CHAPTER II

LITERARY REVIEW

In this chapter, the writer will discuss about literary theories that are used to analyze the novel. The writer use Absurdism Theory as a main theory to analyze Absurd of main character. The writer also use New Criticism theory as a second theory to analyze character and characterization, especially to analyze main character. Instead, the writer discuses related study.

2.1 New Criticism Theory

"The New Criticism is an Anglo-American variety of Formalism that emerged in the early decades of the twentieth century and dominated teaching and scholarship until the early 1960s" (Castle 134). New criticism is one of theories that has been used by scholars for long time for analyzing literary work, in the past several decades. So in this sense, New Criticism is still a real presence among us and probably will remain so for some time to come. The most important concepts of this theory are concerning the nature and importance of textual evidence (135).

The authors interpret their though into the text itself. "The reader response can see the author's intention by language of text itself; its images, symbols, metaphors, rhyme, meter, point of view, setting, characterization, plot, and so forth, which, because they form, or shape, the literary work are called its formal elements" (Tyson 134). So we can see how the author interpreted their though by the language of text itself.

The importance of the formal elements of a literary text is a product of the nature of literary language, which, for New Criticism, is very different from scientific language and from everyday language. Scientific language, and a good deal of everyday language, depends on denotation, the one to one correspondence between words and the objects or ideas they represent. Scientific language doesn't draw attention to itself, doesn't try to be beautiful or emotionally evocative. Literary language, in contrast, depends on connotation: on the implication, association, suggestion, and evocation of meanings and of shades of meaning. In addition, literary language is expressive: it communicates tone, attitude, and feeling. While everyday language is often connotative and expressive, too, in general it is not deliberately or systematically so, for its chief purpose is practical. Everyday language wants to get things done (34).

So, New Criticism believes that the literary text can be understood primarily by understanding its form, a clear understanding of the definitions of specific formal elements is important. Because of the form in text is a reflected of author's mind.

2.1.1 Character

"Characters are the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as possessing particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying it—the dialogue and from what they do the action" (Abrams 44). Character is a representation of people in the literary work by the writer. The

person is described not as an individualized personality but as an example of some vice or virtue or type, such as a busybody, a superstitious fellow, a fop, a country bumpkin, a garrulous old man, a happy milkmaid, etc.

On the one hand, Benneth says that Characters are the life of literature: they are the objects of our curiosity and fascination, affection and dislike, admiration and condemnation (60). Indeed, so intense is our relationship with literary characters that they often cease to be simply 'objects'. Character in the literary work can make us understand the story and make us curious about this story.

So, character in literature is an extended verbal representation of human being, especially the inner self that determines though, speech and behavior. In the literature, the authors make interaction like dialogue, action, and commentary by portraying characters who are worth caring about, rooting for, and even loving, although there are also character whom public may laugh, dislike or even hate.

In the literary works, characters became one of the most important aspect that must exist in the literary works. Without the character, a literary work will be nonsense because this aspect could make the literary work alive. On the other hand, the existence of the character that created by authors is make story seems true life.

Kind of Character

There are many kinds of character. Edgar (135) said the types of characters are divided into two categories, that is round character and flat character. Forster

says in the book *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, "a flat character (also called a type, or "two-dimensional") is built around "a single idea or quality" and is presented without much individualizing detail, and therefore can be described adequately in a single phrase or sentence" (43). It means that a flat character is a very simple personality, often called "one or two dimensional" characters. The writer does not provide enough information for us to understand them.

On the other hand, according to Edgar "a flat character is not dynamic and static" (136). Flat characters are usually minor character in the literary works that appears, but not always so. Although flat character is a minor character in the story, their appearance cannot be neglected because they play to construct the whole story and sometimes to make the round character become more central.

Contrasted with flat characters, "round character is complex in temperament and motivation and is represented with subtle particularity; such a character therefore is as difficult to describe with any adequacy as a person in real life, and like real persons, is capable of surprising us" (Abrams 135). Round character is a character that is very detailed and the reader can able to see and visualize all side of this character.

