

ANALYSIS OF CHARACTERS AND CHARACTERIZATION IN THE NOVEL HI BERLIN 1998 AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR LITERATURE LEARNING IN HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the characters and characterization in the novel *Hi Berlin 1998* by Wahyuni Albiy. The research adopts a qualitative descriptive approach. The data consist of excerpts of dialogues, narrative scenes, and characters' actions found in the novel. Data were collected through close reading and systematic note-taking techniques. The data analysis employed content analysis to interpret the characterization of each figure. The findings reveal that character and characterization constitute significant intrinsic elements of the novel. Characters are defined as individuals who participate in narrative events, while characterization refers to the author's technique in depicting characters' physical and psychological traits. The novel *Hi Berlin 1998* presents eleven characters, which are classified into protagonists and antagonists. The protagonists include Sakeza Labiru, Jan Adam, Abarak, Hazel, Bryan, Julie, Erica, and Sakeza's parents, whereas the antagonists are Araka Bentara and Vodka. Each character is portrayed with distinctive traits, physical descriptions, and unique characteristics that contribute to the development of the narrative.

Keywords: Character, Characterization, Literature, Indonesian Language, Novel.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan siapa saja tokoh yang terdapat dalam novel *Hi Berlin 1998*. Mendeskripsikan penokohan yang terdapat dalam novel *Hi Berlin 1998*. Karya Wahyuni Albiy. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif, data yang dikumpulkan dalam penelitian ini adalah kutipan dialog, adegan atau Tindakan yang dilakukan oleh para tokoh dalam novel *Hi Berlin 1998*. Pada penelitian ini, metode yang digunakan adalah metode deskriptif kualitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data penelitian ini dengan cara membaca dan mencatat. Teknik analisis data menggunakan analisis isi. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian yang dilakukan maka terdapat unsur intrinsic dalam novel yaitu tokoh dan penokohan. Tokoh adalah seseorang yang terlibat dalam suatu cerita sebuah pada sebuah kejadian atau peristiwa naratif. Penokohan adalah pemberian sifat, baik lahir maupun batin pada seorang pelaku atau tokoh. tokoh dalam Novel *Hi Berlin 1998* karya Wahyuni Albiy ini berjumlah 11 orang, tokoh tokoh tersebut terbagi menjadi dua karakter protagonist dan antagonist. Tokoh protagonist diantaranya Sakeza Labiru, Jan Adam, Abarak, Hazel, Bryan, Julie, Erica, dan kedua orang tua Sakeza. Tokoh Antagonist diantaranya Araka Bentara dan Vodka. Setiap tokoh memiliki sifat, penggambaran fisik dan karakter yang berbeda dengan ciri khasnya masing-masing.

Kata Kunci: Tokoh, Penokohan, Sastra, Bahasa Indonesia, Novel.

INTRODUCTION

Literary works are the product of an author's imagination, expressed in written form using beautiful language. According to Wicaksono (2017:1), literature is the product of an author's imagination, depicting social life. Prose is a literary work in the form of a story told using narrative. Prose writing is free and not bound by various writing rules, such as rhyme, diction, rhythm, and so on. There are two types of prose: old prose and new prose. Old prose is prose that has not been influenced by Western culture, while new prose is prose that has been mixed with Western culture. One example of new prose is the novel.

Aditya Ansor Alsunah (2026) views literature as an aesthetic-reflective practice that functions to record, interpret, and construct human experience through language. Literature is not merely understood as a product of the imagination, but as a system of meaning born from the dialectic between social reality, the author's subjectivity, and cultural conventions. Within this framework, literature serves as a critical medium that allows readers to reread values, ideologies, and social dynamics contextually and continuously.

A novel is a prose literary work that expresses the most comprehensive narrative elements, encompasses a broad range of media, and presents broad societal issues (Rahayu, 2014). Tarigan (1984) states that a novel is a type of story with a long plot or that tells the imaginative story of a man or woman. Fictional prose (novels) is constructed from two elements: intrinsic and extrinsic. (Nurgiyantoro 2011:4) explains that intrinsic elements are those that build literature from within, such as plot, theme, plot, moral, characters, and characterization. Meanwhile, extrinsic elements are those that build literature from outside, such as religion, education, economics, psychology, and so on.

An equally important intrinsic element is the characters and their characterization. The strength of a literary work such as a novel is greatly influenced by the author's skill in bringing the characters' personalities to life. Essentially, the human behavior that can be included in a story is very diverse. Characters also serve as a tool for the author to convey life values to the reader. According to Sudjiman (1992), a character is someone involved in a story, or a narrative event or sequence.

Characterization is the assignment of both physical and mental characteristics to an actor or character. Generally, characterization in a literary work includes a protagonist and an antagonist. The protagonist is the character admired by readers because of their admirable, honest, and courageous qualities, and because they convey a moral message and positive values within the story. Meanwhile, the antagonist is the character who creates conflict and hinders the protagonist from achieving their goals, often embodying values that conflict with the protagonist (Nurgiyantoro 2018:178-179). Characters are described not only through their personalities but also through their physical and mental traits. Therefore, the physical or mental traits of a protagonist will differ from those of an antagonist.

