

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical Framework

When studying literature and making research of literature, one has to know and also translate one's experience in literature in an intellectual terms by giving the details on the explanation presented in the research. Therefore, theories and methods are needed in order to give detailed explanation. Theory places an important role in every research analysis.

Theory is important to analyze and doing research on a certain object. Theory is a kind of tool to do analysis, and approach is a kind of access to study. Theory is defined as a set of reasoned ideas intended to explain facts or events, and approach is defined as a way leading to something. Without using theory and approach the analysis will be too general and too far from the topic that will be analyzed, because theory and approach are also playing role as the limitation of the problem.

According to Wellek, literary study is not merely closely related to the history of civilization but indeed identical with it (20). He also stated that every object or class objects is most efficiently and rationally used for what it is, or is centrally (29). To obtain a better understandings about Violet, the main character in the novel, her struggles, and the theme of the novels written by Lemony Snicket *A Series Of Unfortunate Events*, the intrinsic approach will be applied as well. Since the object of the research belongs to children literature, thus, the children

literature theory such as magic and maturation as fantasy by Bramwell will be used to give a better explanation and interpretation about the novels.

2.1.1. New Criticism

To obtain better understanding about the text or story, a reader usually only focuses on the story and the text or language that is already written on the novel or text. They do not absorb other elements to be well reading in order to figure out what other problems occur in the story they have read. Meanwhile, there are many supporting elements that many help the reader to understand the story well. New Critics claimed, their interpretations stayed within the context created by the text itself. Because New Critics believed their interpretations were based solely on the context created by the text and language provided by the text, it is called critical practice intrinsic criticism, to denote that New Criticism stayed within the confines of the text itself (Tyson 132). The statement is also supported by Rene Wellek and Austin Warren in *Theory of Literature*, that is, the natural and sensible starting point for work in literary scholarship is the interpretation and the analysis of the works of literature themselves. After all, only the works themselves justify all our interest in the life of an author, in his social environment and the whole process of literature (139). Those argumentations then lead to the understanding that the work of art itself is always related to its practical application of the theory. The most important thing in a literary work is the analysis of the intrinsic elements which consist of theme, setting, character, characterization, plot, symbol, and rhythm. In this research, to analyze the novel,

three aspects of the intrinsic elements which consist of character, conflict and theme will be used.

The research will be based on the character of Violet Baudelaire as one of the main characters in the novels of *A Series Of Unfortunate Events*, and will be supported by the struggled and the conflicts between Violet and Mr. Poe and Count O'laf, her younger brother and sister, and her surrounding, in order to get a better life after her parents died. Then, the basic motives that may guide Violet in her attempt to survive in her struggle together with her younger brother and sister against the enemies will be identified as well. From the motives, the central idea that becomes the theme of the novels will be found.

2.1.1.1. Character

Character is a person or thing in a novel, play or film that becomes one of the main points of a story. There are different kinds of characters. As stated in the Faith Home School website that characters can be The Protagonist (heroes), the main character around whom most of the work revolves. The Antagonists, the person who the protagonist is against. This is often the villain, but could be a force of nature, set of circumstances, an animal, etc. The Major, these are the main characters. They dominate the story. Often there are only one or two major characters. The Minor, these are the characters who help tell the major character's tale by letting the major characters interact and reveal their personalities, situations, stories. They are usually static (unchanging). The Stereotypical (stock), this is for example, the absent-minded professor, the jolly fat person, the clueless blonde. While the Foils, are the people whose job are to contrast with the major

character. This can happen in two ways. One: the foil can be the opposite of the major character, so the major's virtues and strengths are that much "brighter" in reflection. Two: the foil can be someone like the major character, with lighter versions of the major's virtues and strengths so that the major comes off as even stronger (Faith Home School, 1). But in this analysis, the writer will analyze the major or main character and the minor characters only. As stated by Gill, characters can be divided into two types: major or main characters and minor characters (91). Major characters are characters who are involved in most actions of the work or story, it can be said that they have an essential function in establishing "the soul" of the story. While, minor characters have less function than major character because they only support the major character, however minor character sometimes can be very functional to support the main character's image.

Characters in any literary works have been specially created by the authors. When authors create characters, they select some aspects of ordinary people, develop some of those aspects whilst playing down others, and put them together as they please. The way they created characters finally produced fictional characters. Sometimes, the audiences or readers felt that they knew very well the character they saw in a work like it seems alive. In his book, Gill stated that the reader or the audience came to a point that there are some similarities in the literary work and in the reality (90-91).

Gill argued that there are two variants of characters, round and flat characters. How can we distinguish whether the characters are round or flat? Round characters are full, complex and rich, while flat characters are simple ones.

Another way of distinguishing between characters of a wide and those of a narrow range is to call one open and the other closed. These terms are more concerned with the capacity of characters to change; an open character can grow and develop, whereas a closed one is fixed and unchanging (94). Hence, a round character can be distinguished from how the characters act, it is dynamic that can grow or change or even static that is fixed and unchanging.

As stated in *An Introduction to Reading and Writing* by Edgar V. Robert, he stated that character in literature generally, and in fiction specifically, is an extended verbal representation of a human being, the inner self that determines thought, speech, and behavior. Through dialogue, action, and commentary, the author captures some of the interaction of character and circumstance. In studying a literary character, it is expected to determine the character's major trait or traits. A trait is typical or habitual mode of behavior (143-4).

