AN ANALYSIS OF FORMULAIC STRUCTURE IN STEPHENIE MEYER'S
TWILIGHT

THESIS

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ENGLISH DEPARTEMENT
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In English Studies

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my father, Purnomo Sidik and my mother, Ima. For the support, the love, the patience and never-ending believe.
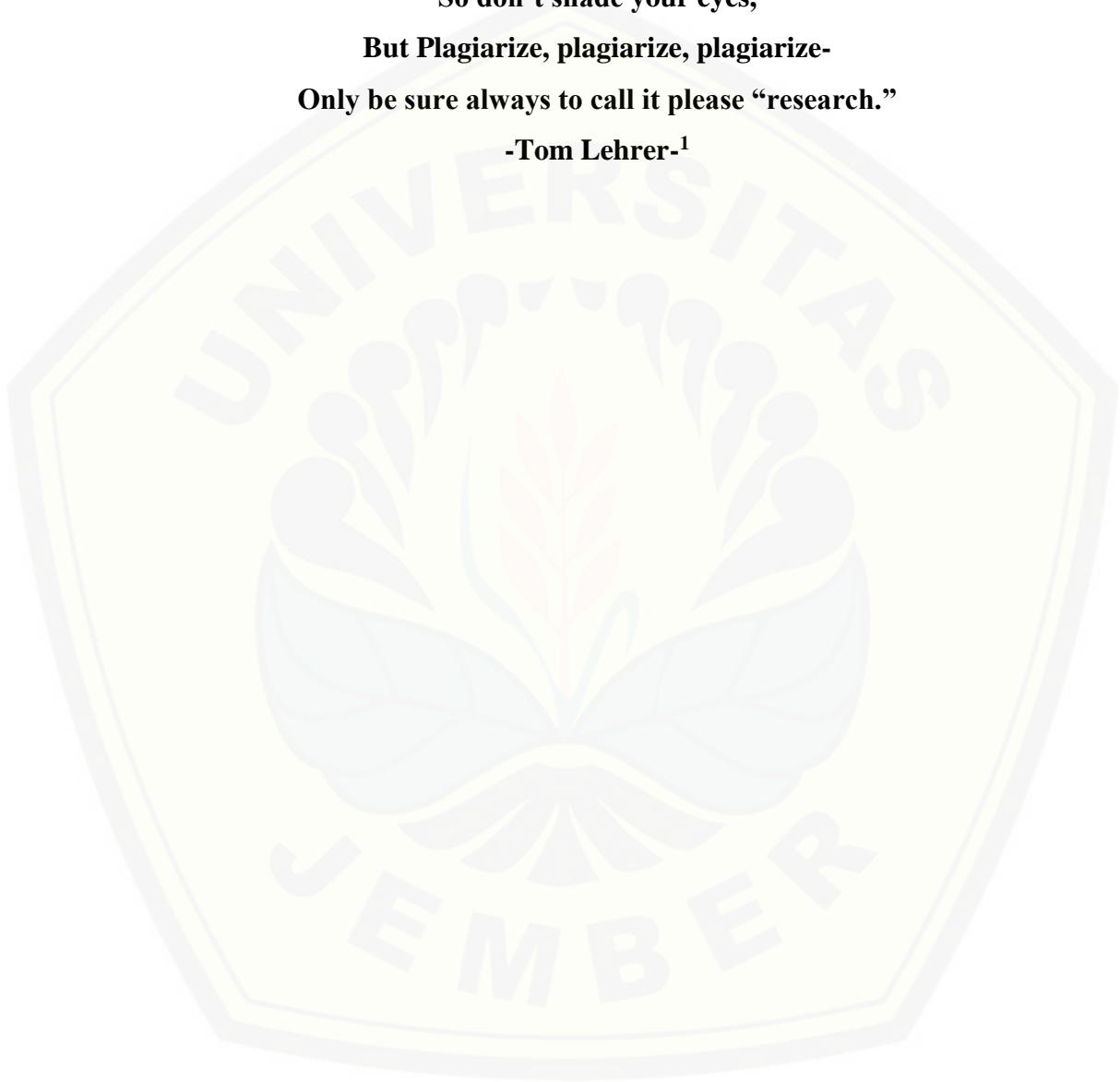
MOTTO

Remember why the good Lord made your eyes!

