

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Novel is ‘a lengthy fictitious prose narrative portraying characters and presenting an organised series of events and settings... the novel has no actual maximum length. Every novel is an account of life; every novel involves conflict, character, action, setting, plot and theme’ (Shaw, 1905:257). This fact makes novel more interesting than other literary genres. Besides, novel is easier to analyse and understand.

The present writer finds that novel is more interesting than poetry or drama, because a novel has more detailed description than drama or poetry. ