

# MULTIPLE OPPRESSION SUFFERED BY JAVANESE FEMALE CHARACTERS IN OKKY MADASARI'S *THE YEARS OF THE VOICELESS*

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**Abstract:** This study analyzes the intersectionality of oppression experienced by Javanese women in the novel *The Years of the Voiceless* by Okky Mandasari. This study uses Irish Marion Young's oppression theory to explore forms of oppression and Kimberly Crenshaw's intersectionality theory to pay more attention to the existence of oppressions that predominate in women's lives in the new order era. This research found that female characters from three generations named Simbok, Sumarni, Rahayu, Bu Jujuk, and Ndari experience oppression in many ways, including exploitation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, violence, and marginalization. It intersects with gender, class, state, and society oppression. Suggestions for other researchers are to continue this research by analyzing the agency of women who are also very prominent in the novel, especially Sumarni's character.

**Keywords:** *Oppression, Female Oppression, Intersectionality, Indonesian New Order Era, the Years of the Voiceless.*

## INTRODUCTION

People need to fight and eradicate it in the middle of never stopped news about women oppression in Indonesia. According to Irish Marion Young, there are five faces of oppression, namely exploitation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, violence, and marginalization. One of the shocking news of women oppression can be seen from the title *Indonesian Women Suffering 'Epidemic' of Domestic Violence, Activist Warn* in The Guardian website dated on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2019. This news reported that a man in Jakarta slashed his wife's throat after she refused to have sex with him. This incident was witnessed by their children aged seven and fourteen. Fortunately, the wife survived the attack after she was

found by the neighbor and taken to the hospital. This oppression can be included in violence which is part of the five faces of oppression theory by Irish Marion Young.

Another report mentioned that a wife, a mother of three children from West Java, attacked her husband with an axe because he demanded his sex ration. It turned out that the wife had postpartum depression after two months of giving birth to her child. This oppression included exploitation. The husband exploits his wife to his benefit without seeing her condition; moreover, she had postpartum depression. In other media mention *that violence against women in Indonesia is systemic. The government is not doing enough to unravel it: rights activists* in Jakarta Globe website dated on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2020 written by Tara Marchelin stated that the national commission for women's annual report in 2019 recorded a 14% increase in cases of violence against women to a total of 406.178 cases. This dazing news is no longer ordinary in the news platform, and it happened all over Indonesia's regions. It could be an alarm for all, especially anyone who believes in gender equality and justice in Indonesia. So that is why this paper attempt to raise consciousness that oppression toward women is real and included in many structures in life, such as gender, class, political, and social.

Oppression does not appear as it is, and people take it for granted, but oppression represents 'inequity' and is structured. Oppression is created by those individuals or groups who feel they have more power, authority, wealth, greed, etc., so they think they can dominate other individuals or groups who are weaker. Therefore, the matter of oppression befalls the minority or less powerful individual and group, such as women, Black people, Asian people, disabled people, poor people, native people, lesbians, gays, etc. Women are the most vulnerable target of all. To resist that oppression, women need to get empowerment.

Women's empowerment in Indonesia has been formalized since Presidential Instruction number 19 in 2000. However, until now, women, especially Javanese women, are still experiencing multi-dimensional oppression starting from being left behind in education, economy, health, and socio-culture (Romli, 2016). Oppression suffered by women is widely raised in literary works. Some authors make their works an arena of social struggle where they can voice their aspirations for the oppressed people they defend more freely than in the practical political arena (Faruk, 2015). The novel "*The Years of the Voiceless*" talks about contestations built through language. Language is also a social, cultural, and political statement that includes strategic

goals, moral judgments, aesthetic preferences, emotions, and power claims into a discourse that implies political consequences (Gadinger, 2019). Thus, this novel is a literary work and a statement of the author's political stance who wants to show that Javanese women are facing multiple oppressions ranging from private to public sphere oppression. It burdens and complicates women's lives, including state oppression through state apparatus and policies and social oppression in the form of defamation.

