

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Individuals from both sexes, male and female, are known to be shaped by their environment. According to Mark Leary, a Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at Duke University, “It is true that environmental influences, including parenting, affect personality” and “based on genetic data, researchers have concluded that environment accounts for approximately 50 to 70 percent of personality.” This shows how the environment plays a big role in shaping individuals’ personality, whether it is good or bad, and this notion is also depicted in the novel that is going to be discussed in this thesis: *The Wasp Factory* (1984) by Iain Banks.

Iain Banks was a Scottish author. He became well-known after the publication of his first psychological fiction novel, *The Wasp Factory*. According to Little, Brown and Company – the publishing company which publishes Banks’ works – Banks is a unique and prominent author: “Iain Banks’ ability to combine the most fertile of imaginations with his own highly distinctive brand of gothic humor made him unique. He is an irreplaceable part of the literary world” (Davies). Banks had his own unique way to create

his novel using his distinctive imagination, and it can be seen through one of his famous novels, *The Wasp Factory*.

The Wasp Factory follows the story of a 16-year-old Frank Leslie Cauldhame who lives in a small island in Scotland with his father. Frank's father tells him that he is castrated by his family dog when he was three years old. After the traumatic incident, he begins to question his manliness; as a result, he grows up to be a peculiar teenager who likes to torture animals and control other people. Besides, the absence of his mother who abandons him since he was born leads him to have negative prejudices against women in general. Frank also has a psychotic stepbrother, Eric, who runs away from a mental institution and on his way to return home. While waiting for Eric, Frank discovers the truth that his father hides from him – the truth that Frank is actually born as a girl and that his father is experimenting to turn Frank into a boy.

Looking at how the story goes, it can be seen that the author wants to convey a certain message to the readers through his depiction of the protagonist. Thus, theme through portrayal of the protagonist is considered the most significant element to analyze in this novel. Theme is defined as “a main idea or an underlying meaning of a literary work, which may be stated directly or indirectly” (“Theme”). Portrayal is defined as “the way that someone or something is described or represented in a painting, film, book, or other artistic work” (“Portrayal”) while a protagonist is defined as “the central character or leading figure in poetry, narrative, novel or any other story” (“Protagonist”). In this novel, the protagonist is portrayed as a static character, which refers to a character “that does not undergo inner changes, or undergoes a little change; a character that does not develop or grow” (“Static Character”).

In analyzing the theme through portrayal of the protagonist in this novel, it is deemed necessary to use psychological approach to understand why the author portrays the protagonist in such a way and how the portrayal is related to the theme. Therefore, this study will use Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, which studies "human behavior by exploring new or controversial areas like wish-fulfillment, sexuality, the unconscious, and repression" (Payas). This theory originally begins as a clinical method for treating patients. However, as time goes by, it starts to be used to interpret literary works. This theory can be utilized to analyze the fictional characters' behavior and the psychological state of the characters who are seen as the representation of human in reality.

The psychoanalytic theory itself is known to have various branches of theory that focus on certain aspects of human. The specific one that will be used in this study is the psychoanalytic theory of personality development by Sigmund Freud. This theory explains that people generally have to pass the five psychosexual stages – oral, anal, phallic, latent, and genital – in their childhood in order to be an adult with a healthy personality. Through the use of this theory, it is hoped that the portrayal of the protagonist and the theme of the novel can be analyzed and understood further.

Statement of the Problem

The problems I am going to discuss in this thesis are:

1. What is the theme of the novel?
2. How does the portrayal of the protagonist help in revealing the theme?
3. How does Freud's theory of psychoanalysis help in understanding the portrayal of the protagonist and revealing the theme of the novel?

Purpose of the Study

Based on the statement of the problems above, this study is conducted:

1. to show the theme of the novel;
2. to show how the portrayal of the protagonist helps in revealing the theme;
3. to show how Freud's theory of psychoanalysis helps in understanding the portrayal of the protagonist and revealing the theme of the novel.

Method of Research

In conducting this study, I begin by reading the novel itself which is Iain Banks' *The Wasp Factory*. After understanding the novel, I do some library research in order to gather some information and references to support my analysis. I also read Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality development which will be used in my analysis. Next, I analyze the portrayal of the protagonist and explain the findings further using the theory. Then, I reveal the theme of the novel through the portrayal of the protagonist. Finally, I draw a conclusion from my analysis.

Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of four main chapters. The first chapter is Introduction, which consists of Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research, and Organization of the Thesis. The second chapter contains the explanation of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality development that is used in analysing the portrayal of the protagonist. The third chapter contains the analysis of theme through portrayal of the protagonist in Iain Banks' *The Wasp Factory* using Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality development. The last

chapter contains the conclusion of what has been discussed in the previous chapters. This thesis ends with Bibliography and Appendices, which consist of Synopsis of *The Wasp Factory* and Biography of Iain Banks.

