

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Theoretical Framework

The writer of this thesis will apply theory, approach, as well as related studies in the effort of supplying reliable information concerning with the core of the analysis. The aim of this chapter is to explain further about the theory and the approach used as the tools in analyzing *Little Women*, a novel written by Louisa May Alcott. As a deeper analysis about the aspects of the work in detail conducted by the writer, it is appropriate to use the intrinsic approach which is based on the theory of New Criticism as the main tool and Piaget's moral development theory as the supporting tool of the analysis. Since the theory focuses on the intrinsic elements of the theory, it is hoped to give a significant support to the analysis of Jo's character in the novel.

1. Intrinsic Approach

According to Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, the natural and sensible starting point for work in literary scholarship is the interpretation and the analysis of the work of literary themselves (139). They also emphasize that the first and the most prominent concentration on this study should be directed toward the literary work itself. Besides, Abram also stated in Kenan's and Holman's that the literary work is most significant an object in itself (305).

Based on their statements, the writer intends to use Intrinsic Approach, which means to emphasize the analysis on the intrinsic elements. The application of this theory must be based on the literary work itself that is why in doing the analysis the writer concentrates merely on the novel as the object of the study. The purpose is to gain and achieve expected results as stated in the objective of the study. Therefore, the intrinsic elements are to be discussed in order to give clearer understanding about the story and to reveal the meaning behind it.

The writer of this thesis believes that the theory of characterization, theory of conflict and the theory of moral development are very useful since they help the thesis writer to analyze the novel well. That is why those three theories are applied to be used in this thesis analysis.

a. Characterization

In real life, people's character traits are unique and separable from all other identities. Sometimes, people do not care about the image that they have of their own identities-as their pattern, their secret, their characteristics, still people think of it as discrete, isolate and unique (Potter, 4). By experiencing a number of situations, relationships and contexts in everyday lives, someone will be able to describe one's character.

Characterization is the technique that an author uses to describe someone's image or character, and the personality of the people that he creates in a story. Each character has its own characteristic that differentiates him from the other characters.

The thesis writer believes that the method of characterization is very important in a novel. An author will be able to describe the personality, the appearance, the moral attributes, and also the attitude of a character through the method of characterization. James L. Potter also says, “a person’s nature may be revealed by what he says and does and by the clothes, the house and furnishing, and the friends he chooses’ (3). In real life, people get the image of a person from environment around them. They can see what he or she is as from others say about him or her and from how they behave toward him or her (Potter, 4).

According to Potter, there are four ways in which an author indicates and describes a character. First, he describes his characters by giving the character’s physical appearance or personal description. Second, he describes his characters through their speech. The author illustrates the kind of language spoken by the people and their manner of speaking. Third, he describes his characters by showing the character’s external action. Fourth, he describes his characters through what others say about a character.

An author sometimes uses his personal experiences to put in his fictional works. He may confer his god-like power and privilege in his private self, secret, or entirely solitary. An author takes control in a story that he creates and he can draw the characters as he wishes to be. That is why characterization plays an important role in the works of literature.

Without character, there will be no story, creating characters in a story, an author will enable the reader to get what he wants to say or tell. Besides,

the characters in the story can also arouse the reader's empathy and sympathy which may bring the readers to experience the reality of the fictional world himself (Dietrich, 75).

A character in a work of fiction may be realized in number of ways. He may be a flat or a round character. According to Paul A. Parrish, a flat character is a human type, often a stereotype, who is not really a complete person at all (28). Flat characters are not interesting, sometimes are boring, because they are simple and limited. This character is usually static and has no appreciable change as the story progresses. Until at the end of the story, they remain as described at the beginning. Neither do they change nor develop. A round character, on the other hand, is usually dynamic and interesting because of the developments he undergoes. He may be changeable, and sometimes he cannot be predicted. So it is very important to pay attention to the changes which happen to him from the beginning of the story to the end.

In the *Little Women*, the main character, Josephine March, is considered as a round character in the story. Her character undergoes the process of changing which changes her role and her character traits. That is why, the writer thinks that it is important to dig deeply in her character since conflicts and other problems mostly overwhelm and linger with the main character. It is also necessary to have full understanding about her feeling, attitude, mind, thought, personality, opinion and anything that affect her.

b. Conflict

The word conflict comes from the latin word 'contra' which means against and 'figere' which means to strike, (Barry, 23). Conflict is the struggle that grows out of the interplay of the two opposing forces in a plot. It means that someone will be in conflict when someone or something strikes the intention of a character. This kind of conflict is also defined as the process of social interaction in which two persons struggle with one another for some commonly value (Popenoe, 29). A conflict provides the element of interest, suspense and tension in any forms of fiction, whether it is a drama, novel or a short story (Holman, 29). The relationship among different characters will apparently arouse conflicts. In a conflict, there is always a beginning, a development until it reaches a climax and then the end. The climax is usually the most exciting and tense part of the story. In general, a conflict often ends in unhappiness. Yet, a conflict can serve as a force that integrates people on each side of the conflict, bonding them firmly in a group. A conflict may also lead to a needed social change, forcing the people to face up their problem (Popenoe, 30).

Conflicts in literature are divided into two types; external and internal conflict. In external conflict, the main character struggles against another character, nature or society. The other one is internal conflict in which the character struggles against some elements of his own personality. Internal conflict is the conflict of a character against himself (Dietrich and Sundell, 116) when someone faces a kind of complicated situation in his life, in making

a decision he has to consider all the alternative choices in his life concerning with his circumstance, for example, a woman who has to choose between her marriage or her carrier. In this case, that person has an internal conflict.

In the internal conflict, the main character has to struggle with himself to reach his goal (Holman, 119). He has to know what he really wants and which one is the best for him because there will always be alternative choices. Then, he will have to decide between those choices.

