

CHAPTER III

EXTRINSIC THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Contrary to the intrinsic elements whose contents are clearly stated in the stories, extrinsic elements have an influence on literary works but not from the works itself. Extrinsic elements help the writer find a way to imply a correct theory to discuss this paper accurately. In the case of *Booksmart* (2019) the extrinsic aspects can be analyzed through the perspective of identity in a postmodern society.

3.1 What is Postmodernity

“Postmodernism is an extension of Modernism. Extending something, however, can mean crossing its boundaries, changing its identity. «Postmodernism may be a response, direct or oblique, to the unimaginable which Modernism glimpsed only in its most prophetic moments.» s Or is it perhaps only a change in perspective? «The change in Modernism may be called Postmodernism”.

According to the Nägele, postmodernism is a continuation of modernism that both criticises and transforms it. Postmodernism does not only expand modernism in a straight path, even though it arises from modernist philosophy. Rather, it surpass modernism's bounds and modifies its basic presumptions. It highlights how postmodernism can be understood as a reaction to modernism's limitations, especially to the realities and uncertainties that modernism could only foresee during its most forward-thinking periods. Postmodernism signifies a change in perspective, a shift in the understanding of reality, meaning, and identity, rather than a total break. This shift represents a shift away from the modernist quest for universal meaning and coherence and towards a postmodern focus on fragmentation, plurality, and reinterpretation.

3.2 Identity in Postmodern Theory

The concept of identity has a significant transition from traditional, to modern, and postmodernity society. Identity in traditional societies according to Kellner (1995),

“Was a function of predefined social roles and a traditional system of myths which provided orientation and religious sanctions to define one’s place in the world, while rigorously circumscribing the realm of thought and behavior”.

It means that identity in traditional society is not based on personal choice or self-construction, but rather as something which is shaped by norms and culture. Kellner (1995) says that in the context of postmodern society, identity becomes more flexible, no longer seen as something fixed or stable. Instead, it is understood as something fluid and always changing, depending on personal choices, social interactions, and cultural influences. Unlike in traditional societies where identity is tied to strict roles and norms, in postmodern society people can shape and reshape who they are. This change represents a large transformation from traditional to postmodern ways of thinking. While traditionality emphasizes unity, stability, and rational consistency, postmodernity embraces diversity, and the instability of meaning. In postmodern culture, individuals construct their identities by combining different components from media, fashion, language, and everyday life. This results a sense of self that is often shifting and performative rather than singular or authentic.

The concept of identity in postmodern theory highlights the tension between societal expectations and personal self-definition. It reveals how

individuals navigate between collective cultural frameworks and the desire for autonomy, a process which often shows in modern movies, one of which can be displayed in Olivia Wilde's *Booksmart*. Kellner's theory offers a relevant lens for understanding identity in media culture, including film. The representation of teenager identity in Olivia Wilde's *Booksmart* (2019), can be read as a reflection of postmodern identity formation. The film portrays teenager characters who navigate multiple and often conflicting versions of themselves including, academic achievers, social outsiders, and self-conscious individuals trying to redefine who they are outside traditional boundaries. Their struggle to reconcile these identities mirrors Kellner's concept of fluid and performative selfhood within a media-saturated society. Through this perspective, identity in *Booksmart* (2019) is not fixed or predetermined but is continually performed, negotiated, and reconstructed amid the cultural pressures of the postmodern world.

3.3 Situating the Postmodernity

In postmodern culture, identity is no longer seen as stable or singular, but rather as something fluid, and constantly changing. Kellner (1995) emphasizes that advertising, fashion, consumption, television, and media culture play a central role in destabilizing identity, creating subject positions that individuals may adopt, resist, or transform. This shows that identity in contemporary society is not simply inherited or fixed by tradition, but is instead continuously shaped by shifting cultural discourses and mediated images.

Media culture, in particular, offers an abundance of models, roles, and narratives which individuals can identify with. These representations not only

entertain but also function as cultural guides, presenting examples of gender roles, behaviours, lifestyles, and value systems. Rather than eliminating identity, postmodern conditions expand its possibilities, though often at the cost of stability. The wide range of choices, pictures, and subject positions creates a rich yet unstable identity setting, with individuals constantly negotiating who they are in relation to the multiplicity of cultural signs surrounding them. This dynamic highlights the ambivalence of postmodern identity. On one hand, it opens up opportunities for greater freedom, allowing individuals to play with identity, changing themselves, and cross boundaries which were once considered fixed. However, the ongoing change can also cause people to feel insecure, confusion, and fragmentation, leaving individuals vulnerable to the pressures of consumer culture and the demands of fashion, trends, and social comparison. With this, identity becomes both an arena of empowerment and a site of instability. The construction of identity in a postmodern context reflects the broader cultural condition of diversity and ambiguity. Traditional and modern values coexist with postmodern sensibilities, resulting in identities that are layered, performative, and highly responsive to cultural change. Identity doesn't vanish, rather than rebuild into a contested space, shaped by the tension between continuity and change, stability and fluidity, individuality and continue to changing.

In this regard, Olivia Wilde's *Booksmart* (2019) can be read as a reflection of postmodernity. The film portrays American teenagers navigating a world saturated with media, images, and social expectations of self-performance. The main characters not only search for their personal identity but also attempt to define

themselves amid competing cultural narratives and representations. Through its humor, visual style, and self-aware narrative, *Booksmart* depicts the condition of postmodernity, in which reality is mediated by culture, and meaning is constantly redefined.