

The Potray of the Main Characters in the Complete Works of O. Henry

Muhammad Hasby Ash-shiddiqy¹, M. Natsir², Anjar Dwi Astuti³
Universitas Mulawarman

¹muhammad.hasbi1294@gmail.com, ²natsir@gmail.com, ³anjardwiastuti@fkip.unmul.ac.id

Abstract

This study aims to determine the depiction of the main character and also how the author describes the main characters in O. Henry's short stories collection. The method in this study is qualitative by using library research, the data for the research is all sentences and dialogues among the characters in the short story which are related to the characters' characterization. The steps to collect the data are: a) Reading the five title short stories of The Complete Works of O. Henry, b) Taking notes, the required expressions or sentences from the short story that contain the information about main characters., c) Identifying all sentences and dialogues in the short story to get the data, d) Choosing the data dealing with the problems that will be investigated, the writer used a content analysis method as the data analysis. The findings of this study reveal that In the five short story titles in the collection of short stories "The Complete Works of O. Henry" there are two methods of characterization and they are the direct method and the indirect method, the characterization method used in each of the short story titles. different, there are those who only use one method and those who use two methods. and then In five selected short story titles in the "The Complete Works of O. Henry" short story collection there are several main characters in each of the short stories, some of which have two main characters, 3 main characters, and some even have only one main character. This can be seen that the main characters contribute or become the center of conflict or plot in each of the short stories

Keywords: Analysis, Characterization and Main Character

1. Introduction

Literature according to Klarer in his book *An Introduction to Literary Studies* (1999:1) literature is referred to as the entirety of written expression, with the restriction that not every written document can be categorized as literature in the more exact sense of the word. Based on definition above, it can be concluded that literature is a work that contains all aspects of human life and its intricacies, using unique, artistic, and beautiful languages. The aspect of life that is presented is in the form of a person's soul experience that relates to his personal world or the external world.

There are some genres of literary work, one of them is a short story. Short story is the story less than 10,000 words to give singular image and focus on one actor in a situation. Short story is one of the literature forms that are a work of fiction that is usually written in prose, often in narrative format and focuses on only one incident, has a single plot, a single setting, a small number of characters, and cover a short period of time (Edward 1968:1).

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the short story is a form of fictional narrative prose whose content tends to be dense and directly to its purpose compared to the longer works of fiction. This is because the short story is not determined by the number of pages for the embodiment of the story, but rather due to the scope of what the work wants to convey. Short stories present events in a concise and concurrent

manner, and the elaboration of characters is not complicated. It only has one meaning, one crisis and one effect for its readers.

The need to conduct research on the collection of short stories because in the short story the character is not explained too detailed like a novel or the other but the character in the short story can be made more interesting in the story, then short stories are able to provide a very interesting story plot for the reader with only a small number of characters. By conducting characterization research on the main characters of the short story, it is expected that the readers can find out the plot of the stories contained in the short story, then the readers are also expected to be able to know the influence of the author in making the characters in the short story.

Short stories can not only be used as a medium for entertainment, but also as teaching materials to support students character education. The character development that occurs in each character in the short story can be clearly illustrated, thus it helps students to understand about human personality. Then, the teacher can develop it to teach about language teaching. Thus, this study will analyze The Complete Works of O. Henry by using characterization methods to find out the main characters personality and how the author portrayed them.

2. Literature Review

Short Story

Short stories are a form of fictional literature, Short stories as the name suggests, show a very short content, both the events revealed, the contents of the story, the number of actors and the number of words used. With its short nature, all elements that build short stories must be able to be utilized to the fullest in order to be able to convey story ideas appropriately. Short for a short story is not because the shape is much shorter than the novel, but because the aspect of the problem is very limited. With this limitation, a problem will be portrayed far more clearly and far more impressive to the reader.

The Portrayal of character

The word character refers to the understanding of the person or actor displayed in a work of fiction. The characterization or depiction is a depiction of someone who is displayed in a fiction story. Minderop (2005: 2) states that characterization is a method of describing the character of the characters contained in a work of fiction. In other words, characterizations or depictions refer to the same thing, how to portray characters in fiction.

Character

The character is one of the important elements of fiction, characters are element which can be found in a movie plot and characters are inseparable, because plot is not simply a series of event happened that come out of character to delineate characters. In order word, when we know 'what happened to him or her' and 'how did it work out for them', so we should find out the action of the character in a sequence of events. Klarer (1999: 17) states as follows: "characters in a text can be rendered either as types or as individuals. A typified character in literature is dominated by one specific trait and is referred to as a flat character. The term round character usually denotes a persona with more complex and differentiated features. Typified characters often represent the general traits of a group of persons or abstract ideas. Medieval allegorical depictions of characters preferred typification in order to personify vices, virtues, or philosophical and religious positions."

