

ABSTRACT

The problem discussed in this study is about the issue of struggle which is usually faced by the victim of sexual abuse. It is represented in the novel entitled *Speak* written by Laurie Halse Anderson. This study aims to analyze how Melinda Sordino as the main character struggles to overcome her sexual abuse trauma by using new criticism theory. The writer focuses on the formal elements in literary works such as plot, characterization, setting and symbolism to build the theme as an organic unity. The research finds that the characterization, plot, setting and symbolism in the novel support the theme of Melinda's struggle to overcome her sexual abuse trauma that consist of physical and non-physical struggle. The physical struggle is shown through her fight against the conflict with the other characters in the story. Meanwhile, the non-physical struggle is shown through the process of drawing art that helps her to regain her confidence to speak up.

Keywords: *bullying, characterization, plot, setting, sexual abuse, struggle, symbolism*