According to Edgar "round characters are usually the major figures in a story" (136). The authors portrayed a round character in greater depth and more generous detail. The authors develop the round characters more detail to make them to be a central of the reader attention. Nurgiyantoro states that the main character in the story may be more than one person, although its superiority level

is not the same (117). Their superiority is determined by dominance, mostly appearance and influence toward the whole development in the story. When the authors can make a good develops the round character in more detail, it can make the reader easily to remember and reminded the character.

2.1.2 Characterization

The writers will use a variety of techniques to help readers get to know the characters in the story and what the characters are like.

Characterization is a name for the methods a writer uses to reveal a character's values, feelings, goals, etc. to readers. When revealing a character's traits, a writer can do so using direct characterization or indirect characterization.

Holman says characterization is the creation of imaginary persons (75).

The ability to characterize the people of one's imagination successfully is a primary attribute of a good novelist, dramatist, or short story writer. Holman also state that there are three fundamental methods of characterization in fiction:

- 1. The explicit presentation by the author of the character through direct exposition.
- 2. The presentation of the character in action, with little or no explicit comment by the author. The reader is expected to be able to give attributes of the actor from the action.
- 3. The presentation from within the character, without comment on the character's inner self, with the expectation that the reader will come to a clear understanding of the attributes of the character. (75)

From the statement above, Holman argues that characterization have three fundamental methods to make the readers easy to judge the personality of their

character. It is very useful method because we can analyze a character of someone by looking at his behavior, speech, and appearance.

The authors might develop a character through dialogue, and action. There are two ways the authors can convey information about a character; direct and indirect characterization.

Direct presentation they tell us straight out, by exposition or analysis, what the character are like, or have someone else in the story tell us what they are like. In **indirect presentation** the authors show us the characters in action; what they are like from what they think or say or do (Perrine 66)

Direct Characterization is when a writer conveys information about a character by telling the information directly to the reader. This is done through narration when the author comes right out and tells the reader things about the character. Direct characterization makes it easy for readers to come to clear understandings about the character. However, most information about characters is not so easily ascertained. That is because most of our understandings about characters must be arrived at as a result of indirect characterization.

Indirect characterization occurs when the author shows the character in action, and lets the reader interpret what these actions reveal about the character. Readers must then rely on their own knowledge and experience to interpret the character. There are a number of tools that a writer will use to impart personality traits to their characters.

In literary works, the character is varied and each of the character is different traits because actually characters in literary works refer to a real human being behavior and personality. So, character and characterization are interrelated, also character become an important point to analyze in this study.

2.2 Absurdism in Literature

Absurdism boomed in literature after World War II when Samuel Beckett wrote *Waiting For Godot*. The absurdest genre grew out of the modernist literature of the late 19th and early 20th century in direct opposition to the Victorian literature which was prominent just prior to this period. It was largely influenced by the existentialist and nihilist movements in philosophy. Both philosophy and literature are the same in having reality as its departure.

Absurdism is not easily separated with postmodernism. It is an era as a reaction against modernism in the wake of World War II, beginning of Cold War, early of Civil Right in the United States and the start of post colonialism (Sharma & Chaudhary 191). Postmodernism influence many aspect of human life including literature. The content of philosophy is based on the fact which evaluated its identity and essence. Literature also comes from reality but is processed through imagination. Thus, philosophy and literature can run together, due everyone can do philosophy through literature, without regards its form.

2.2.1 Absurdism Theory

The word 'absurd' connotes something that does not follow the roots of logic. From the Oxford dictionary, the word 'absurd' means unreasonable, meaningless and ridiculous. The word absurd also may refer to incongruous, unreasonable, and illogical. If we apply the word absurd in literary work, we will find the meaningless of the work in the way the story finds its result or purpose. Kiekegaard said in his Journal about absurdism;

What is the Absurd? It is as may quite easily be seen, that I, a rational being, must act in a case where my reason, my powers of reflection, tell me: you can just as well do the one thing as the other, that is to say where my reason and reflection say: you cannot act and yet here is where I have to act.... The Absurd, or to act by virtue of the absurd, is to act upon faith... I must act, but reflection has closed the road so I take one of the possibilities and say: this is what I do, I cannot do otherwise because I am brought to a standstill by my powers of reflection (27).