So don't shade your eyes,

But Plagiarize, plagiarize, plagiarize-

Only be sure always to call it please "research."

-Tom Lehrer-[1]

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[1] http://www.goodreads.com/quotes

DECLARATION

I hereby state that this thesis entitled *"An Analysis of Formulaic Structure in Stephenie Meyer's Twilight"* is an original piece of writing. I declare that the analysis and the research described in this thesis have never been submitted for any other degree or publications. I certify to the best of my knowledge that all sources used and any helps received in this preparation of this thesis have been acknowledged.

Jember, December 2015

Bundan Nugroho Purwantoro

APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis entitled *An Analysis of Formulaic Structure on Stephenie Meyer's Twilight* has been examined in front of the board of examiners at the Faculty of Letters, Jember University.

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Bundan Nugroho Purwantoro

SUMMARY

An Analysis of Formulaic Structure in Stephenie Meyer's Twilight; Bundan Nugroho Purwantoro, 080110101021; 49 pages, English Department, Faculty of Letters, Jember University.

Twilight is a popular novel written by Stephenie Meyer. Thiss thesis is conducted to show the reason of the novel becomes popular and best-seller through the formula constructed the text. Structuralists cricized if the structures underlying narrative structures of literary texts are not original. Twilight which is a literary text presumed a piece of unorigianl work becomes the most wold best-seller novel. Therefore, this thesis uses Cawelti's theorry about formulaic literature to explain the Twilight's popularity phenomena.

In this research, qualitative method is employed to analyze the formula contructed Twilight through selected events within the novel. Formulaic literatures propose if every popular work is not only embodied by conventional structures (pattern) but also cultural values the readers enjoyed. In oreder to have brif explanation around the formula, three aspects which have significant role on the construction of Twilight are analyzed. They are gothic elements, romance narrative and fantasy aspects. In terms of cultural values, this research provides postmodern culture as the cultural background of the formula.

As a result, Twilight is a novel that is contructed by blending gothic, romance and fantasy. Furthermore, this research also find that through the development and the focus of the story, Twilight is determined to be romance novel in where gothic and fantasy aspects are used to dramatize the romance story. Moreover, the popularity of Twilight is due to the postmodern women are illuminated by the concept of hyper-reality about body image. Through the process of identification, women who is surpressed by the alternative reality can escape from the real world to the magical world of Twilight in where all the burdens may vanish.

Keywords: Formulaic Literature, Formula, Postmodern, Hyper-Reality

TABLE OF CONTENT

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, an overview of the whole thesis is provided in order to give the readers a clear description about the topic discussed in the research. The topic is about formulaic literature in Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight*. Therefore, the writer provides the background of study, research problems, purposes, and research questions.

1.1 The Background of Study

The tales of undead rising from the grave to haunt the livings and sucks their blood have fascinated and frightened human for centuries. Throughout the years since this monstrous being is firstly known, vampires have gained a great popularity in their various forms. In literature, Vampire's stories have been flourished since 18th century. However, not until 19th century the vampire legend was perfectly immortalized through the work of John Polidori's *The Vampyre*. By combining the folklores legend with tradition of demon lover, incubus the vampire's features began to edge closer to characteristics of modern vampire today. The success of Polidori's tale becomes a trigger to the rise of vampire literature and introduce vampire to an even wider audiences and give this creature a popularity that has continued to the present day (Baresford, 2008:21-22; Orlomoski, 2011: 6-7; Punter&Byron; 2004: 268).

After having been introduced to the world of *Lord of The Rings, The Hobbit, and Harry Potter, Twilight* by Stephenie Meyer offers us a new sort of environment. Since it is published in 2005, it reached #5 on the New York Times Best Seller list and reached #1 actually month later in the same year. The phenomenality of this novel is so great as in that year it is named as one of the Publishers Weekly's Best Children Book of 2005. In 2008, the novel has been translate into 37 languages and has been sold for more than 17 millions copies in the world and has won as The Biggest Selling Books of 2008. Today, the book has been sold for more than 120 billions copies and is reprinted many times and

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grossed 370 millions dollars (Finkie, 2014; Lincoln, 2011; Vambooks, 2014).

