



The Analysis of the Main Character in Short Story The Husband Stitch by Carmen Maria Machado

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ABSTRACT

The study entitled The Analysis of the Main Character in Short Story The Husband Stitch by Carmen Maria Machado is aimed to find out the psychological, sociological, and physiological dimensions of the main character and the methods of characterization used by the author to present the main character in this story. There were some theories used in this study such as the theory about characterization by Griffith (1982), and the theory about the dimension of character by Wellek and Warren (1955). The author uses a direct method to represent the main character to the readers. After analyzing, the author describes the main character of “I” as a beautiful girl who comes from a good family. She has some secret about the ribbon on her neck, and she does not want someone else to know about it, even her husband. The main character in this story experienced a dynamic character. The main character of “I”, who at first did not want to show what was behind her green ribbon, finally changed her mind and showed what she had been hiding from her husband.

Keyword: Short story, character, characterization, She, the author



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1. Introduction

Short story is one of fiction, which it's created by the author's imagination. A short story is a story that has fewer paragraphs than a novel. A novel is a book-length story in prose, while a short story is also prose but in a simple form. The short story is formed by structure; consists of two elements, which are intrinsic and extrinsic elements. Intrinsic element is more there in literary work or inside of the literary work such as theme, character, plot, point of view, setting, language style, and symbol. Extrinsic element covers the part of the things outside of the literary works, such as politics, sociology, physiology, culture, and religion.

As we all know, a character is one of the important elements of literary works such as short stories. The character influences the story through its personality, motivations, and attitudes. Characters are people in narratives, and characterization is the author's presentation and development of characters (Griffith, 1982: 29). According to William Kenney (1966: 27), there are three types of character based on the function; the main character, a secondary character, and a supporting character. Furthermore, this study analyzes the method of characterization used by the author to present the main character in the short story. How the main character is presented can build such an atmosphere that affects the emotion and feelings of the readers.

Every study has an aim that has to be achieved. The aims of this study are: (i) to know who the main character in the short story “The Husband Stitch” is and to know what the character looks

like and how the character shows the characteristic. And (ii) to explain the methods of characterization used by the author to present the main character in the story.

1. Literature Review

An article by Wilany (2015) entitled “*An Analysis of Main Character in Miss Brill Short Story by Katherine Mansfield: A Psychological Approach.*” In this article, the research results were analyzed using Freud’s theory of identifying ego, and superego. According to the analysis result, the main character Miss Brill has strange behavior just to attract people around her. Looks look happy, but she feels lonely. She wants to be respected and liked by everyone around her and has a relationship with someone. Moreover, she is an independent woman who feels lonely. It is affected by the superego. Superman can be understood as a reflection of Miss Brill’s loneliness and willingness to relate to other people in her life. The personal ego can be distinguished from the environment; it combines to form the core personality. The ego controls the course of action, deciding which will be satisfied. The sublime is the aspect of morality that conforms to the norms of society.

The thesis by Dewi (2008) purposes to define the main character in the novel and discover how Daniel Steel describes the main character in terms of physiological, psychological, and social aspects. The theory which was applied in her thesis is taken from *Theory of Literature* (1955) by Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, *Practical Pshchology* (1953) by Kerl S. Bernhardt, *The Fundamental of Physiology* (1957) by Elbert Tokey, and *Sociology Introduction* (1963) by Roucek and Warren. This thesis is a suitable reference to find out how to analyze the character in terms of three-dimensional aspects of character because it gave a clear analysis of each aspect.

2. Research Method

The data of this study was taken from the short story entitled “The Husband Stitch” by Carmen Maria Machado. This study is chosen as a data source because it can fulfill the need for data in this study. The data was collected through library research that was collected through doing some steps, such as (1) reading and understanding the whole content of the story, (2) identifying the data related to the topic and it was followed by note-taking.

The collected data were analyzed descriptively on a theoretical framework. First, the collected data was analyzed by classifying the main character in the short story. In collecting data the author divides the working procedure into several steps. The first was reading the short story repeatedly and intensively to understand the content of the short story. Then, the second step was reading the theory book and browsing the internet, to get more information that is relevant to the topic. After being classified, the data were analyzed to determine the Physiological, Sociological, and Psychological Dimensions of the main character based on the theory proposed by Wellek and Warren (1955). Then, the method used by the author to present the main character in the short story based on the theory proposed by William Kenney was analyzed.

3. Theoretical Framework

There are some theories used in this study such as the theory about character proposed by William Kenney (1983), Badlick (2016), Richard Gill (1955), the theory about characterization proposed by Griffith (1982), and the theory about the dimension of character proposed by Wellek and Warren (1955).