The gap and novelty of the study are this paper will explore the position of Javanese women who experienced oppression in the perspective of intersectionality theory by Kimberly Crenshaw. Javanese women are rarely discussed in the case of oppression as in Javanese culture; women are placed subordinate to men due to strong patriarchal culture.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

So far, the study of the novel *The Years of the Voiceless* tends to see three things. Firstly, a study sees the female character in the novel as a victim of a social order that oppresses women (Zahra, 2015; Novitasari, 2018; Syamsu, 2020). Second, it is a study looking at women's empowerment (Andayani, 2016; Asmarani, 2017; Gamas, 2019). Third, it is a study of the technical aspect of language or literature (Nugrawidhanti, 2019; Nashiroh, 2020; Nurviansyah, 2017). There has been no previous study yet that looks at this novel more comprehensively at how a novel is used to condense public ideas about intertwined power.

The position of the novel *The Years of the Voiceless* is vital to show the position of Javanese women who have to struggle and survive amid multiple oppressions in life's intersection within society. The purpose of this paper is to complement the shortcomings of previous studies, which did not highlight the complexities of Javanese women's lives in the multi-dimensional vortex of oppression. In line with that, two questions want to be answered in this paper. First, what are the faces of oppression experienced by female characters in the novel *The Years of the Voiceless*? Second, how are the oppressions of Javanese women in the perspective of intersectionality in the novel *The Years of the Voiceless*?

This paper employs the five faces of oppression by Irish Marion Young's and Kimberly Crenshaw's intersectionality theory. The five faces of oppression theory will investigate the forms of oppression: exploitation, powerlessness,

marginalization, cultural imperialism, and violence (both physical, psychological, sexual, and economical). In comparison, intersectionality theory will investigate the position of Javanese women who have experienced five faces of oppression in the novel. The combination theory of five kinds of oppression and intersectionality is considered fit to dissect and find the best answer to the research problem in the novel *The Years of the Voiceless*.

## METHOD

### Data Collection and Analysis

This study is literary criticism that concerns defining, classifying, analyzing, and evaluating the works of literature (Abrams, 1981 in Aini, 2018). The data collection of the study is going through several steps. They are, first, reading the novel *The Years of the Voiceless* using the close reading method. The researchers need to read the book several times to make sure there is no missing information such as plot, setting, theme, etc. This process aims to understand more about intrinsic and extrinsic elements. Second, reading the novel focuses only on the data related to the five faces of oppression and intersectionality of Javanese rural women. In this process, the researchers collect the evidence regarding those matters. The next step is analyzing and interpreting the data, which will reveal the answers to the research problem.

## FINDINGS

### Five Faces of Oppression

The female characters in the novel *The Years of the Voiceless* who experienced oppression are Simbok, Sumarni, Rahayu, Bu Jujuk, and Ndari. They got five faces of oppression as in below:

#### 1. Exploitation

Exploitation is mostly carried out by the military staff on the Singlet people. The exploitation occurs to Sumarni because she is a new wealthy person in the village. Sumarni gets rich due to her job, which is considered inappropriate according to Islam religion and makes people suffer. Sumarni's

new job of lending people money started when her neighbor needs money to send her child to the hospital. Sumarni did not intend to become a loan shark, and this condition is used by the military staff on behalf of the state, asking for security money. This security money, they say is for Sumarni's family own sake and safety.