Twilight deals with an ordinary girl named Isabella Swan. Bella moves from sunny Phoenix to rainy Forks, a small town in Washington, to live with her father after her mother remarries. In the first day of school, she is seated next to Edward Cullen in Biology class. In the first moment of their first meeting, Edward shows repulsive response to Bella. Thinking that Edward does not like her, as he disappears the day after, Bella is surprised by his warm welcome after he returns. Since then, the bond between them begins. This relationship gets closer after Edward comes to rescue Bella and stops a van with one hand before it crushes both of them. Later, Bella follows and annoys Edward with questions about him and the accident, which Edward refuses to answer and warns her to stay away from him. One day, Bella and her friends go to La Push beach for vocation in where she meets her old friend, Jacob. He tells her a story of his tribe legend about vampires and the Cullens'. After Bela hears the story and does her own research, she discovers that Edward is a vampire. Knowing the truth about who Edward really is, Bella gets more affected to Edward instead leaving him who desires of her blood. This passionate forbidden love gets a challenge when a group of nomadic vampires come visited the family. James, one of the nomadic vampire, is intrigued by Edward's protectiveness toward Bella and desires to hunt her for sport. Edward and his family risk their lifes to help Bella. The story ends when Edward and his family successfully rescue Bella before James kill her.

In this thesis I intend to explore *Twilight* popularity by analyzing the structures constructing the text and to find the special feature *Twilight* have behind its popularity. Therefore I will employ John G. Cawelti formulaic literature theory.

In the novel, Meyer introduces an extraordinary and very unique characters and characterizations through her vampire. Basically, what people know about vampire can be drawn like Dracula, a pale face, darkly dressed man with sharp white fangs and fears to crucifix and sensitive to sunlight (Barber, 1988:40-42; Bunson, 1993:8-9). In other hand, Meyer's vampire, such as Edward and his family, is described as a common man-like that has perfect physical

appearance, including their magnificent scent and beautiful voice, does not fear to crucifix and when he stands under sunlight, instead dying because of the light, this vampire skin will sparkle like diamonds. Furthermore, although both traditional vampire and Meyer's vampire drink blood, Meyer's vampire drinks animal blood than humans' (Meyer, 2005). Indeed the *Twilight* vampires are different to the previous vampires. However, their popularity cannot merely be judged through their appearance only. The concept of new vampire is unique but to define its popularity, the way how the text attracts readers' enthusiasm, it needs other elements that force the reader to like it.

Structuralist intentionally criticizes the structures that underlie narrative structures of literary text. In *Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*, by citing Roland Barthes view, it is stated (Shelden, 2005:62):

> "In a 1968 essay, Roland Barthes put the structuralist view very powerfully, and argued that writers only have the power to mix already existing writings, to reassemble or redeploy them; writers cannot use writing to 'express' themselves, but only to draw upon that immense dictionary of language and culture which is already written"

Literary texts are seen as that they embody narrative structures in which the structures are not original. Writers do not invent something new in their writings. There has been existing pattern becoming convention, a kind of recipe that can be used over and over again. These writers just employ these universal patterns again and mix with other existing pattern that is still not used before and then they have a new story. The works are constructed with same elements but in different combination. Therefore, as unique as the setting and the characters within literary texts, the structures constructing the stories, that make up the texts as a whole, are essentially similar.