External conflict is a struggle between man and man or between man and society (Shaw, 91-92). A character may have external conflict when he has to deal with other characters or society. The main characters and the other characters appear with their own images and attitudes, which may lead them into conflicts, for instance, two men compete to get the same job. In *Little Women*, Alcott gives a picture of Josephine's conflicts; both external and internal ones, which need to be solved before she achieves her moral development.

2. Theory of Moral Development

Because the novel contains Jo's process to develop her behaviour and attitude toward other people in her society, then the Psychological theory of Moral Development is needed to help analyzing Jo's characterization. Morality is about what is right and what is wrong, and also about fairness. When a person does something right, it leads him or her to reward. On the contrary, when a person does something bad then it will lead him or her to

punishment. Justice or fairness depends on the morality level of the person. According to Piaget, there are two stages of moral development (60). The first stage is Heteronomous morality while the second stage is Autonomous morality.

Heteronomous Morality also known as the stage of “Moral Realism” or “Morality Constraint.” “Heteronomous” means being object to rule imposed by others (Piaget, 61). During this stage young children are always faced with parents and others adults telling them what to do and not to do.

There is a complete acceptance by the children toward adult’s instruction. What is assumed to be right is when children obey the adults and rules. The action of breaking the rules leads automatically to punishment. In this case, fairness is due to parents’ or adults’ decision.

The second stage of moral development is Autonomous Morality, also known as “Morality of Cooperation” (Piaget, 60). In this stage children are continually interacting and cooperating with others. Their ideas about rules and morality begin to change. They learn that people makes rules. There is recognition cooperation and common respect, on the other hand, bad refers to the doer’s intention. Fairness is defined as equal treatment. In this case punishments are not automatic but must concern of the doer’s purpose and explanatory condition.

In this following page, the thesis writer quotes the concise characteristic of Piaget’s Moral Development as it is written by Hogan and Emler (213)

Heteronomous Morality (Younger)	Autonomous Morality (Older)
<p>Based on relations of constraint; for example the complete acceptance by the child of adult prescriptions</p> <p>Reflected in attitude of Moral Realism rules are seen as inflexible requirements external in origin an authority not open to negotiation; and right is a matter of literal obedience to adult and rules.</p> <p>Badness is judged in terms of the objective form and consequences of actions; fairness is equated with the content of adults decisions, arbitrary and severe punishments are seen as fair</p> <p>Punishment is seen as an automatic consequence of the offense and justice as inherent</p>	<p>Based on relations of cooperation, mutual recognition of equality among autonomous individuals, as in relations between people who are equals.</p> <p>Reflected in rational moral attitudes: rules are viewed as products of rational agreement, open to recognition, made legitimate by personal acceptance and common consent, and right is a matter of acting in according with requirements of cooperation and mutual respect</p> <p>Badness is viewed as relative to the actors intentions; fairness is defined as equal treatment' or taking account of individual needs; fairness of punishment is defined by appropriateness to the offense</p> <p>Punishment is seen as affected by human intention.</p>

B. Review on the Related Studies

There are several critics and studies conducted on Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*. Yet, in order to complete the analysis, the writer takes lots of information which rooted from the online media. The material could be in the form of biography, commentary, and article that contain the study related to *Little Women* or some issues in the novel.

There are several sources related to the study. One out of many related studies is an article entitled *A Feminist Perspective of Josephine March in*

Little Women which was published by Mama Heartfilled and posted on www.bookstove.com. Also, the study conducted by the writer has a relationship with the study which was conducted by Anita Widiastuti, a Muhammadiyah University student (2003), entitled *The Effects of Civil War on Families in Louisa May Alcott's Little Women* because her study focuses on *Little Women* novel but it analyzes more on the effects of Civil War to March Family.

On the article entitled *A Feminist Perspective of Josephine March in Little Women*, Heartfilled describes the crises of womanhood in the context of *Little Women*, while confronting their seeming contradictions and seeking to show that there does not always have to be an either solution. Some women were able to find a good balance between their own identity and family life. The later sought an escape route on the road to personal fulfillment, much like the character of Jo in *Little Women*. The novel tells about the lives of March Family; father, Marmee, Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy and it details the struggles of the March women, especially Jo, she tries to find sustenance for the family and identities of their own in the culture of a masculine society. All of them worked outside their home when Mr. March lost his property.

While in another study, *The Effects of Civil War on Families in Louisa May Alcott's Little Women*, Widiastuti mentioned that the most appealing aspect of the novel is drawn by the effects of Civil war. The family fell into poverty because the father, the man who must earn money for the family living, is away from home where the war is. The author wants the readers to

underline that civil war in America in 1860's causes the bad effects to the family especially in economic aspect. The family is drawn in poor by the poverty caused by the civil war. Not only in economic aspect but also caused effects in education aspect which is drawn by the one of the character, Amy, who left out the school. The author said that the effects can be studied in sociological term which studies the social life of human. According to the author, sociology plays a big role. A literary work is created by the people who are the member of a society. Sociology studies the relations between people and society. Sociology discusses the social condition of the author. The sources above have been really helpful to inform the thesis writer many things that are closely related to the novel and the study as well. It supports the thesis writer to have a good understanding of the family as well and also to elaborate a deeper analysis of the novel.

Mama Heartfilled studies more about the feminist perspective of Josephine in the novel, while Anita Widiastuti studies more about the effects of Civil War to the March family. Both of those studies do not analyze the important aspect why *Little Women* is considered as a children literature. Children literature stands out for its moral development every reader could learn. Since this study analyzes about moral development of Josephine March in the novel, then this is really the important point had by this thesis compared to the abovementioned studies.