Security money becomes one form of blackmailing used by the military staff because, in the new order era, military staff is given full authority to manage society. If society did not obey them, people would be labeled as PKI, and military staff will easily find them, put them in prison, or kill them at once. It can be seen from the quotation below;

One of the men in the camouflage uniforms came up to us. He was tall and skinny, and his boots seemed too big for him. "How's it going, ma'am?" he asked Mother. It's going well, sir. I'm in luck.",

"Well, luck doesn't come by itself, you know... You have to look for it.",  
"Yes, sir.",

"If you get lucky here, that means it's the state that helped you. Right?",  
"Well the luck comes through here from Gusti.",

"But it's also the soldiers who helped you get lucky, ma'am. All of this is possible

because of us." He took one of Mother's pots. "My wife needs a pot like this ma'am.",

"Sure thing. It's 5.000, but you can pay in 30 installments.",

"How can you charge me like the others, ma'am? Look at my uniform, look at this gun.",

"Oh, it's not like that, sir. I'm just a trader. I don't make that much profit.",

"Ah, you really don't know how it works!" (p.58)

As mentioned above, security money is the form of blackmailing by the military staff. They press people in the name of offering the security for people like Sumarni. She cannot refuse because military staff will terror or label Sumarni as PKI. So that is why Sumarni is pressed to give money once in two weeks to the military staff. It showed on;

"Ma'am, you've been selling here, so our commander says that you have to pay a security fee," he said. He had two other uniformed men with him.

"Security fee for what, sir?" Mother asked, in a fearful tone that was very different from her usual trader's banter.

"Well, for the security in here. It's thanks to our security arrangements that you've

been able to do brisk business here. We're the ones taking care of all security. So you make a profit, but what do we get?" one of the other soldiers said.

"Yes, sir. Sorry, my wife here doesn't understand. Please understand, we're both illiterate. So how much do we have to pay, sir?"

"How about this: Instead of paying the fee, you just give us whatever you haven't sold. That works out better, right? You won't have to give us any money." The soldiers took Mother's merchandise. There were four buckets and six pots, all of them seized. They also took the remaining half sack of rice. My parents stayed and didn't do anything. (p.60)

Once Sumarni agrees to give the military staff security money, they will keep doing that. They will come over to Sumarni's house on agreed time which is once in two weeks. The security money collected by the military staff will be used for their benefit. The money will go to the military staff's own pocket, not to the state.

They come to the house often, every two weeks on Monday. Sometimes they come at other times too. They'll say they just happened to be in the area, or they wanted to drop by. But Mother knows what she has to do each time they come. It's only ever about the money. (p.49)

At first, Sumarni refuses to pay for security money, but she will receive several warnings when she keeps doing that. The warnings are in the form of head village visit, unknown people to terror Sumarni, threat to give Sumarni fine, and label her and her family as PKI. So she does not have any choice except to pay the security money to guarantee her from the military staff. The oppression showed in the following paragraph;

"You can say whatever you like, but those are the facts. Now it's up to you whether you need security or not."

"What do you mean 'security'? I haven't done anything wrong. I have no enemies.

The money I lend is my own, I don't rob people for it. And I don't force people to borrow from me; they come on their own. How am I making things difficult for people?" Mother couldn't hide her exasperation. She knew these men only came for the money. But for her, every cent she had was the product of hard work, and should only be spent on things that she felt were important. (p.66)

## 2. Powerlessness

The powerlessness experienced by the female characters and the whole characters in the novel *The Years of the Voiceless* is seen when they do not have a chance to choose what party they want to choose in the election. The military staff, as the government representative, asked them to vote particular party and a threat follows it if they do not obey it, they will face consequences. Here the military staff act as the absolute one, no one can oppose them. If they oppose them, they will be put in jail or label as PKI. Here, the label of PKI is feared by the people because if you are labeled as PKI, society will not accept you, they will think of you as an outcast. People will not hire you or help you at all. You will survive by becoming a tramp, and your whole family will suffer the same, even your child and grandchild.

The military staff on the government's behalf will give a mark on your ID card so that people will know that you are different because you were labeled as PKI. You need to report to the village office once a week and it will follow you for the rest of your life.

“Well there we are, ma’am. Kang, everything’s fine now. Have you had a chance to vote yet? Well come on, you can go now. Don’t forget, it’s the one with the picture of a banyan tree. You’re not PKI, right?”