Every story is constructed by familiar or same patterns which become the way how the people enjoy the reading activity. This familiarity within the text plays important role in bringing the readers into pleasurable moment. However, as a product of culture, literary text also has relation to cultural phenomena. In *Five Approaches of Literary Criticism*, Scott (1962:125) stated;

> "Art is not created in a vacuum, it is the work not simply of a

> person, but of an author fixed in time and space, answering to a community of which he is an important, because articulate part" (1962: 123)

In this view, literary text is not created by one person only but the culture in where the author lives and the ideology that the culture believes play important role in the creation of literary text. Popularity of certain novel is closely related to the cultural background in period of when the text is created. The work becomes popular because the culture response what the text offers as something valuable, entertaining and relaxing.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the description mentioned above, the research questions to discuss concern with the following questions,

1) How does Stephenie Meyer depict the formula in the *Twilight*?
2) From the portrayed formula, what makes *Twilight* popular and bestseller?

1.3 Purposes

Through the topic analyzing in this research, this thesis is expected that the result can enrich the way of analysis in structural study, especially in formulaic literature. Secondly, this thesis is aimed to know the depiction of formula within Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* through investigating the structures constructing the text. In case of popularity, there is a strong connection between the society and the culture represented the text. The third purpose of this thesis is to determine the cultural interest of this society through analyzing the formula constructing *Twilight* in order to find the reason of the novel popularity. Lastly, this thesis is beneficial to see as the way how authors write their works often represents the culture and by discussing the formula within the text and determine the cultural interest, the readers can see the cultural values behind the *Twilight*.

CHAPTER 2. THEORITICAL REVIEW

The previous research about *Twilight* is essential to see how the preceding researchers analyzed and presented the same data. This chapter provides two theses which has relation to the research and it also deals with explanation of the approach supporting the development of the thesis, the popular formula theory employed and the discussion about the culture and the popularity.

2.1 The Previous Researches

The first previous research is Elisabeth Johansson' thesis of Lulea University of Technology entitled *A Domesticated Vampires: How the Vampire Myth has changed since Bram Stoker's Dracula to Stephenie Meyer's Twilight*. In her research, she discussed how the vampire's myth has changed since Bram Stoker's Dracula to Stephenie Meyer *Twilight*. Through the analysis, she compared vampire myth in three different novels, Bram Stoker's Dracula; Anne Rice Interview with Vampires and Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight*. It is discovered that Dracula is similar to the folkloric vampire. He is repelled by garlic and holy item. In addition of his cruelty, Dracula is also drawn to sleep in the coffin and burn to ashes when he exposes under the sunlight. With Anne Rice's novel she discovered new elements added into vampire myth. The novel not only introduce vampire child but also the vampires is describe to have moral questions and question of god. They are care and have feeling to one another. More elements added in *Twilight*'s vampires. In her research, she found out that instead of being burned by the sun, the vampires are sparkling which makes them possible to be active during the day. Additionally, she discovered the novel introduced vegetarian vampires, whose diet based on animals' blood. In short, she concludes that vampires today have become integrated to society.

The second research written by Sheila Yulianti's of Jember Unioversity entitled *"The Comparative Study on The Vampire in Stephenie Meyer's Twilight and Vampire in Bram Stoker's Dracula"* focuses on comparison between two

types of vampire in two different novels. Yulianti aimed to find out how the authors describe these characters and also seek the similarities and the distinctions. Therefore, her research in this case is using comparative study to find the comparison between two types of vampire. Supposedly, Yulianti only compares the traditional and the modern vampire. In this research, there is no critic or further discussion about why she compares the vampires within the two novels.

The object analyzed by the previous researchers similar to this thesis's object. The two theses above discussed Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* vampire in different presentation. This undergoing research also analyses Meyer's *Twilight* but in different way. While both the previous these analyzed the vampires, this thesis discusses around the formula within the novel. The novel is very well-known as the text has become the world best seller novel from 2005 to 2009. This research focuses on the pattern constructing the text based on Cawelti's formulaic literature. Along the research, it will be discussed the way how *Twilight* is constructed by different pattern and in the final part of this thesis, the answer of the novel being popular will be provided by describing the cultural interest which is presumed have impact to attract readers in a worldwide.

2.2 Cawelti's Theory

In order to understand how and why *Twilight* become popular and even be a bestseller novel, I will use popular formula theory set up by John G. Cawelti. In his book *"Adventure, Mystery and Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture",* he establishes a speculative framework that become reasons why such literary works become popular. Etymologically, formula comes from latin word formula, meaning form, rule or method. In literature, Cawelti suggests two concept that are commonly used in term of formula, small form and larger plot.