An interesting novel to analyze the characters and their characterization is Wahyuni Alby's 1998 novel, "Hi Berlin." The novel tells the love life of Sakeza Labiru, the main character, who falls

in love with Jan Adam, her junior at school. The characters depicted in the novel are relevant to the traits, behavior, and personalities of today's youth. This study aims to examine the characters and characterization in Wahyuni Alby's novel "Hi Berlin 1998," specifically the main character and the characters who contribute to and shape her personality.

Various studies have been conducted on character analysis and characterization, and each study, discussing similarities in theory and subject matter, serves as a reference in this study. One previous study that discussed character analysis and characterization is the study conducted by La Ode Madina and Freny S. Pormes (2020) in the journal *Jurnal Jendela Ilmu*, entitled "Analisis Karakter dan Penokohan Dalam Novel Yajid Dia Adalah Kakak Ku" by Tere Liye.

This reference discusses character analysis and characterization in the novel. Similarities between these two previous studies and this study are the use of qualitative descriptive methods and the study of characters and characterization in the novel. In previous research, the focus was on discussing the character of each character in the novel *Dia Adalah Kakak Ku* by Tere Liye, while in this research, the focus was on the description of the characters based on the physical and mental characteristics of the characters in the novel *Hi Berlin 1998* by Wahyu.

METHOD

Research methods are the tools, procedures, and techniques chosen to conduct research or collect data. In this study, the method used was descriptive qualitative. Qualitative descriptive methods are data processing methods that systematically organize collected data to draw conclusions. The data is then analyzed individually by analyzing quotations. According to Bogman and Taylor, qualitative research methods produce data in the form of written words from people and observable behavior.

The data source used in this study was the novel "Hi Berlin 1998" by Wahyuni Albiy. The data in this study consisted of words, sentences, and dialogues that describe the characters in the novel. In this study, the researcher used data collection techniques through reading and note-taking. The data collection techniques in this study were as follows: first, carefully reading the data source, the novel "Hi Berlin 1998" by Wahyuni Albiy. Second, marking each narrative and dialogue that shows the characterization of the characters. Third, the researcher recorded each narrative and dialogue that contains descriptions of the characters' characterizations. The data analysis technique in this study uses content analysis, there are three stages, namely, data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

From the perspective of the function of characters in a literary work, characters are divided into protagonists and antagonists. The analysis of the novel "Hi Berlin 1998" focuses primarily on the characters and their characterizations. The following are the characters featured in "Hi Berlin 1998."

Sakeza Labiru

Sakeza is the main protagonist in the novel "Hi Berlin 1998." He is considered the main character because he appears consistently from the beginning to the end of the story. Sakeza is

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a third-grade student who excels at horse riding and billiards, but he is lacking in academics. This is evident when he receives a grade of 50. This is evidenced by the quote:

"My grades are below average," I stared at a piece of paper with the number 50 in the top right corner." (Hi Berlin 1998: 12)

"I have been an equestrian athlete since I was ten." (Hi Berlin 1998: 46)

Sakeza's physical characteristics include fair skin, brown eyes, long hair, and round cheeks. She is also friendly and kind. This is evidenced by the quote:

"Her radiant white skin, brown eyes, long hair, and round cheeks." (Hi Berlin 1998: 55)

In her teens, Sakeza is still an unstable girl, especially when it comes to her aspirations. Her aspirations are always changing, from being an artist to a rider, and so on. This is evidenced by the quote:

"Meanwhile, I don't know what my aspirations are; they're always changing. In the morning I might want to be an artist, in the afternoon I might want to be a rider. Then, in the afternoon I suddenly want to enroll in flight school, while at night I want to be unemployed and just play with nightingales. The next day, my aspirations change again." (Hi Berlin 1998: 25)

Jan Adam

Adam is the second main protagonist in the novel Hi Berlin 1998. Adam is a high school student who has just entered high school. Physically, Adam has a charming face with blue eyes. It's only natural that Adam has such a charming face with blue eyes, given his German ancestry. This is evidenced by the quote:

"Adam is handsome, I admit. His face isn't that European, but he has those blue eyes." (Hi Berlin 1998, p. 43).

"My father is pure German." (Hi Berlin 1998:111).

Adam is a hardworking young man, skilled at making coffee, which earned him a job even though he hadn't graduated from school. This is evidenced by the quote:

"I'm grateful, even though I was initially rejected for work because I was underage, but I was eventually accepted because my coffee-making skills are unquestionable." (Hi Berlin 1998:54).

Adam is obedient, even when it doesn't suit him. This is evident when his older brother asked him to quit his job and stay away from Sakeza. Adam did so. He resigned and tried to distance himself from Sakeza.

Adam is quiet, soft-spoken, intelligent, and independent. He has a warm and kind nature. This is evidenced by the quote:

"I consider Adam to be soft-spoken, intelligent, ambitious, and independent. He is also warm and kind." (Hi Berlin 1998: 180)

Although Adam is quiet and doesn't talk much, he dares to challenge, fight, and protect Sakeza. This is demonstrated when Adam confronts his older brother, Vodka, who is harassing Sakeza.

Araka Bentara

Raka is the antagonist in the novel *Hi Berlin 1998*. Raka is intelligent and always ranks first. Raka's character development is triggered by love issues. At the beginning of the story, Sakeza mentions that Raka was a kind and polite person, but his personality changes to become harsh, rude, overly possessive, and arrogant. Sakeza also mentions Raka's personality change. This is evidenced by the quote:

Araka Bentara is two months older than me. We've been in a relationship since tenth grade. At that time, he was willing to tutor me in math, and I felt helped. He's kind and polite..." (*Hi Berlin 1998*: 13)

"In eleventh grade, before our relationship had even reached a year, Raka showed his true colors..." (*Hi Berlin 1998*: 14)

Raka's behavior was violent and he even physically abused Sakeza by pushing her. This is evidenced by the quote

"...He's crazy! He's already pushed Sakeza, physically hurt her..." (*Hi Berlin 1998*: 18)

His arrogance was evident when Raka suddenly dragged Adam out of the cafeteria and pushed him to the ground, even though Adam was enjoying his food at the cafeteria table. This happened because Raka accused Adam of approaching Sakeza, and he arrogantly abused Adam without knowing the truth.

His antagonistic nature was also evident when Raka tried to set Adam against his older brother, Vodka, by telling Vodka that Adam got into a fight and was suspended because he was a girl. This is evidenced by the quote:

"So you're the one who told my older brother?"

"I didn't tell. "But, if that's your assumption... I don't deny it either," said Raka.

(*Hi Berlin 1998* : 166)

Discussion

The total number of characters in the *Hi Berlin 1998* novel by Wahyuni Albiy is 11 people, these characters are divided into two types of characterization, namely protagonist and antagonist. The protagonist characters include Sakeza Labiru, Jan Adam, Abarak, Hazel, Bryan, Julie, Erica, and Sakeza's parents. They are characters who have good traits, do not hurt and support the main character. Antagonist characters include Araka Bentara and Vodka. These antagonist characters have bad traits and are the opposite of the main character. In the *Hi Berlin 1998* novel, the main character is Sakeza Labiru, said to be the main character because Sakeza is always told in every scene, the story centers on him and he has the most tragic life among the other characters. Each character has different traits, physical descriptions and characters with their own characteristics.

CONCLUSION

A novel has intrinsic elements such as theme, characterization, setting, plot, point of view, style, and moral. These elements are essential in a novel to create a complete story. Equally important are characters and characterization. A character is someone involved in a story, while characterization is the imbuing of both physical and spiritual characteristics to an actor or character. Generally, characterization in a literary work consists of a protagonist and an

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antagonist. The protagonist is a character admired by readers for their admirable qualities, honesty, courage, and the moral message and positive values conveyed in the story. Meanwhile, the antagonist is a character who creates conflict and hinders the protagonist from achieving their goals, often embodying values that conflict with the protagonist.

The analysis of the 1998 novel "Hi Berlin" found 11 characters, divided into two types: protagonist and antagonist. The protagonists include Sakeza Labiru, Jan Adam, Abarak, Hazel, Bryan, Julie, Erica, and Sakeza's parents. Antagonist characters include Araka Bentara and Vodka. Each character has different traits, physical descriptions and characters with their own characteristics. First, Sakeza Labiru as the main character has physical characteristics of white skin, brown eyes, long hair and round cheeks. He is also friendly and kind. Second, Jan Adam is a male character who does not talk much, is smart, hardworking, obedient, and brave. Adam has a prominent physical characteristic, namely his blue eyes. Third, Araka Bentara, he is Sakeza's ex-boyfriend, he is the antagonist in this novel. Raka has an arrogant, rude, harsh, and divisive nature. Fourth, Erica is Sakeza's female best friend who is the protagonist. Erica is critical and thoughtful, she always thinks about her actions carefully. Erica is the wisest friend in advising. Erica has physical characteristics of short hair. Fifth, Julie is Sakeza's female best friend and Erica who is the protagonist. Julie is a talkative and brave character. Unstable in facing something and has high solidarity. Sixth, Sakeza's mother is a dentist, she has a talkative, affectionate nature and always gives positive things. Seventh, Vodka is Adam's older sister. Vodka prioritizes education, this is what makes Vodka firm with Adam to focus on his education. But behind her firmness, Vodka feels Adam is her responsibility. Eighth, Abarak is Sakeza's male best friend, he was friends with Sakeza before Julie and Erica. Abarak is not told much, only two scenes, but his arrival saves Sakeza. Ninth, Hazel and Bryan are Adam's best friends. They have the same character, mischievous, talkative, often make people around them laugh, supportive, and sometimes wise. This is proven by them always making fun of Adam, advising Adam and defending Adam when Adam is bullied by Raka. Hazel's emotions are more inflamed than Bryan who is able to control them. And finally, Sakeza's father has a friendly personality, this is proven when Adam's arrival is warmly welcomed by Sakeza's father.

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