My parents nodded. They got up and went to the voting booths. The lines had thinned out as Mother waited her turn. I saw her look back at the soldiers who had taken her merchandise. They were talking and laughing. (p.61)

## 3. Cultural Imperialism

Sumarni experienced cultural imperialism. She got it from the government, Javanese culture and her daughter, Rahayu. She got the cultural imperialism from the government because she must give her vote to the yellow party and choose the existence religion for her ID just like the other citizen. While cultural imperialism from her Javanese culture is in the form of her submission to her husband. In Javanese culture, a wife should submit wholly to a husband. She cannot argue her husband; even when her husband cheats on her, a wife must remain loyal and devoted.

There were no more parties with names in Arabic. They had united a single party with a star for a logo. And the parties of the abangan people had also apparently merged. The new party now had a bull's head logo on a red background. But neither of those was our party, the one that the singlet voters were required to vote for. Because we were

patriots and we supported the government, we all supported the yellow party. We would punch the logo with banyan tree. (p.73-74)

I always voted for the yellow party because the ward chief and uniformed men who guarded the voting booths said we must do. After punching the paper, I gave it to the soldiers, putting it into a box. Rather than kick up a fuss, I just went along. The district chief was telling us to vote, and like the others, I would do as he said. (p.99)

"What's your religion, Yu?" Koh Cayad's question startled me. We talked every night since Teja's death. No one came to watch the TV, so Koh Cayadi did not need to hide in his room all night. But we never talk about anything this serious. Religion? What was my religion?

"It's supposed to be Islam, Koh. Just like everyone else."

"I'm Christian. It says so on my ID card. Like the others." (p.169)

From Simbok, Sumarni got the cultural imperialism when she was young. So, Simbok asks Sumarni to accept Teja, who proposed her to avoid the curse. Because in Javanese culture, women should not refuse a proposal which come to them, if not it will become a curse and the women cannot marry anyone in her whole life. So, to avoid the curse, Sumarni did not have a choice except to accept Suteja's proposal.

Little did I know, though, that Old Man Noto had told Simbok about Teja wanting to marry me. That night, behind the house, as I offered up my silent prayer, simbok whispered to me, "Nduk, a girl must have a husband and children. If a man proposes to you, you can't refuse. You could be cursed and become an old maid" (p.44)

Another cultural imperialism in the novel is Rahayu thinks that her mother is a sinner. She always made food offering on the specific period for the ancestral spirits. Rahayu hates this activity which made her mother is a sinner in her eyes. Rahayu thinks her mother that way because in a school, Rahayu is taught by the Islamic religion values, so what Sumarni did is not following the Islamic principles. In Islam, the great God is only Allah SWT, while Sumarni does not know Allah SWT. In Sumarni's whole life, Simbok never taught her about Allah SWT. Simbok is only taught her to pray to ancestral spirit.

Let mother have her satisfaction from the rice cones and grilled meat. But I don't want to see it. Every fiber of my being revolts at being near such fuolly and sin and is allowing it to go on. So be it. Let us be happy by not seeing each other. Let us remain far apart for our own happiness. Here, in this city, I've found what I'm looking for. Everything that is right and that makes sense. Modern, not foolish. Godly, not devil-worshipping. (p.128)



#### 4. Violence

There are four kinds of violence in the novel *The Years of the Voiceless* experienced by female characters: Simbok, Sumarni, Rahayu, Bu Jujuk and Ndari; namely physical, psychological, sexual, and economical violences. The following table shows each data from four kinds of violence.

