consciousness as a subject who felt free in her heart and mind. The freedom Aibileen got came from her decision to be and to do whatever she had to. After she denied Hilly's accusation, Aibileen was fired and threatened not to get another job. However, her subjectivity was clearly shown by how ready she was to welcome her days ahead after she had told the truth. Aibileen was ready to pay the cost of the truth.

Aibileen : God says we need to love our enemies.  
 : It hard to do. -----  
 Aibileen : But it can start by telling the truth. -----  
 Aibileen : No one had ever asked me what it felt like to be me. Once I told the truth about that I felt free.

Those were Aibileen's vocalization about what she felt after she told the truth. The texts show how precious the truth was. Telling the truth could be read as the highest achievement of a subject for she had full awareness about what she had to do and the following risks that came after that. For the sake of freedom, Aibileen chose to come out from the boundaries binding her before. Although it meant that she would be jobless for the rest of her life, it was still worth to do. Feeling free was the reward for the one who successfully became a subject for herself.

## 5.2 Minny Jackson

Minny Jackson was expressive, bold, strong, assertive, temperamental, but very compassionate. She worked as a maid as well as a nanny in Hilly Holbrook family. Besides, she also had to take care of Hilly's mother, Mrs. Walters. Minny was very good at cooking. She was an expert in baking pies. Her prowess in cooking and baking pies made her have an important role in this movie.

Minny also experienced some forms of racial and gender discrimination. As a black maid, she got some unpleasant treatments from her employer, Hilly Holbrook, the most dominant and aggressive character in this movie. As a wife, she also had lots of unpleasant treatments from her husband. She got to be a breadwinner for her family. She had to work hard because she had double burdens as a wife responsible for domestic stuff and as a black maid responsible for raising money for her big family.

Minny's journey to find her subjectivity seemed to be earlier than Aibileen's in the movie. Her expressive character made her easier to show her feelings and ideas. The character of Hilly who was

very dominant and powerful made Minny become stronger from day to day. Hilly was very racist. She loved Minny's pies very much, but she was very strict in the idea of separation between her stuff and Minny's. Hilly not only separated Minny's bathroom from her family's bathroom, but also built it outside of Hilly's house to make sure the sanitation of her house. Hilly was sure that black maids would possibly bring any dangerous bacteria that could bring some disease to her family.

Minny's subjectivity was firstly seen in the movie when Minny denied Hilly's instruction not to use her family's bathroom in a stormy and rainy night. It was impossible for Minny to go to her bathroom, but Hilly kept forbidding her to use the family's bathroom. With the permission of Mrs. Walters, Minny went to the family's bathroom silently. However, Hilly got suspicious and proved that Minny was in her family's bathroom. Hilly got angry to Minny.



Figure 2

Figure 2 was a situation when Hilly knew that Minny was in her bathroom. Minny actually hadn't used the bathroom when Hilly knocked the door and asked her to go out. However, Minny's subjectivity was seen through her resistance to Hilly. Her resentment to Hilly who didn't have any conscience was done by pretending as if she had finished using the bathroom. Minny pressed the flush and slowed down her movement to make Hilly get angrier. Hilly then felt irritated and shouted, "Minny, you are fired." From the figure, it could be seen that Minny was satisfied for doing her action. Her response didn't show any regret for breaking Hilly's instruction. On the other hand, her body language said that Minny enjoyed the time intimidating Hilly. Her body language, repelling her waists proved her resistance to Hilly. She actually had a chance to apologize for what she had done, but Minny didn't do that. Her independence made her keep her self-esteem. Minny had her consciousness that her self-esteem couldn't be bought by any cost. The position of her head looking to the right side symbolizes that

she ignored Hilly's instruction and was not afraid of Hilly's threat.

Knowing that Minny was fired, her husband treated Minny bad. Instead of understanding Minny's condition, her husband, on the other hand, beat up Minny for her fault causing she lost her job. Minny got double discrimination, from her employer and her husband, at the same time. Her anger to Hilly who put her in the worst condition gave Minny strength and bravery to revenge on Hilly. Her subjectivity could be seen again by her next revenge on Hilly. Instead of asking Hilly's forgiveness, Minny got the idea to insult and hurt Hilly's self-esteem. Minny brought her best pie containing her "shit" to Hilly. As usual, Minny's pies always succeeded to make Hilly happy. While Hilly was enjoying eating the pies, Minny told her to eat her shit.



Figure 3

Figure 3 was the moment when Minny finally said to Hilly, "Eat my shit". It showed how dare Minny was and how independent she was. Her action wasn't controlled by others, but herself. She was brave to do whatever she wanted to do and she was ready to pay all of the cost. Her freedom to do whatever she wanted proved that she took the subject position for herself. Others might put her as their object, but Minny didn't let it happen. She inisiatively took her subject position who was able to determine her action and her future. A close-up shooting of Minny's face shows clearly her determination of being a subject for herself. Her glared eyes showed her full anger and bravery to defend her self-esteem towards Hilly. Minny was sure that what she had done would probably bring her to a bigger problem, such as physical violence, jail, and even death, but she still dare taking all of the risks. Knowing all of the risks, Minny kept doing that because she wanted to prove her true strength as the representative of her community who mostly got unpleasant treatment from their employers.

It was very paradoxical that someone who did a campaign for whites' bathroom sanitation by separating their bathroom from their maids' unconsciously ate her black maid's shit. It was the worst insult ever for the whites. "Shit" could be read as a symbol of the dirtiest dirt and "a black maid's shit" meant "the dirtiest dirt from the dirtiest one". Therefore, eating the black maid's shit was the most disgusting action the white employer ever did in her life. In this case, Minny successfully did her revenge to Hilly.

## 6 BEING INDEPENDENT WOMEN

Both Aibileen and Minny finally agreed to help Skeeter Phelan with her project book, *The Help*. Both of them knew that this book would positively give a chance for other black maids to have better future. Through literature, they were willing to touch others' consciousness and conscience to support human rights for black maids. Aibileen and Minny's subjectivity was proven by their concern of their community rights. They didn't think only about themselves, but also about the needs of other black maids in the future.

In order to make the project succeed, both Aibileen and Minny also asked their other friends to give more perspectives about being black maids in white family. This effort also became the way Aibileen and Minny did to invite more black maids to think about others' better fate and to raise black maids' welfare.

Being independent women, both Aibileen and Minny were portrayed to express all of their experience as black maids in the novel. Without any guilty feeling, they kept sharing their ideas and feelings through their writing. Writing was their way to confirm their subjectivity because they were free to express all of the truth kept so long in their own memory. Their subjectivity was getting fulfilled when both Aibileen and Minny were brave to write their own bitterness and life secrets in the novel. Aibileen let Skeeter write about her lost of son due to the racial war. Besides, Minny let Skeeter write about her bad action to Hilly by giving her shit to Hilly, her white employer. Both of them were very sure that their stories would be very problematic and potentially brought them into the bigger problems in the days ahead, but their subjectivity gave them more reasons to keep them written.

Not only that, their independence as black women was also proven by their chance of getting other income from their book sales. *The Help*



became a phenomenal book and brought in lots of profits to all of the writers. From writing, both of them got independent finance to feed their family.

## 7 CONCLUSION

Both Aibileen Clark and Minny Jackson in the movie succeeded to be “Subjects” for themselves. The journey of finding their subjectivity was started by their consciousness of who they were and where their position was in the society. Then, the consciousness gave them strength and bravery to break out the boundaries binding them and finally pushed them to act out as the autonomous subjects. They were named as subjects not only because they were brave enough to choose whatever they wanted to do, but because they were also brave to be responsible for all of the risks and consequences coming from their choices. In this movie, the role of cinematography was important to support the affirmation of their subjectivity. Their subjectivity could be found by both of their verbal and non-verbal languages.

The other important thing that was also emphasized in the movie was the role of writing. Writing was the effective way that both maids did to confirm their subjectivity. Through writing, they were able to express their true ideas and feelings about anything happened that were silenced and denied for long time ago in the memory and in the society. Besides, they were also sure that their writing on the novel could bring the positive impacts to the black maids’ community. Both of them were trying to touch others’ conscience and consciousness through the novel. It was not about their needs anymore, it was all about the needs of black maids’ community. In addition, writing could also give them extra money that would make them economically independent and no longer relied on others. Finally, their subjectivity helped them have physically, mentally, and economically independent lives.

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