Small form refers to conventional way of treating some specific thing or person. Conventional here means that the formula is commonly used in its standard meaning. It is usally explained through epithet and stereotype character in particular culture. Cawelti states "...19th century formulaic relation between blondness and sexual purity gave away in the 20th century to a very different

formula for blondes" (Cawelti, 1976: 5). This type of formula is a conventional form that is quite specific to a particular culture and period and it is not has same meaning outside this particular context.

Second concept commonly used of formula is larger plot. Larger plot refers to a general plot patterns that are not limited to a specific culture and period. The concept is found "..in those manuals for aspiring writers to give the recipe for twenty-one sure-fire plots- boy meets girl, boy and girl have a misunderstanding, boy gets girl" (Cawelti'1976: 5). It means the concept is a kind of rule to write certain work. Therefore, the pattern is embodied in many literary work as the formula be a kind of recipe need to follow by. Literary formula, then, is a combination of a number of specific cultural conventions with a more universal story form or archtype.

2.3 Characteristics of Formulaic Literature

Formula literature is, first of all, a kind of literary art (Cawelti, 1976:8). Formula as it has defined is a combination of conventional narrative structures used in many popular work. Formulaic literature is a kind of literary work that refers to a category of literary work in which the elements are so similar from one work to other by following kind of formula. According to the theory, this type of literature is characterized by its standardization and escapism.

2.3.1. Standardization

Standardization refers to similar understanding between writer and the readers. It is significance concept in term of formulaic literature related to attract the interest of the reader, that standardization reflects the first description of the story told about in the text. It is essential as without the same understanding , the artistic communication is not possible. Robert Warshow in Cawelti's states "...originality is to be welcomed only in the degree that it intensifies the expected experience without fundamentally altering it" (Cawelti, 1976: 9)

It means the reader can find enjoyment, satisfaction and emotional interest to the work they are familiar with. In this case, formulaic literature does not refer to originality but to unoriginality and familiarity. There is a standard structure need to be followed in relation to this kind of work. However the work have to

employ this conventional pattern, the work needs to have its own quality and characteristic to attract the reader. In that, the work may bring enjoyment and excitement .

2.3.2. Escapism

Escapism is related to the aesthetics taste in the literary works – the moment of pleasure, excitement, gratification, and enjoyment. Mimetic literature is a way of a writer creates their own work by reflecting and reinterpreting the world around them. Formulaic literatures are not fully not mimetic as they use such formulas that have been employed by many writers. What differ them is that "formulaic works necessarily stress intense and immediate kinds of excitement and gratification as opposed to the more complex and ambiguous analysis of character and motivation that characterize mimetic literature." (Cawelti, 1976:14)

Excitement and gratification or escapism involves recognizing two rather psychological needs that are the need of order and security and the need of insecurity and ambiguity. Good formulaic literatures are those which can serve these oppose needs in balance. Furthermore, Cawelti stated that "much of artistry of formulaic literature involves the creators' ability to plunge the readers into believable kind of excitement while at the same time confirming their confidence that in the formulaic world things always workout as they want them to" (Cawelti, 1976:16). In other words, the formulaic literature sets the readers up with expected predictable sets of conventions while at the same time allowing them to explore experiences within the known text. There are three literary devices used in formulaic literature that serve this escape moment, they are suspense, identification and the creating of a slightly removed, imaginary world.

2.4 Typology of Literary Formula

Cawelti (1976:37) states that "one of the important problems connected with the study of literary formulas is to arrive at some understanding of the general story types that underlie the diversity of formulaic constructions." As what it has explained before that formula is a pattern that constructing every story type and conventional pattern that emerges in many different culture. Therefore, formula embodied particular cultural images, myths and themes that then transform into a type of literary work.

In formula literature, some types of story could be crated. There is a type of story in which centralized to the heroic action, boy and girl relationship and then fall in love, or a story focuses on unraveling of same mystery in where it may contain the elements of heroism and romance. Cawelti (1976:39) distinguished these type of story into five primary type, they are adventure, romance, melodrama, mystery, and alien beings or states.

a. **Adventure**. This type of story is centralized in hero overcoming obstacles and dangers and succeeds to finish some important missions. In adventure story the heroes usually gets some benefits such as a beautiful attractive lady. The true focus of this type is the hero and the dangers he has to overcome. The relation between hero and the villains is the essence of this type of story. Cawelti suggested that there are two pattern in which hero can be described; first as a superhero with exceptional strength and ability or, second, as a common people, at the beginning of the story at least, and becomes more important and stronger later.

b. **Romance** is a feminine story equivalent of the adventure story, which mostly has female protagonist. In that, romance might contain the elements of adventure. However, the obstacles and the dangers the heroine needs to overcome as a mean to challenge and strengthen the love relationship. Therefore what is called romance then is that love story in which the essence of the story is the triumph of love by overcoming all obstacles.

c. **Mystery.** Difference to adventure and romance that could be have certain combination with some other formulas, mystery type story has "a dominant formulaic principle in its own right, with the single exception of one of the greatest and most fruitful of all formulas" (Cawelti, 1976:43). This type is centralized in the investigation and discovery of hidden secrets in which the problems always lie on rational solution. The essence of this story is placed in its rationalization and mystification.

d. **Melodrama.** This type of story is the most complex of all, that melodrama usually combines more than one of different of fantasy formula. Cawelti

(1976:45) stated that melodrama is "the fantasy of a world that operates according to our heart's desire in contrast to the other formula types that are fantasies of particular actions or states of being that counter some of our deepest fears and concentrate on particular wishes for victory or love or knowledge." It means that melodrama contains all the other formulas that the combination of the action, mystery and love are used to show the sense of "rightness"-right or wrong, good and evil (Cawelti, 1976: 47)

e. **Alien Beings or States** is the story that involve into the horror story, which usually represents the depredation and ultimate destruction of some monsters; such as zombie, werewolf, Dracula, alien, ghost, etc. This type of story also refers to science fiction, like the topic of dystopia. Cawelti (1976:49) stated "though most science fiction does not aim for the effect of horror in the fashion of ghost and monster stories, there close connection between these different modes of using alien experiences is suggested by the role of science in a classic horror story."

These five types of story are just the common type of literary formulas. Cawelti said that there are many other important types other than these five general types he suggested. Gothic romance for example is the combination of gothic, which contains elements of mystery and horror, and romance.

2.5 Formula and Culture

Formula is a combination of conventional narrative structures which is characterized by its standardization and escapist elements with cultural values. There, three essential points can be taken, for instance standardization, escape, and cultural values. These points cannot be parted as the popularity of certain stories is the result of the combination of these three. The significant concept in formulaic literature is convention which is made up by people selection. Moreover, Cawelti (197620) stated if formula is cultural product. Thus there are close connections between formula and the people and their culture. In other words, formula can influence culture since formula is the product of culture.

In order to create an effective story, certain archetypal patterns are essential. The nature of which can be determined by looking at many different sorts of stories. These story patterns must be

embodied is specific images, themes and symbols that are current
in particular culture and period (Cawelti, 1976:30)

It has been suscussed before if formulaic literature is characterized by familiarity which makes the reader enjoy certain stories. Yet this convention only is not enough to bring the readers to the moment of escape. In order to maximize the escapist elements, the stories have to embody the values which are enjoyed by the reader. The stories are determined by some fashions, the cultural values the readers understand and enjoy, to be popular and accept. Those stories which are not popular are caused by the lack of this fashion. If the fashion changes, the culture will evolve with this fashion. Formula as the cultural product will also develop, change and destroy previous formula as the cultural values people enjoyed change.

Cawelti proposes four relationships between formulaic literature and the culture that produce and enjoy them (Cawelti, 1976:35);

1. Formula stories affirm existing interest and attitudes by presenting an imaginary world that is aligned with these interest and attitudes.

2. Formula resolves tensions and ambiguities resulting from the conflicting interest of different groups within the culture or from ambiguous attitudes toward particular culture.