Only human life can be absurd. Other animals are not absurd within the world they inhabit because they do not perceive themselves in a way that they allow them to reflect on their place within it. In contrast, the self-conscious man awakens within his surroundings to find himself out-of-joint:

"There can be no absurd outside the human mind. Thus, like everything else, the absurd ends with death. But there can be no absurd outside this world either. And it is by this elementary criterion that I judge the notion of the absurd as essential and consider that it can stand as the first of my truths (Camus, MS; p. 35)."

Albert Camus maintains in The Myth of Sisyphus that the absurd arises because the world fails to meet our demand for meaning (Nagel 721). This suggests that the world might satisfy those demands if it were different. Camus'

argument is that the universe is absurd, i.e. that there is objectively no meaning in the world.

"The absurd depends on man as on the world. For the moment it is all that links them together. It binds them one to the other as only hatred can weld two creatures together. This is all I can discern clearly in this measureless universe where my adventure takes place" (Camus 16).

The writer find that Camus' argument on the absurd can be summarized as follows: Between myself and the universe, there is such a gap in meaning, so great that one must ask, "How could it be possible for any meaning to exist?" From his quotation above, it is clear that Camus believes that this principle of absurdity, that there is no meaning in the universe, must follow from the two terms and the understanding of their relationship (Teachout 2).

Nagel contrasts his sense of absurdity with Camus. There are two main differences between Nagel and Camus. Nagel's absurdity is constituted by our failure to find objective reasons to justify the concern central to our lives. The doubt that arises from consciousness of the objective perspective collides with the commitments of the subjective perspective. Until this objective consciousness awakens in us, we are not absurd, for the conflict is not present. For Camus, absurdity is a feature of our confrontation with the external world and consciousness is not an essential part of absurdity, but is only a way to recognize absurdity that exists regardless of this awareness. Thus Nagel holds that there is no possible world in which human's existence would not be absurd, while for Camus absurdity comes about because of the world that we by chance find ourselves inhabiting (Randles 35)

Nagel's states in his journal 'The Absurd" to describe and understand absurdity as a feeling. "Most people feel on occasion that life is absurd, and some feel it vividly and continually. (716)"After noting the near universality of this feeling, Nagel's effort is to offer an explanation of why we have this feeling.

Nagel distinguishes between the feeling that accompanies absurd situations and the feeling that human life as such is absurd.

In ordinary life a situation is absurd when it includes a conspicuous discrepancy between pretension or aspiration and reality: someone gives a complicated speech in support of a motion that has already been passed; a notorious criminal is made president of a major philanthropic foundation; you declare your love over the telephone to a recorded announcement; as you are being knighted, your pants fall down. (718)

With this conception of absurdity in mind, Nagel argues that there are grounds for supposing that there is a general and inevitable discrepancy between pretension or aspiration (what we think should be happening) and reality (what really is happening), and thus that our lives are absurd. The absurd conflict is apparent.

"If life itself is absurd, there has to be a universal philosophical sense to absurdity, a way in which pretension and reality clash for all of us" (719). Nagel argues that this condition is supplied by the collision between the seriousness with which we take our lives and the perpetual possibility of regarding everything about which we are serious as arbitrary, or open to doubt. This collision is between two ways of viewing, which both are unavoidable. On the other hand, there is the particular viewpoint from within our lives, in which we attach worth and importance to the things we do.

We cannot live human live without energy and attention, nor without making choices which show that we take some things more seriously than others. From it, we have a point of view outside the particular form of our lives, from which the seriousness appears gratuitous. These viewpoints collide in us, and that is what makes life absurd. It is absurd because we ignore the doubts that we know cannot be settled, continuing to live with nearly undiminished seriousness in spite of them (719).