Kinds of Character

Character in fiction can be classified a major and minor, static and dynamic. A major character is an important figure at the center of the story's action and theme. Usually a character's status as major and minor is clear. On occasion however, not one but two characters may dominate a story, their relationship being what matters most. Diyyani (1965:45).

Characterizations

Character refers to person, particularly portrayed by an actor who appeared in literary work, whether a fictional character or historic figure. Character are widely considered as an essential element of fictional work especially in novel and play, the process of creating and developing character in a work fiction is called characterization. Klarer, (1999: 18) states characterization is the figures in a literary text that can either be characterized as types or individuals. Characterization by this definition, means the real description of the characters participating in the story through their actions. Characterizations or disposition is a technique or ways of showing figures.

3. Methods

In doing this research, the researcher used the descriptive qualitative study as the research design in which the researcher deals with a process of data required, analyze the data collected and interpreted the result of analysis. This study will analyze the data in the form of words and sentences in the short story.

In this study, the researcher using a technic interactive model analysis. Interactive model analysis is a research method applied to written or visual materials for the purpose of identifying specified characteristics of the material (Miles & Huberman, 1994: 10). Interactive model analysis will be applied in this research to analyze the collection of short stories The Complete Works of O. Henry.

The data source in this study is a collection of short stories from author O. Henry entitled The Complete Works of O. Henry. The words, phrases and sentences that relate to the main characters in the short story. There are hundreds of short stories written by O. Henry however, researchers chose five short stories to be analyzed 1) Hearts & Hands, 2) The Gift of the Magi, 3) The Ransom of Red Chief, 4) The Cop and the Anthem 5) A Retrieved Reformation.

The instrument in this research is the researcher himself, the researcher collects the data from the short stories by taking notes. The researcher analyzes and describe the data based on the explanation of the characterization that have been mention in the previous chapter.

In this study the researcher using document review technique in obtaining the data, the necessary steps of collecting the data are follows: Reading the five short stories of The Complete Works of O. Henry. And Taking notes, the required expressions or sentences from the short story that contain the information about main characters.

This research uses content analysis method. Fraenkel and Wallen (2007: 483) state content analysis is a technique that researchers can use to examine human behavior indirectly through analysis of their communication such as: textbooks, essays, newspapers, novels, magazine articles, songs, image ads and all types communication that can be analyzed

4. Result

1. Hearts & Hands

A) After analyzing the short story titled "Heart & Hands" the writer found that the main characters in this short story were portrayed by the author with two methods the direct method and the indirect method. Miss Fairchild was portrayed by the narrator directly to the readers by using direct method as a woman with a very luxurious appearance, awfully expensive, and describes Miss Fairchild as a wealthy woman. Mr. Easton was portrayed by the narrator directly to the readers by using direct method as a young man with a handsome, brave, and kind-hearted face. The Other Man (Marshal) is portrayed by the narrator in the direct method as a grim-faced, messy-looking, and large-bodied man.

B) Miss Fairchild described as a woman of high social status that is rich woman with the appearance of luxury and convenience as well as women who have good communication skills. In the data above, Mr. Easton was described as a neat-looking young man, handsome-looking, and kind. and also, as a man who felt embarrassed while talking to a woman. The Other Man (Marshal) is described as a man who looks messy, has a grim face, and has a big body. and also, as a kind man who helped Mr. Easton who is having a problem.

2. The Gift of the Magi

A) After analyzing the short story titled "The Gift of the Magi" the writer found that the main characters in this short story were portrayed by the Author with one method the direct method. Della is portrayed by the narrator directly to the reader by using the direct method as a woman with a fragile body and thin body. It can be seen that the reader can know the appearance and health condition of Della through words directly from the narrator, not through dialogue or actions of the character itself. Jim is portrayed by the narrator directly to the reader using the direct method as a twenty-two-year-old man with a thin body, without a coat and gloves. It can be seen that the reader can know Jim's appearance, health condition and age through words directly from the narrator, not through dialogue or the character's own actions.

B) Della is described as a fragile and thin woman, and also as a kind-hearted wife who cares about her husband's condition by giving him a gift. Jim is portrayed as a twenty-two-year-old man with a thin body and a shabby appearance, and also as a good and patient son who is facing some of the problems in his domestic life with only a smile.