4.1 Character

According to Kenney (1983; 45), character is one important aspect because character is built by the writer that has a function as a medium to introduce the reader to various characteristics of human beings, including negative characteristics as well. According to Baldick (Nuraeni, 2016, p. 47) “*Character is a personage in a narrative or dramatic work, also a kind of a sketch briefly describing some recognizable type person.*” It means characters are made to distinguish the role of everyone in drama. Abrams (1999: 76) says that “*Character is a people who are appeared in a narrative prose or novel and it is interpreted by the readers as a person who has the moral quality and certain tendency such as being expressed in what they say and what they do.*” And according to Richard Gill (1955), the character can be divided based on the function, one of the

functions is the main character. The main character is a character who consistently supports the author's idea, and has much more portrayal than the other character.

4.2 Characterization

Characterization is the author's presentation (the method) and the development ways that are usually used by an author in characterization; direct and indirect (Griffith, 1982: 29). It is a process by which the writer reveals the personality of a character.

4.2.1 Direct method

In the direct method, the novelists simply tell the readers what the character is like. William Kenney in his book "How to Analyze Fiction" (1966) calls that kind of method a discursive method, while Donald in his book *To Read Literature* (1983) says that is an exposition of character. The method is often used to reveal minor characters.

4.3 Types of Character

According to Bernardo, in fictional literature, authors use many different types of characters to tell their stories. Different types of roles in the narrative process, and with a little bit of analysis, the researcher found that the type of the main character in the story "The Husband Stitch" is :

4.3.1 Dynamic Character

A dynamic character who is person changes over time, usually as a result of resolving a central conflict or facing a major crisis. Most dynamic characters tend to be central rather than peripheral characters because resolving the conflict is the major role of central characters.

4.4 Dimension of Character

Wellek and Warren (1996) stated that the writer must concern with three aspects to create the perfectness of the character in describing the character. Wellek and Warren claimed that these three dimensions with the technical term "Block Characterization" build the characterization in literary work.

4.4.1 Physiological Dimension

Physiology is the study of the human body (Tokay, 1957:1). So, the physiological dimension is related to the physical condition or appearance of the character which can be observed through sex, age, and other physical appearance, such as body, shape, size, height, skin color, and face.

4.4.2 Sociological Dimension

Sociology is the study of human beings and their interaction within and between groups of people (Roucek and Warren 1963:3). So, in literary work, the sociological dimension can be concerned with the economic, political, and social situations, and the interrelationships between all spheres of human activities (Wellek and Warren, 1966:101)

4.4.3 Psychological Dimension

Wellek and Warren (1955:75) state that the psychology of literature means the study of the writer, the study of the creative process, or the study of psychological types and laws presented within works of literature. According to Bernhardt (1953), the psychology of literature work can be observed through the character. Through the psychological approach, the psychology of character that include human motivation, feeling, and emotion can be analyzed.

5 Analysis

5.1 Main Character

The main character is the central character that plays an important role in the story. As the title of the short story explicitly, the main character is "I". The story entitled "The Husband Stitch" tells about the main character of "I" who hides a secret behind the green ribbon around her neck. Therefore, the main character of "I" becomes the main character because she takes an important role in the story.

The discussion below is the analysis of the dimension which builds the main character's characteristics and also how the author characterizes the main character.

5.2 Physiological Dimension

The physiological dimension can be analyzed through the general health, sex, age appearance including the shape of the body, size, the color of skin, etc.

At the beginning of the story "The Husband Stitch", the main character was identified as a beautiful woman, she has a pretty mouth. And she is a good girl who comes from a good family. This point can be seen from the following quotation :

" I am beautiful. I have a pretty mouth. I have breast that has out of my dresses I a way that seems innocent and perceives at the same time. I am a good girl, from a good family." (Machado, 2017; 3)

In this statement, the main character was characterized by a direct method because the author tried to give the information about the main character appears in a simple way. The author directly stated that the main character of "I" is a beautiful and good girl according to the quotation above.

From the physiological dimension, it can conclude that the main character was a beautiful and good girl. In finding out the physiological dimension of the main character, the authors used only one method. Direct method.

5.3 Sociological Dimension

The sociological dimension in the story can be seen from many things, which are related to the environment and its influence on us such as family, neighborhood, school, the relationship of the character to other characters, etc. Which are the closest group that form basic behavior patterns and attitudes of their numbers. Social interaction also concerns social groups, social status system, the economy, and religion. The analysis of this dimension is presented in the following discussion. The analysis of this dimension is presented in the following discussion :

She says that her ribbon is not a secret, so she does not hide anything from her husband. The point can be seen from the following quotations :

"The ribbon is not a secret, it's just mine." (Machado, 2017: 20)

This statement gives information about the main character's social relationship with her husband. In the quotation above, the author tried to explain that the main character does not want to anybody know about something behind her green ribbon. Even her husband.

After years of married, the main character of "I" want to untie the ribbon on her neck, to show her husband the thing behind the ribbon. The point can be seen from the following quotations :

"Do you want to untie the ribbon?" I ask him. "After many years, is that what you want of me?" (Machado, 2017; 31)

From this statement, the author gave information to the readers that the main character changed her mind and wants to untie the green ribbon on her neck. Because of her love for her husband, the main character of "I" want to show what is behind her green ribbon, after years of hiding it, and no one is allowed to touch it.

From the sociological dimension, it can be concluded that the main character does not want to anybody know the things behind her ribbon. Even if it is her husband. But at the end of the story, she wants to untie her ribbon in front of her husband, to show the things that make her husband curious from their first meeting, until their marriage which has been on for years.

5.4 Psychological Dimension

When analyzing the psychological dimension of a character, there are various aspects to be concerned about. They are human motivations included appetites, wants, emotions, feeling and attitudes, social motives, and also feeling and emotions. The analysis of this dimension is in the following discussion :

..... And when he asks to marry him, days shy of my eighteenth birthday, I say “yes, yes, please,” (Machado, 2017; 9)

The quotations above show how happy the main character of “I” when the boy asks her to get married to him, a few days before her eighteenth birthday.

5.5 Types of Character

5.4.1 Dynamic Character

A dynamic character is a character change experienced by the main character over time, as a result of facing a major crisis. The analysis of the types of the main character is in the following discussion:

There are two rules: he cannot finish inside of me, and he cannot touch my green ribbon. (Machado, 2017; 7)

In this story, she was described by the author as a beautiful girl who comes from a good family. She had a green ribbon tied around her neck. She is the only one who knows about something at the back of her ribbon. She does not allow anybody to touch the ribbon. She hides the things behind her green ribbon from other people. She has two rules for the boy. One of those rules is the boy cannot touch the green ribbon at the back of her neck, in any condition. This shows her commitment not to tell something behind her ribbon, even if she hides it from the man she loves who will marry her in the future. Even when married, She still would not allow her husband to touch the ribbon on her neck.

After years of marriage, the main character changed her mind and want to show the things behind her green ribbon to her husband. The point can be seen from the following quotation :

“Do you want to untie the ribbon? I ask him. “After these many years, is that what you want of me?” (Machado, 2017; 30)

After years of marriage, had a son, and went through a lot, and a lot of arguments with her husband over the ribbon. She decided to tell her husband what was behind the ribbon. Because she loves her husband and she thinks that her husband is a good person. The moment when she unties the ribbon on her neck, is something that her husband had always wanted, from their first meeting, till now.

It means that the main character changed her principles because she had through a lot during her marriage to her husband. The main character of “I”, at the beginning, she does not want to show something behind the green ribbon on her neck because she thinks that it is just hers. After many years, had a son, and a lot of arguments with her husband over the green ribbon during their marriage. She changed her mind, because she loves her husband, and thinks that her husband is a good person. The main character of “I” showed her husband what had been hidden behind her green ribbon all the time.

6 Conclusion

After analyzing the short story *The Husband Stitch* by Carmen Maria Machado, the researcher can conclude that the main character of this story is “I”. The reason is that this story tells about her, starting with her first meeting with the boy who will be her husband in the future, their marriage, and the green ribbon on her neck. She does not want to someone else touch her ribbon, even her husband. It made her husband wonder, what was hidden behind that ribbon. In the end, I change her mind and show what was hidden behind her ribbon.

Based on the analysis of the characters that can be seen from the main character in the novel “*The Husband Stitch*”, it is known that “I” is the main character in this story, there are three dimensions

of character that are analyzed. From a physiological dimension, the main character of “I” was a beautiful girl who comes from a good family. From a sociological dimension, she does not want something behind the ribbon on her neck. The main character of “I” does not want anybody to know about it, but in the end, she shows what is behind her ribbon to her husband. From the psychological dimension, she was a happy woman who is asked to marry the man she loves, with before her eighteenth birthday.

The author used a direct method to describe the main character in this story to the readers. Meanwhile, the main character changed her principle because she had through a lot of things. Or we can call it a dynamic character.

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