From the study of character's personality, the understanding of the character can be growing up. Because sometimes we found a particular trait may be considered as the primary characteristic of a person. As Robert stated that at the time a character is being observed, it is essential to not only regarding its physical description, but also to be sure to relate the physical description to mental or psychological description that can be figured out from the character's reaction, think, and manner toward various situations and events (144). Meanwhile, the character is like human as well has complex mind of various traits, qualities, motives, desire and conflict (91). There are five effective ways to analyze a character. First, we come to know character by what others think of them. Second, we make judgment about them based upon what they look like. Third, we learn

about them by how they speak in the dialogue. Fourth, we learn a good deal about them based upon what they do not do. Fifth, we look based upon what they themselves think (Guches 69).

Thus, the development of the character's behavior, reaction, psychology and ideas will be understood by Guches' method ways to judge the characters from many sides. Besides that, by understanding the characters deeply also can be one of important points in analyzing the characters' complex minds. Motives and desire behind the character's action can also be found by analyzing the characters.

2.1.1.2. Conflict

A story without conflict is not a story; because conflict is one of the important things that compose a good story, conflict is also a supporting idea in the plot. Gill stated that people must never forget the pleasure of a good story as one of the basic pleasures of literature. A good story is a story that invites and answer question as to why one event follows another (121).

Literature must always be interesting; it must always have a structure and an aesthetic purpose, a total coherence and effect. It must, of course, stand in recognizable relation to life, but the relations are very various, the life can be heightened or burlesqued or antithesized; it is in any case a selection, of a specifically purposive sort from life (Wellek, Warren 212). Conflict on the story or literature is usually based on the example of real life, but it is possibly modified by the author to be more dramatic or burlesque to get the attention from the readers.

Wellek and Warren mentioned that it is customary to speak of all plots as involving conflict (man against nature, or man against other men, or man fighting himself); but then, like plot, the term must be given much latitude. Conflict is 'dramatic', suggests some matching of approximately equal forces, suggest action and counteraction (217). To achieve something in dealing with the conflicts, there must be a motivation and desire behind actions done by the characters. Based on Wellek and Warren's arguments it is clear that a good story is a story which contains complex events, which are called conflicts, and those conflicts can reveal some actions by the characters.

According to Dowling, there are two main conflicts in stories: external and internal. A struggle between characters and an outside force is an external conflict. Characters may face several types of outside forces. The outside force may also be forces of nature. While a struggle that takes place in the characters' mind is called internal conflict. Sometimes, characters must deal with their own mixed feelings or emotions. It is when characters may have to decide between right or wrong or between two solutions to a problem (Dowling). The external conflict is for instance, conflict with others which occurs when a character meets other characters who have contrasting desires or ideas. It usually happens when two or more characters are pushed to have same aim and purpose with their mind. Internal conflict, for instance, occurs when the characters have to deal with the conflicts in their mind and feeling, and this conflict can change their emotion or characterization.

Conflict is the major problem that makes plot rises into climax. The interesting level about any work of literature is usually based on the conflict

which is faced by the character. It will arise when characters are faced with some great source of difficulties. These conflicts then bring the story to a central idea of the whole story of the work.

2.1.1.3. Setting

As stated by Gill, setting is a broad word that covers the places in which characters are presented; the social context of characters, such as their families, friends and class; the customs, beliefs and rules of behavior of their society; the scenes that are the background of situation for the events of the novel; and the total atmosphere, mood or feel that is created by these. When studying a novel, people find that setting is one of point that should be observed because it can make a contribution to the book. A successful setting is one which is appropriate to the section of the novel in which it appears and also, possibly, as a whole (106).

As Endriga stated that setting include the background, atmosphere or environment in which the characters live and move, and usually including the physical characteristics of the surroundings. It enables the reader to get a better envision how a story unfolds by relating necessary physical details of a piece of literature. A setting may be simple or elaborated, used to create ambiance, lend credibility or realism, emphasize or accentuate, organize, or even distract the reader (Online).

2.2. Review of Related Studies

When writing the thesis, information cannot simply endure and draw on the data and information from the books or other thesis sources. In order to make

a perfect analysis, the information that comes from other sources besides the novel is important also, for instance, the material which formed as a journal, biography and article that contain the study related to *A Series Of Unfortunate Events* or some issues in novel and intrinsic approach are needed.

The first research related to the study of New Criticism is the a thesis written by Yuli Mistiawanti titled *The Struggle Of A Single Father In Chris Gardner's Movie The Pursuit Of Happyness: Intrinsic Approach*, here she analyze the movie of *The Pursuit Of Happyness* and she conclude that the character of Chris Gardner's behavior and reaction toward his problems are also motivated by some American basic values and also American dream. Mistiawanti states that the most essential thing in a literary work is the analysis of the intrinsic elements which consist of theme, setting, character, and plot.

The second source is an article wrote by Angela E. Hubler in her journal titled *Beyond the Image: Adolescent Girls, Reading, and Social Reality*. Hubler argued that while girls may be inspired by such novels, they may also be offered a false sense of optimism about how oppression might be overcome. Certainly, both of the novels while the writer discuss above suggest that if girls just prove themselves to be as competent as boys, they will be treated as equals.

The sources described above are really helpful to inform about the data which is used to gain the analysis. It also helps the writer to maintain a good comprehension on the main character Violet and also to elaborate a deeper analysis of the novel.