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Chapter Two

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The analysis of this thesis deals with the searching for the theme and the messages of Oscar Wilde's *The Happy Prince*. As stated in the introduction, the writer bases his analysis on the objective theory, which disregards any extrinsic elements of the story.

To work right along with the theory, he also applies the intrinsic approach due to the fact that he is focusing his analysis on the intrinsic elements. The intrinsic elements that will be used to support the analysis are setting, plot, character and their conflicts.

A. Objective Theory

M.H.Abrams in his *The Mirror and the Lamp* states that objective theory regards the literary work as an object that has an independent existence and is used for analysing the work as a self-sufficient entity. Abrams stated :

> "...'objective orientation', which on principle regards the work in isolation from all these external points of reference, analyzes it as a self-sufficient entity constituted by its parts in their internal relations, and sets out to judge it solely by criteria intrinsic to its mode of being." *(Abrams, 1953:26)*

Due to the fact that the writer will work through his analysis based on the intrinsic elements of the stories, he will use the objective theory which regards literary works in isolation from all external aspects of the stories. Therefore, in the analyzing proccess, the writer will disregard any extrinsic elements such as the background of the author, the period when the work was written, the social or political background of the period, etc.

B. Intrinsic Approach

The writer analyzes the short story using only the intrinsic elements in order to make this study more specified. According to this idea, the approach that is appropriate to apply to this thesis is *the intrinsic approach*, one which regards only the intrinsic elements of a story.

Therefore, in analyzing the short story, the writer makes an approach to the plot, characters,

conflict, and setting of the story in order to reveal the problems.

C. Plot

According to *Dictionary of Literary Term*, plot refers to a series of carefully devised and interrelated actions that progresses through a struggle of opposing forces (conflict) to a climax and a denouement *(Shaw, 1972:289)*. There are four elements of plot, they are : exposistion or introduction to the situation, conflict, climax, and suspense.

Exposition is the laying out, the putting forth, of the materials in the work: the main characters, their backgrounds, characteristics, basic assumption about life, goals, and potentials. *(Jacobs, 1989:101)*

Conflict, in a plot, refers to the materials from which a plot is regarded. There are, at least, three kinds of conflict : physical conflict (man against nature), social conflict (man against man), and inner conflict (man against himself, or conflict that happens in the mind of a character).

Climax is the highest point in the series of the actions through out the story. It is the point when all the rest of the action becomes firmly set - the point of inevitability and no return *(Jacobs, 1989*

: 101). Climax happens in which the conflict and the consequent tension are brought out to the fullest extent.

Finally, resolution is the set of action bringing the story to its ending or to its conclusion. It also refers to the rounding-off of the action in a story, the conclusion one way or the other of the conflict.

In this thesis, the writer will reveal on which part of the story each section of plot takes place. This analysis of plot will positively support the searching for the theme and the revealing of the messages.

D. Character

Characterization is important in fiction because it is an essential part of plot and the plot results from characterization *(Shaw, 1972:71)*. In characterization, an author gives certain characteristics to his characters so that those fictional persons may become so credible that they exist for the readers like the real people.

Character, as an extended verbal representation of human being, the inner self that determines thought, speech, and behaviour *(Jacobs, 1989:143)*,

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must be considered as the most important part of the story. It is based on the reason that characters can build a certain impression of the story itself.

Authors often use four distinct ways to present information about characters: first, what the characters themselves say and think (if the author expresses their thought); second, what the characters do; third, what other characters say or think about them; and finally, what the author himself says about them, speaking as a story-teller or an observer.

However, we can divide characters into two types, they are : major characters, that we take a long, hard look at them through our reading in order to understand an author's meaning; and minor characters, that have less important role or function in the story. In this thesis, the writer will only analyze the only two major characters of the story, the Happy Prince and his friend, the Swallow. Other characters will not be discussed in detail.

The writer will reveal the two characters by analysis based on four problems, they are : what or how the social standing of the characters is, how their physical appearance is, what or how they speak and do through the story, and what their conflicts are.

E. Conflicts

Conflict is a simple struggle between opposing forces that can be a clash of actions, ideas, desires, or values. In a plot, it may be termed the material from which a plot is regarded *(Shaw, 1972:91)*. Therefore, it is regarded as the essence of all stories. It may be one of man against nature (elemental or physical conflict), man against man (social conflict), or in the mind of the chief character, man against himself (inner conflict). The writer will use two kinds of conflict in revealing his analysis, they are the inner conflict and the social conflict.

In this thesis, the writer will analyze conflicts experienced by the major characters of the story, they are the Happy Prince and his friend, the Swallow. The writer will firstly see the inner conflicts of both characters, and then see the conflicts betweeen two of them (social conflicts).

By studying the inner conflict and the social conflicts of the two major characters, the writer is positively sure that readers may get a brief description of the theme of the story. This statement is based on what Graham Little has ever said that in identifying the theme, we should propose question

with what conflicts this work deals *(1966:13)*. When readers have known the theme, it is easier for them to depict the messages from the story they are reading.

F. Setting

According to Jacob in his *An Introduction to Reading and Writing* setting is defined as the total of references to physical and temporal objects and artifacts (1989:72).

The setting of a story can be a physical one, that deals with place and everything in certain environment where the readers can catch the meaning from its appearance; and a spiritual one, that has symbolic level or symbolic value. In short, physical setting is related to the atmosphere which arises partly from background, character, and plot. Both of them cannot be separated because the meaning of the spiritual or psychological setting is implied by the physical one (Kerney, 1966:39).

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CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS