

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

This chapter presents the conclusion to the findings and discussion in Chapter Four. It begins with the summary of the findings as well as my personal comments, and followed by the limitations of my study. This chapter ends with some suggestions for future research.

The main purpose of this study is to find the representation of the main female character in a short story written by Roald Dahl entitled “The Last Act”, which plot revolves around a depressed, suicidal woman. In order to find the representation, I use the Actantial Model and Narrative Trajectory theories proposed by Algirdas Julien Greimas; both theories belong to the branch of linguistics known as structural semiotics. The theories help in deciding the main events of the story, which thus help in showing how the main female character is represented.

There are four events that are found in the story and the result from all of them shows that the female is represented negatively. In the first event, after the death of the female character’s, Anna’s husband, the woman is portrayed to be having emotional problems, so much that she wants to commit suicide. Her unwillingness to continue on living shows that she is weak and cowardice. In my

opinion, this negative portrayal of the character represents the message that Dahl wants to convey to the reader; that is that women will be overcome with emotion and will not be able to think logically when faced with difficulties. I also believe that Dahl may want to say that women may rely on other people more when they have emotional problems.

The negative representation can be seen to still be going on in the second event. Again, Dahl portrays the main female character as having a pessimistic view of life as she sees no purpose of living when her children return to their daily activities and, in her mind, abandon her. This, I strongly believe, shows that women are clingy. They are represented as not having a real purpose in life outside of homemaking and taking care of their children and husbands, so when they are taken away, women will tend to be emotional and want to take the easy way out.

In my opinion, the third event shows a similar negative representation of women. In here, Anna is portrayed to want to have a companion. In other words, she feels uncomfortable when she does not have someone to turn to. I believe this is Dahl's way to emphasize on how women need constant companionship and are unable to function on their own, or he wants to say that women are governed by their emotion.

For the last event which is where Anna meets her old friend, Conrad. The negative representation of Anna is still going until the end of the story. In here, she is portrayed as someone who barely considers other people's feelings or is selfish. It is shown when Conrad tries to tell his past about what Anna did to him. However, we know that Anna does care about her husband and also her children.

Because of that, I believe Dahl tries to tell the readers that women usually care to the people who they loved, such as family. They barely think about other people's feeling since they are not the one who should be responsible for that and they also have people they love to take care with.

Overall, as it can be seen that all of the events result that a woman is represented negatively. Although they are some positive side about Anna, the negative characteristics of her are more dominant since it is being shown more in the story and it is also the one that cause the issues. Furthermore, from the way Dahl portrays the women negatively in his story also shows the way he sees women at that time as a weak and emotional being. He sees women as they use their emotion more than their logic in order to face various difficulties on their life. Based on my personal opinion, the effect of the representation may show that women are a very emotional being that they are easily get hurt mentally, especially when they have to lose someone they love the most like in the story.

In doing this thesis, there are some limitations and the first one is the data or the short story that I use is only one. I believe that this prevents me from comparing the portrayal of women in this story to Dahl's other stories, which may help in generalizing how Dahl usually portrays women in this story. Another limitation, which is connected to my limited choice of work to analyze, is the time constraint; it makes me have to carefully divide the story into a broader event without considering details that may bring forth more representations. Furthermore, the lack of time also makes it impossible for me to analyze the representation of the male character in this story even though I believe Roald Dahl also wants to show us something from the male characters in the story. The last

one, the theories I use only focus on events and they do not consider different aspects of the story. If I use more theories that can focus on other aspects like symbolism, the result may be more satisfying.

For future research, I recommend that other researchers should use more than one story so as to be able to draw comparison and a more thorough idea of how sees women. It is also advisable to break down the story into as small units as possible in order to get a detailed analysis of the story. Another thing that may be important is to consider making diagram from the perspectives of different characters as the subjects so that the dynamics among the characters may be found, which will lead to a more thorough analysis of the story. I also believe that in terms of this particular story, a deeper and more meaningful analysis may be achieved by applying another theory on top of the two already used. For instance, another semiotics theory by Barthes, or even a stylistics analysis using Labov's narrative structure theory will be a good addition to the present analysis.

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