Nagel sets himself two tasks in defending his sense of absurdity: "This analysis requires defense in two respects: first as regards the unavoidable of seriousness; second as regards the inescapable of doubt." (719) Seriousness and doubt, the conditions for absurdity, are for Nagel inextricably intertwined with two perspectives that are essential parts of human person hood. According to Randles 'Nagel maintains that neither of the perspectives can be eliminated, and thus, neither can the resulting seriousness or the doubt' (14). As a result, absurdity cannot be eliminated.

Nagel argues has another reasons that make human life is absurd they are; circumstances and personal relation. 'Many people's lives are absurd, temporarily or permanently, for conventional reasons having to do with their particular ambitions, circumstances, and personal relations' (718). Absurdity in human life depends on human situation itself. The sense that life as a whole is absurd arises when we perceive, perhaps dimly, an inflated pretension or aspiration which is inseparable from the continuation of human life and which makes its absurdity inescapable, short of escape from life itself.

When a person in absurd situation, he must take a choice. Nagel states that have three choice when a human in absurd situation.

When a person finds himself in an absurd situation, he will usually attempt to change it,

- 1. by modifying his aspirations, or by
- 2. trying to bring reality into better accord with them, or by
- 3. Removing himself from the situation entirely. (718)

Modifying his aspiration; it means that we change the condition. Trying to bring reality into better accord with them; we know that the reality is not suitable with our pretension, and we try to bring the reality to become what we want.

Removing himself from the situation entirely; it means we receive the reality. We does not change the reality itself.

All of human certainly will be in the absurd situation because not all pretension is become true. It doesn't matter that a human in the absurd situation, but the way how the human to receive from absurd situation is important.

2.3 Review of Related Study

The first is Devotion In Nicholas Spark's *The Notebook* (1996): An Individual Psychological Approach. This thesis is written by Yuli Andria Fajarini in Muhammadiyah University Surakarta. The object of this thesis is to analyze the novel based on its structural elements and the devotion of Noah that deals with *inferiority feeling and compensation, striving for superiority, fictional finalism, style of life, social interest,* and *creative self*-using an individual psychological approach. The result of the study revealed that the major character, Noah Calhoun is affected by the psychological effect. Noah fights hard to get his true love and shows her his devotion. He dedicates all of his live for her, Allie.

The similarities between researcher and Yuli Andrian is using same the object, novel *The Notebook* by Nicholas Sparks. The differences between this thesis with the researcher in the character and the theories. Yuli Andrian analyze about the Noah's Character and used psychological theory and the researcher analyze about Allie's character and used Absurdism theory.

The second is The Type of Love as Reflected through the Main Characters and Their Conflicts in Spark's The Notebook. This thesis is written by Silvina Ayu Ardiantina in Samata Dharma University. This thesis described about the main characters, and the conflicts in the novel The Notebook. This thesis also reveals the type of love of the main characters in the novel, and describe the term of love theory. Noah Calhoun and Allie Nelson are the main characters and they fall in love to each other. They struggle for their love until the end of the story. This study

is able to show the type of love as reflected through the characteristics of the main characters and their conflicts that happened in their love journey. The characteristics and the love of Noah and Allie can fulfill each other in facing the conflicts in their relationship. They have a type of love, which is called Eros love or Erotic love because there is an exclusiveness which cannot be found in other type of love. It proves with sexual desire, full commitment in all aspects of their life, and the affection of their love in their marriage.

The similarities between researcher and Ardiantina is using same the object, novel *The Notebook* by Nicholas Sparks. The differences between this thesis with the researcher in the character and the theories. Yuli Andrian analyze about the Noah and Allie Character and used love theory by Enrich Fromm, Ayala Pines and Paul Hauck and the researcher analyze about Allie's character and used Absurdism theory by Thomas Nagel.