3. Formula enable the audience to explore in fantasy the boundary between the permitted and the forbidden and to experience in a carefully controlled way the possibility of stepping across this boundary.

4. Literary formulas assist in the process of assimilating changes in values to traditional imaginative constructs.

Formula literature as a study is about how all the elements of a story are put together create certain pattern in the construction of the text. In relation to popularity, the theory proposes if the pattern within the text is a reflection of culture that is enjoyed by people in particular culture and period. Certain stories become popular because "they successfully articulate a pattern of fantasy that is at least acceptable to if not preferred by the cultural groups who enjoy them"

(Cawelti, 1976:34). In short, if the story is not good enough as a story, if the story does not capture the imagination, the story will not succeed.

This undergoing research wants to discuss the problem based on this thought. Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* become a trend and the world best seller novel since the novel is published in 2005. If the text is seen through the pattern constructed the novel, which are presumed to be unoriginal, the pattern planted there is based on existing pattern which has been known by many people. Nevertheless, *Twilight* becomes popular. By employing Cawelti's theory, this thesis is aimed to analyze of how this pattern are accepted and enjoyed while the pattern is familiar to he audiences.
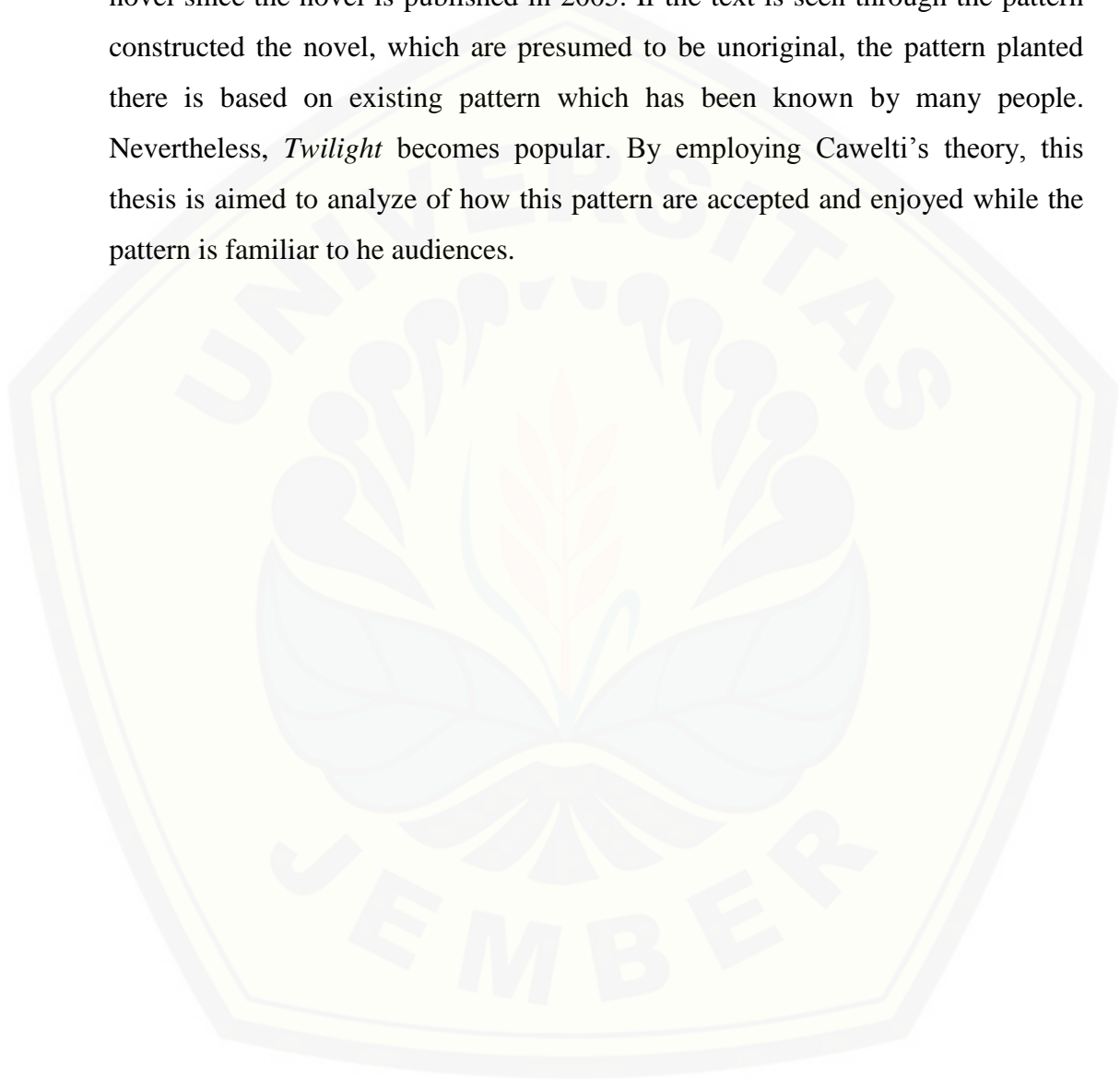
CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the writer is going to describe the research methods done in accomplishing the thesis. Research method is one of the essential aspects to guide the researchers. Related to this thesis, the methods are divided into three parts; they are the type of research, the data collection, the data analysis and data processing. Each of them is explained in the following subchapter.

3.1 The Type of Research

This thesis uses qualitative research. Qualitative research is empirical research where the data are not in the form of number, instead it is in the form of words (either written or spoken form) and visual images (picture) (Blaxter, 1996:60). This qualitative research is presented in descriptive way. Therefore, the data required are in the narrations and statements form. Description and interpretation are the way to analyze the qualitative research. The data from *Twilight* are selected and collected in a form of quotation. In presenting the result of this analysis, it is described by taking some quotation from the novel and related data about the formula and culture who read it to support the analysis.

3.2 The Data Collection

In this research, the writer utilized library research, which is done by collecting data from books, thesis, journal, and any other written documents (Kothari, 2004:7). Data can be collected from documents, interviews, observations, and questionnaires that can be used as part of the research strategies and approach identified (Blaxter, 1996:59). The data are classified into primary data and secondary data. The primary data of this research is taken from Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight*. Since formula literature needs the whole literary aspects to be analyzed, the primary data involve on the facts of events in the story. The secondary data can be defined as the data that has been already collected and analyzed by others. Blaxter states that "secondary data is an existing data which presents interpretations, conclusions, or additional knowledge (Blaxter,

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1996:151). Secondary data are those showing the convention of the patterns constructing the novel and those which related to *Twilight* popularity, the postmodern culture; mormon ideology; and vampire transformation The data is taken from thesis, journals, articles, and any books including websites related to the topic discussed to support the analysis.

3.3 The Data Processing and Data Analysis

Data processing is done by categorizing the information acquired. All of data are taken from novel, articles, journals and some source books related the discussion about formulaic structures and the novel popularity. In order to find the answer of the problem mentioned before, this study uses inductive method. Inductive method is a method which establishes from the specific to general explanation. This undergoing research begins with the analysis of the formula within *Twilight* and then the analysis result will be related to cultural background to answer the reason of the novel popularity. Therefore, this thesis will be conducted into several phases.

After the novel is read, it is found that Meyer's *Twilight* is constructed by three different patterns. Those patterns are blended in certain ways so that the novel can be read as something new. The novel shows that the setting, mood, suspense and the characters are formerly following the gothic pattern while the way how the story is narrated and the main characters development embody the romance convention. Moreover, through the development of the story-telling, there is a sense of fairy tales which implies within the text. Therefore in conducting the discussion, these three aspects are analyzed to find the formula of *Twilight*.

In analyzing the gothic aspects, I have to examine how this gothic elements influence the construction of the novel. Through the analysis, four basic features which are presumed making the novel considered gothic are determined. These elements consist of the setting, the atmosphere, the female protagonist and the evil villain. These four elements are discussed in separate ways.

The second aspect to be discussed is related to romance pattern. This thesis employs the romance convention formula proposed by Janice Radway. In