

CHAPTER 2

LITERARY REVIEW

In chapter 2, the writer would like to present theories of some experts that support her topic of the paper. She would like to reveal the theme of John Steinbeck's The Pearl through the analysis of the nature of the novel. Those theories are about character, plot, motivation, seclusion and theme. She would like to analyze those elements one by one. Starting from the definition of character, including its types and clasifications, and followed by the explanation the rest of the elements, she tries to apply those theories in her analysis.

2.1 The Definitions of Character

Character is one of the most significant elements in literary work – in this case, a novel – beside other elements such as plot, theme, setting and point of view. A well-known novel usually has an interesting story which is supported by interesting characters, and the above elements.

An author may create the characters of his novel through his imagination or based on his experience. He is completely free in creating his characters. He holds his own control of those characters to have a life and he creates their trouble or whatever he wants to happen in his story as if they are puppets. He gives his characters' thoughts and feeling as if the characters live and represent a real life in the novel. He describes the characters through what they say, do and think. Gill (1995) says :

“A character is an identity which is made up by appearance, conversation, action, name and (possibly) thoughts going on in the head” (p.127).

Character has a variety of identities. Character can be developed and become more complex. He has many kinds of personality traits which formulate him to become a complete character.

2.1.1 Major and Minor Character

There are some classifications of characters in terms of their function in the story, i.e. **Main or Major character** and **Minor character(s)**. Main / Major character is mostly complex and is fully developed otherwise he is not concerned by readers.

(Forster in Kirsznner & Mendell, 2000 : 93).

Main character is a character that the author focuses on. He appears most of the time in the story and in it he or she usually is the most important character. In the writer's opinion, The Pearl has **Kino** as its main character, because Kino is the character that determines the plot of the story, and appears mostly in every chapter. In other words, Kino is the central cynosure of the story. Kino's personality traits change after the pearl's discovery : from a person who is friendly and calm to a bad-mannered person who has an uncontrolled ambition.

The rest of the characters are called **minor characters**. They have a tendency to be called flat characters because they have no significant changes in their behaviour.

The following is the statement of Kirsznner & Mendell (2000) :

“Minor characters are frequently not well developed. Often they are flat, perhaps acting as foils for the protagonist”. (p.94)

There are so many minor characters in The Pearl, that are classified in terms of their functional gradation. They are Juana, Coyotito, Juan Tomas, Apolonia, doctor, the doctor's servant, neighbours, beggars, buyers, priest, strangers and the trackers.

Juana is Kino's wife who always prays to God for having good luck. She also has an important function in the novel because she is the one who first realizes that the pearl is a kind of a threat for her family life. Coyotito is Kino's and Juana's little son who is hurt by a scorpion's sting. He is, at first, a victim of his parents' economic condition and at the end, he becomes a victim of his parents' greediness. At the end of the story, he is killed by a bunch of people called trackers.

Juan Tomas is Kino's older brother who loves and supports Kino. He is still able to warn Kino about the danger of possessing a great valuable pearl. He is also a brave and kind man. It is seen when he helps him by offering his house as a hidden place for Kino and Juana. Apolonia is Juan Tomas' wife who takes care of their four children. She is a kindhearted lady because she agrees to give Kino and Juana a place to hide.

Neighbours are people who live around Kino's house. They like to help each others when there is a problem. It is seen when the baby is sick , they come to Kino's house to see what happened and follow Kino to see the doctor in the town. The Doctor is an arrogant person who lives in the town and is a very money-oriented. The Doctor's servant is a man who comes from the same race as Kino. The priest is a person who is interested in money just like everyone else. He convinces Kino to give him some money.

The buyers are people who, in fact, like to cheat poor people like Kino. They try to give the lowest price to the fisherman who tries to sell his pearl. The beggars are homeless people who sleep outside the church. The stranger is a man who sneaks in and tries to steal the pearl and to kill Kino in his wooden house. The trackers are a bunch of people who follow Kino and Juana from the village and try to steal the pearl. They kill Coyotito by shooting him while resting in a cave.

2.1.2 Round and Flat Characters

According to the types of character, there are two kinds of distinguishing characters in the story. They are **round character** and **flat character**.

What **round character** says and does might be so complex, complicated and changeable without shocking us as readers by their inconsistent attitude.

(Ritcher, 1981 : 4). He may have some changes such as thoughts and traits from the beginning, the middle, until the end of the story. He may change his personality because of the changing of his life condition such as a desire to have a better life. Kino, for instance, who at first is a very simple and obedient, later becomes a very ambitious and hard headed man.

Forster in Kirszner & Mendell (2000) says :

“A character as round is well-developed, closely involved in and responsive to the action” (p.93).

Flat character is the one that is almost static and makes no change. (Forster in Kirszner & Mendell, 2000 : 93)

A flat character acts consistently because he is only influenced by one or two traits or we can say he is a caricature for he has a simple characteristic. Gill (1995) says in the following :

“A flat character has a few characteristic, while a round one has several” (p.130).

He has no changes in his behaviour or personality traits. He does not have an outstanding characteristic so that the role of this character is not really important as that of round character. However, he is still needed anyway. In some stories, he can help the development of round character. He can support round character to do something, give opinion and that can be one of those who help the round character's change. He lacks of

development and he never surprises the readers. Sometimes, a flat character becomes the causes of the main character's change.

As we can see in the novel that one of the flat characters is Juana. Juana is considered as a flat character because she only has a few characteristic that does not change from the first time she appears until the end of the story. She is an obedient wife who always follows what her husband says.

2.2 Motivation

A character will not completely work out in taking part in the story unless he or she has no motivation that may foster his or her deed. Motivation is a force or a drive of internal pressure to behave in a particular way. (Klein, 1982 : 32)

In other words, motivation is a kind of urging which emerges from the characters themselves either consciously or unconsciously to reach certain purposes in their life. This is Kirszner & Mendell (2000) statement :

“A character motivation is the reasons behind his or her behaviour”. (p.95)

We consider that the characters in the story may act on the similar way as the people in real life do. A round character, for example, is a complex person that possibly changes his character. He or she has a lot of problems in his or her life, so that the problem can motivate him to find the way to solve or to reach certain purposes. He is motivated to do things, particularly when he wants to achieve something.

The motivation in Kino's changes appears and develop because there are opportunities to happen. First, the accident when Coyotito gets hurt because of the scorpion. Second, Kino's discovery of the pearl. Those two events open Kino's eyes to a

larger world where he thinks he can get a better life and reach a new world that he had never experienced before.

The fact that Kino lacks of money to cure his baby and that he loves his family, pushes him to take a risky and dangerous decision to sell the pearl in the capital city – an unfamiliar place to him that is full of challenges and dangers. A character's motivation may appear in the middle of the plot. The motivation comes before the actions that the character does.

2.3 Plot

Apart from the above elements, plot is very essential in a story. Plot consists of successive events or actions which are arranged in certain order and related to each other. If we notice the plot carefully, we can see that first event causes second event. The second event causes third event and so on until those events becomes one unity that is tied together or connected one to another. In other words, that connected events have cause and effect relationship. The following is the statement of Perrine (1984) :

“Plot is the sequence of incidents or events of which a story is composed, presented in a significant order”. (p.41)

To expose what the story of the novel talks about is one of the ways to analyze a plot. In the exposition, we need to explain and describe what the significant events happen in the story. At the end of the story, we can know the ending of the story whether it is a happy or unhappy ending . By exposing the whole story, we can easily identify the entire conflict, rising actions, top of the conflict (climax), and the falling actions.

After exposing the entire story, the next step we should take is to identify the rising actions. This is time where the conflict begins to appear. Conflict is a part of plot

where the problem, the situation, the character and everything inside the novel become more complicated. Perrine (1984) says :

“Conflict — a clash of actions, ideas, desires, or wills.
(p.42)

The main character involves deeply in the development of the plot. He can determine the conflict, the climax and even the solution of his or her problem. He or she also has ideas and tendency to make all things possible to happen. He or she is the one who is much more dominant and is able to create some significant actions and makes it become more complicated until it reaches the top of the conflict, that is the climax. He may have conflict against his mind, heart, people around him and even something that has power to him. The following is the statement of Perrine (1984) :

“ The conflict may be physical, mental, emotional, or moral” (p.42).

We need to identify the climax of the story then. It is time where the main character faces the most difficult time in his life. He experiences many forces from his surroundings including those which come from himself. He will get his dreams, ambition, emotion or everything mixed-up together and makes him determine a decision to get his problem solved.

Falling action is part of the story that we have to identify next. This is the time where the climax meets some solution, whether or not the solution leads to a success or not, happiness or sadness. There are some actions that the main character takes in order to get his conclusion for what he has experienced. This is what we call as falling action of the story.

2.4 Definition of Seclusion

In the plot, we can see the group of important actions that the character takes. A seclusion condition may be appeared in the part of plot, whether it is in rising action or in the climax.

Seclusion is a condition where somebody keep himself apart from the others. A secluded man may become isolated and uncontrollably develop his mind or ambition that may lead him to catastrophe. The following is the statement of Mahoney (1961) :

“When a man is separated from his fellowmen and the ties of human sympathy and affection are thus weakened or severed, he suffers accordingly”. (p.39)

In The Pearl, for example, Kino meets his difficult time when his ambition becomes uncontrolled. Kino’s ‘heart’ and ‘head’ are in imbalance. ‘Heart’ is concerned with emotion, ambition and feeling. ‘Head’ refers to logic, consideration and control. So, it is possible if one of them, either it is ‘head’ or ‘heart’ becomes more outstanding than the other. In other words, that the ‘head’ is stronger than the ‘heart’ or vice versa.

2.5 What is Theme?

Since theme is the goal of the writing, the writer will, of course, include it in the discussion. A brief statement of what the story tells about is not a work that we call a theme (Marsh, 1995:2). That brief statement is usually called a summary and it is different from theme.

What is exactly the theme? Theme is the story’s element through which the writer conveys her messages. Theme is very essential in the story. It is the foundation of what the writer is going to talk about. It is the central, main idea of the story.

Perrine (1984) says in the following :

“The theme of a piece of fiction is its controlling idea or its central insight. It is the unifying generalization about life stated or implied by the story”. (p.150)

Theme must state something that happens in real life. So that people can easily understand the problem that the story presented. It might be about love, happiness, despair, hope and the like. Those are things that commonly happen in our daily life. So, readers can easily understand and interpret the theme of one story to be taken as a moral lesson. DiYanni (2001) also says :

“Simply put, a story’s theme is its idea or point formulated as a generalization”.(p.86)

Different readers may differently interpret the theme of a story. It depends on the perspective of their own. However, because of the theme is expressed as a generalization, readers can accept those different interpretation as long as it makes sense.

The theme cannot be seen directly in the story but it is only indirectly felt by feeling after finishing reading the whole story. Due to its status as an abstract work, the author’s meaning is usually not openly stated in the paragraphs.

The theme can be seen from the actions carried out by the character. A main character, for example, is the one who is responsible for revealing the theme because he is the one who the author focuses on. The changing of this character can support a story’s theme, as it does in a John Steinbeck story, The Pearl.