Table 1. The Data on Violence

No.	Characters	Utterances	Coding
1	Sumarni	<p>"So, Yu, I hear you're not just selling vegetables and household items anymore. You're now a moneylender, are you?" Sumadi said.</p> <p>"Oh. I'm still trading, chief. I don't lend a lot."</p> <p>"Hahaha...! Whether it's a little or a lot, it's still money-lending. You're a moneylender, a loan shark! It's people like you that make life difficult for others." "Hold on, now chief. I'm just trying to help people. When they need money, I give it to them. If they need a pan, I sell them a pan."</p> <p>"Yeah, right... Don't try to wriggle out of this one! You've made a lot of enemies now, and that makes you an enemy of the state too" (p.66)</p> <p>"You no-good, shameless moneylender. You're a loan shark, a bloodsucker. You think I can't repay my debt? Don't underestimate me, Yu. I'm an official. I get paid by the state every month. You're just a loan shark who makes others suffer." (p.83)</p>	Psychological
		<p>"Oh Teja, you ungrateful man. Here I am struggling to earn money, and he's out having fun with other women."</p> <p>Mother was no longer raging at Torah. Now she was cursing out father. But no one even knew where he was. Teja the lazy. Teja who sleeps like a buffalo. Teja who only cares about himself. Teja who is now shackled up with some other woman... (p.49)</p>	Economical
2	Rahayu	<p>The two soldiers were now using their guns. No, they weren't shooting. Instead, they are hitting Amri and Iman with their rifle butts, catching them in the face, the back, the stomach. I couldn't stand it anymore.</p> <p>"Stop it... stop it!",</p> <p>Thud... I felt my cheek burn up and sting. I had</p>	Physical

		caught a rifle butt in the face. There soldiers stopped. Amri and Iman were both curled up on the ground. (p.140 – 141)	
		I was sure that Mr. Waji would pour out all his disappointment and anger in class the next day. He didn't just talk about sinner but gave an example by calling my name. All the children in the school would know. "Rahayu's mother is an example of a loan shark. She lends money to people and charges them ten percent interest. She preys on those poor people." (p.84)	Psychological
		I see your eyes strain when I talk about the prison. Then you cover your face when I talk about the soldiers. You scream when I tell you I was raped and tortured. Then you laugh when I tell you about how good it was making out in the middle of the night beneath a sky speckled with stars with a man the same age as my father. (p.10)	Sexual
3	Ndari	"It hurts, miss." "What hurts, Nduk? What is it?" I asked as I tried not to think the worst. "It" hurt. Was "it" what I thought she meant. Allah, what more trouble is this? "My thing... My thing... it got poked with a finger..." "It" was what I thought. Ndari was still crying. I held her tighter. "Who, Nduk? Who poked you?" "Uncle..." (p.222)	Sexual
4	Symbol	I have a hazy memory of him beating her because she had a fever and couldn't go to the market. If she didn't go, we wouldn't have anything to eat. And all he did was just waiting for the food. He was like a crazed dog. Only a crazed dog would bite his sick wife. I was terrified back then. I hid behind a door and cried. He left after beating her, and he never returned. (p.16)	Physical
5	Bu Jujuk	My husband, Ni.. He has cheated on me with kledhek. It's been a long time, Ni. But I just shut up. I don't want to make a fuss; I don't want to get into trouble. But I'm not strong, Ni. My heart is sliced into pieces... Bu Jujuk is back to her world, a world full of obedience and fear (p. 46- 47)	Psychological

In the quotations above, it is proven that violence can take many forms. Moreover, this violence is not only physical but also psychological, sexual, and economic.

### 5. Marginalization

The last five faces of oppression from the novel is Marginalization. There is phenomena in Singlet village that distinguish women and men's job. In this village, women are allowed to do the easy job, which does not need any strength. But because of this, women are paid with food, while men are paid with money for their service/ job. It is very uncommon for Javanese women to work as *kuli* (a porter), but Sumarni's stubbornness finally can break the Javanese cultural tradition. Initially, it is *ilok*/ strange when women having a man's job, but later on, it will be common, and people will accept it. By breaking this old tradition, Sumarni can level up her life's prosperity. It is showed by the data below;

“Ni, you must be kidding. There’s no such thing as a female porter. You’re just not strong enough. Forget about it. Women should stick to easy jobs, like peeling cassavas” (p.30)

I didn’t talk about the bra with Simbok. I just told her that I want to help her to peel the cassavas and hopefully make a little money. She told me I wouldn’t get any money. That was the custom at the market. The women were paid with food, while the men were paid in cash. (p.20)

### Javanese Women Experiencing Oppression in Intersectionality Perspective

In Javanese culture, the destiny of women is *masak* (cooking), *macak* (dressing up) and *manak* (giving birth). The concept of true women in Javanese is always related with their body and nature. This concept is descent from generation to generation and it is ingrained. For example, in Nyi Hartati teachings for her daughter Rancangkapti about *kias lima jari tangan* (metaphor of five fingers). This teaching tends to weaken women position.