3. The Ransom of Red Chief

A) After analyzing the short story titled " The Ransom of Red Chief" the writer found that the main characters in this short story were portrayed by the author with two methods the direct method and the indirect method. Johnny is portrayed by the narrator directly to the reader using the direct method as a ten-year-old boy with freckles and red hair. It can be seen that the readers know Johnny appearance through direct words of the narrator, not through dialogue or action of the character itself. Bill is portrayed by the narrator directly to the readers by using the direct method as a criminal man who plans to kidnap a child in a small town. It can be seen that the reader can know Bill's profession through words directly from the narrator, not through dialogue or action from the character itself. Sam is portrayed by the narrator directly to the reader using the direct method as a criminal who plans to commit major fraud. It can be seen that the reader can know Sam's profession and purpose through words directly from the narrator, not through dialogue or action from the character itself.

B) Johnny is described as a ten-year-old red-haired boy, freckle-faced, naughty, and also hyperactive who always makes trouble and fuss. Bill is portrayed as a man who fears insects and experiences severe trauma because he is often bothered by Johnny. In the above

data, Sam is described as a criminal who needs a capital to carry out a major fraud in a city and also a patient man.

4. The Cop and The Anthem

A) After analyzing the short story titled " The Cop and The Anthem" the writer found that the main characters in this short story were portrayed by the author with two methods the direct method and the indirect method. Soapy is portrayed by the narrator directly to the reader using the direct method as a homeless man who spends his time sleeping on a park bench because he does not have a home. It can be seen that the readers know Soapy's profession through the words of the narrator directly and not through dialogue or action of the character itself.

B) Soapy is described as Homeless man and also hyperactive who always makes trouble and also as an ex-convict who has just been released from prison for a year.

5. A Retrieved Reformation

A) After analyzing the short story titled " A Retrieved Reformation " the writer found that the main characters in this short story were portrayed by the Author with two methods the direct method and the indirect method. Jimmy is portrayed by the narrator directly to the reader using the direct method as a man who has just been released from prison after serving almost ten months in prison from a total sentence of 4 years. It can be seen that the reader can know the condition of Jimmy who has just been released from prison through words directly from the narrator, not through dialogue or the character's own actions. Ben is portrayed by the narrator directly to the reader using the direct method as a man who works as a detective who is investigating a safe robbery case. It can be seen that the reader can know the Profession from Ben Price through words directly from the narrator, not through dialogue or the character's own actions.

B) Jimmy described as a former criminal who has just come out of jail after being held for nearly 10 months of time served 4 years and also has a great expertise in the breaking into safes. Ben Price is described as a policeman who is investigating a case of safe box burglary and as a man who is kind to an ex-criminal who has changed his life.

5. Discussion

This part presents the discussion of the research findings. The Portrayal of the main characters is a method of writing or showing the characters in the story to the reader, character portrayal can help us to know the appearance, social status, or personality of the characters in the story. Based on the findings, there are two methods used in the five short stories above, namely the direct and indirect methods. the direct method of the characters in the story is illustrated or shown by the author through the narrator's words directly to the reader, This is in line with the statement of Gill (1995: 127) which states that how the characters appear directly through the description of the author or narrator referred to as an analytic method, then the indirect method of the characters in the story is depicted or shown in the story to the reader through actions or words of character, this is also in line with the theory of Klarer (1999: 19) which states the dramatic characterization or showing is a method of character presentation to the reader of the image of a character "shown" solely through its actions and speech, thereby demonstrating "objective" perception which leaves interpretation and evaluation solely on the reader's judgment. In the research thesis characterization from Ayu Agustina (2013) entitled "Characterization Analysis of Main Characters in Korean Drama Entitled Dream High" she found that in the drama has various types of characters, there are protagonists and antagonists and some supporting characters. However, this research is not in line with the authors of this study, because the focus in this

study is about the process in the portrayal of the character on the author of the short story in the story.

In his thesis characterization research from M. Muntaqif Latif (2016) entitled "Analysis of Main Character Characteristics in Social Network Film Scripts" he found that in the novel there were two main characters with different personalities and made many contributions in the story. However, this research is not in line with the authors of this study, because the focus of this study is about the process of describing characters by the author of the short story in the story.

And finally in his thesis characterization study from Ermalina (2015) entitled "Analysis of the Main Characters of" The Lord of the Ring - The Return of the King "A Novel by JRR TOLKIEN" she found that in the novel there are five main characters with Different characterizations, there are four protagonists and one antagonist in the story. However, this research is not in line with the authors of this study, because the focus of this study is about the process of describing characters by the author of the short story in the story.

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that there are two methods of describing the characters in the short stories contained in the research findings and the most widely used method is the direct method. then in previous studies after comparison it is known that although the subjects studied are similar literary works, the studies are not the same or in line with research from the author, this is because the focus of this research is on how the characters are in a literary work described or shown by the author, whereas in previous studies used as reference is more focused on the description of the characters that exist in literary works..

6. Conclusion

The first short story titled Hearts & Hands, there are three main characters in this short story they are Miss Fairchild, Mr. Easton, and The Other Man (Marshal). It is because they give much contribution in the story. The three main characters are portrayed by the author with direct methods, this is because readers can find out their physical appearance, personality, social status, and social relationships through the narrator's words in the story.

The second short story is titled The Gift of the Magi, there are two main characters in this short story namely Della Dillingham Young and Jim Dillingham Young. this is because the two main characters become the center of conflict in the story. The two main characters are portrayed by the writer by direct method, this is because the reader can know and understand their physical appearance, personality, social status, and social relationships through the narrator's words in the story.

The third short story is titled The Ransom of Red Chief, there are three main characters in this short story namely Sam, Bill Driscoll, and Johnny Dorset. this is because the three main characters become the center of conflict in the story. The three main characters are portrayed by the author by two methods and that is the direct method and the indirect method. But most of the main characters in this story are portrayed by the writer with indirect methods, this is because readers can find out their personalities through the words and actions of the main characters.

The fourth short story is titled The Cop and the Anthem, in this short story there is one main character, and he is Soapy. this is because the whole plot or conflict in this story is only about one character. One main character is portrayed by the author with two methods and that is the direct method and the indirect method. However, the direct method is more often used by the

writer, this is because the author describes the appearance, personality, and social life of the main character directly through the narrator's words.

And the last is the fifth short story entitled *A Retrieved Reformation*, in this short story there are two main characters they are Jimmy Valentine and Ben Price. This is because the two main characters contribute more to the story plot. The two main figures are portrayed by the author with two methods and that is the direct method and the indirect method. However, the indirect method is more often used by the writer, this is because the author describes their appearance, personality, and social life through the words, actions, and reactions of the main character itself or from the characters around them.

From the conclusions above we can see that the direct method is more often used in portraying characters in a short story. This is because the reader is able to more quickly describe the character through words directly from the narrator.

7. Suggestion

Based on the conclusion above the writer was able to give suggestions, for the following suggestions:

1. For teachers who are teaching extensive reading of their students. This can be a reference or material in extensive reading and also as a reference for student character development.
2. For students and readers who are interested in analyzing literary work about short stories. It is recommended to understand the character depictions contained in the short story before they understand the whole story. By understanding the portrayal of characters, it can help them more easily grasp the true meaning, message and even the whole story in it.
3. For further research is expected this thesis can be used as a reference to conduct another study on the portrayal of characters or characterization of various literature such as poetry, novels, song lyrics, or different short story.

References

- Mario Klarer, 1999. *An Introduction to Literary Studies*. USA: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- M. Atar Semi, 2012. *Metode Penelitian Sastra*. Bandung: CV Angkasa.
- Jones, Edward. 1968. *Outline of literature: short story, story: novel, and poem*. USA: The Macmillian Company.
- Suminto A. Sayuti. 2000. *Berkenalan dengan prosa fiksi*. Yogyakarta: Gama Media.
- Minderop, Albertine. 2005. *Metode Karakterisasi Telaah Fiksi*. Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia.
- Edgar Allan Poe. 1846. *The Philosophy of Composition*. United States of America: American Monthly Magazine.
- Duffy, Charles and Henry Petit. 1953. *A Dictionary of Literary Term*. USA: Brown Book Company.
- Richard Gill. 1985. *Mastering English Literature*. New York: Palgrave.
- Sumadi Suryabrata. 2003. *Metode Penelitian*. Jakarta: Rajawali
- Fraenkel, Jack R. dan Norman E. Wallen. 2007. *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Sandra Mathison. 1988. *Why Triangulate?* Washington DC: Sage Publication.

- Denzin, N.K. 1978. *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Ayu Agustina. 2013. *Characterization Analysis of Main Characters in Korean Drama Entitled Dream High* (Thesis). Samarinda. Unpublished.
- M. Muntaqif Latif. 2016. *An Analysis of Characterization of The Main Characters in The Social Network Movie Script*. (Thesis). Tulungagung. Unpublished
- Ermalina. 2015. *Analysis of the Main Characters of "The Lord of the Ring- The Return of the King*. (Journal). Pasir Pengaraian. Unpublished