

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

According to Esca (2012), “A narrative text tells a story from a particular point of view and can be presented using words, images, and/or sounds” (para. 1). The purpose of a narrative is usually “to narrate events, entertain and engage the reader in an imaginative experience” (Esca, 2012, para. 1). In other words, a narrative text is a text that tells a fiction or a non-fiction story to the readers or listeners in order to amuse or entertain them. A narrative text is a story that can be based on the experience or the imagination of the author. There are several types of narrative texts, such as legend, fable, fairy tale, folktale, and many more; they also come in various length from a novel to a short story.

A short story is a short fictional prose narrative that only has a few characters and is shorter than a novel (Hansen, n.d., para. 1). As it is short and compact, a short story allows the readers to notice the whole narrative structure in one sitting (Lemov, 2015, para. 2). A short story can also show how society is structured, which means we can learn a lot about how people live and represented

when we read it. In a short story, the theme is the core through which the author can convey a lot of things, including how he sees the world around him.

Hall (1997) states that “Representation is the production of meaning through language” (p. 16). In other words, a description of someone or something using words will create a certain representation or a mental image of the thing or person described. This makes it very important for authors to create an impression about the things they write about. Representation short stories can be found in the form of symbols, objects, setting of the story, or even the characters in the stories.

Representation of a character in a short story can be analysed by using a lot of theories, including in the field of Linguistics. Two of Semiotics theories that can be used to analyse the representation of a character in a short story are the Actantial Model and Narrative Trajectory; both theories were proposed by Algirdas Julien Greimas and are now widely used by various structural semioticians. The Actantial Model is the theory that can be used to break an action into six actants and three axes. The three axes are the axis of desire, power, and transmission/knowledge. Each of the axis consists of two actants. The axis of desire consists of subject and object, the axis of power consists of helper and opponent, and the axis of transmission/knowledge consists of sender and receiver. The Narrative Trajectory is the tool that is used to describe the subject’s action in achieving the object. The Narrative Trajectory consists of three tests: the qualifying test, the decisive test, and the glorifying test. These tests are preceded by the stage of manipulation or contract.

The data that I choose is a short story entitled “Nunc Dimittis” that is written by Roald Dahl. I choose the short story written by Roald Dahl because he is known to write stories with unusual themes. “Roald Dahl reinforces the theme that justice will be brought upon those who betray, deceive, and manipulate others by using dark humour and suspense” (Study Moose, 2016, para. 1). In this particular short story, Dahl writes about a man who seeks justice through the path of vengeance. The story is structured in such an intricate and interesting way that makes the readers curious about how the plan is playing out. In addition, the way Dahl structures the story is believed to be able to reveal more about the main character’s characteristics and give some representation of said character in the story.

The purpose of the study is to find the major events in the short story entitled “Nunc Dimittis” by Roald Dahl and to find how the male character is portrayed in the events by using the Actantial Model by A. J. Greimas (as cited in Hebert, 2018) and Narrative Trajectory (Greimas, as cited in Martin & Ringham, 2006).

This study is significant in adding to the existing literature of Linguistics, especially in the study of structural semiotics, which focuses on a narrative text. It is hoped that the analysis also sheds a new light in exploring the representation and portrayal of a fictional character through the structure of the story rather than through the main plot itself.

(Total Words: 746 Words)

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This thesis will try to answer the following questions:

1. What are the major events in the short story entitled “Nunc Dimittis” by Roald Dahl?
2. How is the male character portrayed in the events?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is:

1. to find the major events in the short story entitled “Nunc Dimittis” by Roald Dahl.
2. to find how the male character is portrayed in the events.

1.4 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter One, which is the introduction, consists of Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, and Organization of the Thesis. Next is Chapter Two, which is Literature Review that contains the theories and a review of a previous study that I use to analyse the short story. Chapter Three contains Method of Research of my analysis, including the Research Design, Data Collection Technique, Framework for Analysis, and Data Analysis. In Chapter Four, the analysis of the data is reported. The last chapter, Chapter Five contains the conclusion of the analysis and my comments of the findings. The thesis ends with References and Appendices.