The contents of the teaching are; first, Thumb means *Pol Ing Tyas*. As a wife, one must surrender entirely to her husband. What the husband wants, it must be obeyed. Second, Accuser (pointer) means never dare to break the *tudhung kakung* (husband's instructions). The husband's instructions should not be questioned. Third, the superior (middle finger) means the wife must

always venerate and maintain the husband's dignity. Fourth, ring finger means keeping wife's face sweet in serving her husband and when the husband wants something. Fifth, *Jejenthik* (pinky finger) means that the wife is always *athak-ithikan* (skilled and sense) in any work serving the husband. A wife should be fast and gentle (Susanto, et al., 2000).

The concept of being true Javanese women also recorded in any Javanese ancient letters, Javanese ancient books, Javanese ancient literary works, Javanese puppet story, or even Javanese modern literary works. For example, is *Serat Panitisastra*. In this letter, women's worth is seen from their ability to reproduce offspring. Women will be adored if they can give birth to a son, while they will be considered useless if they cannot bear any child. It is in accordance with the quote below:

*sepining garwa tan darbe / suta sepi satuhul/..../  
a wife is empty if she does not have children; she is really empty/.../  
lamun mungguhing wanudya yen alaki/ oleha anal lanang/ kang akendel  
nanging away kadi/ kekendelaning singa susuta/ amung sapisan  
kendele/...//*

As for a woman/ if she is married/ she should bear a son/ Brave but should not be like / the courage of a female tiger to give birth/ they only give birth once//

(Sudewa in Susanto, et al; 2000: 40-41)

Related to Javanese culture with a woman in general, they must be facing intersectionality. Crenshaw divided intersectionality into three: structural, political, and representational. First, Crenshaw (1991) explained that a structural intersectionality is a place where women face a series of oppression in their lives, starting from poverty to work's problem. Second, Crenshaw (1991) stated that political intersectionality happens when women conflict within a political agenda. And third, representational intersection means women become a minority, and women issues are not significant (Crenshaw 1991).

Intersectionality of female characters in the novel *The Years of the Voiceless* starts with Simbok. The conceptions of Javanese women above give a domino effect of which perpetuates the Javanese women subordination in society. Javanese women then have this stereotype of submissive human in front of their husbands. In the novel "*The Years of the Voiceless*", Simbok, Sumarni's mother, has suffered from Javanese cultural coercion. Simbok has to serve her husband regardless of her condition. Here, Simbok experiences a structural intersectionality. It can be seen from the data below:

I have a hazy memory of him beating her because she had a fever and couldn't go to the market. If she didn't go, we wouldn't have anything to eat. And all he did was just waiting for the food. He was like a crazed dog. Only a crazed dog would bite his sick wife. I was terrified back then. I hid behind a door and cried. He left after beating her, and he never returned (p.16)

Next is Sumarni's intersectional oppression, which happened when she works diligently while her husband cheats on her, she has to be responsible for her daughter's education and upbringing. Sumarni puts efforts to work by lending her money to her neighbors or people in Ngranget traditional market and selling household appliances, yet she still encounters several obstacles. Here, Sumarni experiences structural intersectionality.

The obstacles started by the military staff that comes to Sumarni's house after hearing the rumor that she is a loan shark and her job makes people suffer. Their coming is to warn Sumarni, if Sumarni wants a quiet life in the Singlet village while having an inappropriate job, she must give security money to the military staff once in two weeks. If not, she can face unpleasant occurrence, and the military cannot guarantee her family's safety. Then it turns out to be true, the next day, the neighborhood unit chief comes to Sumarni's house with the same purpose as the military staff. On the next two days, Sumarni is visited by seven men in the *sarong*. They come to Sumarni's house to protest her job as a money lender or loan shark with interest is a sinful act. In the end, Sumarni is defeated by those uncomfortable acts and chooses to pay security money for her and her family's safety.

Here, Sumarni is a woman who faces an intersection brought by the military staff acting on behalf of the government. This intersection is a political intersection because the military staff presses on Sumarni to get security money which will go to their pocket, not the State.

"The point is, Yu, We don't want a money lender in our village. We don't want any sinners in our midst." (p. 70)

During Suteja's life, he often neglects Sumarni and having an affair with kledek and is drunk every night. Rahayu witnesses it; she states that Mother confronted Father with her hands on her hips. Her face was flushed with rage after Suteja is out the whole night without sleeping in the house.

"I was working the whole day while you were just getting drunk!"

"Who was getting drunk? You watch what you say."

"Then why do you smell of liquor? And your eyes look drunk too! Are you still going to deny it?"

"You nagging woman! Shut up!" (p69)

After Suteja passed away, two years later, Sumarni gets confrontation by a woman named Endang Rahayu, who claims to be married secretly to Teja and asks for her son's rights. Endang Rahayu is Teja's mistress who wants his inheritance. To keep her wealth, Sumarni is asking Sumadi for help. Sumadi is a military commander who often visits her house to collect security money. Trapped by her situation, Sumarni does not have a choice to accept Sumadi's help with the compensation of one quarter of Sumarni's wealth. So she chooses that rather than gives half of her wealth to Endang.

"That's a small problem. It's easy. But then again... there's got to be a percentage. You understand."

"How much?"

"A part of your property; Let's just do a rough calculation, Yu. You can lose half your property if you do as the ward chiefs say. I can help you keep a bigger portion, say three quarters. I'll take the other quarter as the fee for arranging things. So it works out better, right? You're a trader; you probably know how to calculate it better than me."

"I am a trader, chief. I lend money for a percentage. I know how much a percentage should be, roughly. But a quarter isn't a percentage anymore."

"Have it your way. You're the one that asked for my help." (p186)

Bu Jujuk experiences another intersectional oppression. She is Sumarni's customer. What is happening to Bu Jujuk is in accordance with the Javanese culture that women should obey and submit to her husband. It is the form of structural intersectionality.

My husband, Ni.. He has cheated on me with kledhek. It's been a long time, Ni. But I just shut up. I don't want to make a fuss; I don't want to get into trouble. But I'm not strong, Ni. My heart is sliced into pieces... Bu Jujuk is back to her world, a world full of obedience and fear (p. 46- 47)

Intersectionality faced by Rahayu is political and representational intersectionality. When Rahayu tried to help people in a village located in Magelang, Rahayu cannot help them much because although she and her entourage were trying to convince the people in the village, their effort was in vain. In the end, military staff will chase away the remaining people and Rahayu's entourage. Even Amri is killed due to his bravery against the military staff. It is political intersectionality because Rahayu interrupts the government political plan implemented by the military staff. It is representational intersectionality because Rahayu as a woman is considered marginal and

insignificant. Whatever she does, she cannot stop the plan to build *the Kedung Merah* reservoir. Even for what Rahayu did to help the people in the village, Rahayu is labeled as a PKI, and that label haunted her for life, which causes her mother Sumarni to go mad. During her imprisonment, Rahayu is treated as an insignificant human. She is raped and tortured by the military staff.

The two soldiers were now using their guns. No, they weren't shooting. Instead, they are hitting Amri and Iman with their rifle butts, catching them in the face, the back, the stomach. I couldn't stand it anymore.

"Stop it... stop it!",

I felt my cheek burn up and sting. I had caught a rifle butt in the face. There're soldiers stopped. Amri and Iman were both curled up on the ground. (p.140 - 141)

I see your eyes strain when I talk about the prison. Then you cover your face when I talk about the soldiers. You scream when I tell you I was raped and tortured. Then you laugh when I tell you about how good it was making out in the middle of the night beneath a sky speckled with stars with a man the same age as my father. (p.10)

The last is Ndari. Ndari is a ten-year-old teenage girl living in the village, which will turn into a reservoir. Ndari is one of the villagers who stay in the village and following her family's decision not to move from the village. Ndari is a representative of a vulnerable woman because her uncle raped her. Ndari is innocent, and she is only ten years old, but her uncle has the heart to do that to her. In the end, her father found out and kills his brother. Ndari, her fate was getting worse because her father sacrifices her to become a comfort woman to those military staff so that they will not displace the village to be a reservoir. Here, Ndari experiences representational intersectionality. She is a woman who has no value whatsoever after she lost her virginity.

"It hurts, miss."

"What hurts, Nduk? What is it?" I asked as I tried not to think the worst.

"It" hurt. Was "it" what I thought she meant. Allah, what more trouble is this?

"My thing... My thing... it got poked with a finger..."

"It" was what I thought. Ndari was still crying. I held her tighter. "Who, Nduk? Who poked you?"

"Uncle..." (p.222)

All in all, female characters named Simbok, Sumarni, Rahayu, Bu Jujuk, and Ndari in the novel *The Years of the Voiceless* experienced five kinds of oppression; they are exploitation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism,

violence, and marginalization. On top of that oppression, those female characters who are Javanese women face intersectionality oppression in their life. Intersectionality is the way to map oppression. This oppression not appears one time in those female characters' lives, but it intertwines and mostly happened simultaneously. Simbol, Sumarni, Rahayu, Bu Jujuk, and Ndari generally encounter structural and representational intersectionality. While Sumarni and Rahayu are also undergoing political intersectionality.

## DISCUSSION

Down to date, the study of the novel *The Years of the Voiceless* inclines to highlight three things. Firstly, a study discusses the female character in the novel as a victim of a social order that oppresses women (Zahra, 2015; Novitasari, 2018; Syamsu, 2020). Second, it is a study of women's empowerment (Andayani, 2016; Asmarani, 2017; Gamas, 2019). Third, it is a study of the technical aspect of language or literature (Nugrawidhanti, 2019; Nashiroh, 2020; Nurviansyah, 2017).

This study is different from other studies because it finds the existence of intersectionality of women oppression, which is not only about gender but also the oppression from the other aspects, such as class, state, and society itself in the setting of the Indonesian new order era. The intersectionality found in the novel includes structural, political, and representational intersectionality based on Kimberly Crenshaw's theory. This study also discovered the oppression experienced by female characters named Simbok, Sumarni, Rahayu, Bu Jujuk, and Ndari are include into five faces of oppression. They are exploitation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, violence, and marginalization.

Further, this study is essential because oppression does not stand alone, but it intertwines with other oppressions. Furthermore, it is not only caused by gender, class, state, and society.

## CONCLUSION

The research found that there are five faces of oppression in the novel *The Years of the Voiceless*. Those five faces of oppression are exploitation, powerlessness, marginalization, cultural imperialism, and violence (physical,



psychological, sexual, and economic). While, female characters in the novel represented by Simbok, Sumarni, Rahayu, Sundari, and Bu Jujuk are characters who experienced those five faces of oppression and are in the intersection situation because they encounter the oppression from all directions. The intersectionality which occurs to those female characters is structural, political, and representational intersectionality.

## SUGGESTION

Suggestions for other researchers are to continue this research by analyzing the agency of women who are also very prominent in the novel *The Years of The Voiceless*, especially Sumarni's character. It will be very interesting if other researchers can unravel the woman agency of Sumarni and contribute to the academic discussion in feminism and woman agency.

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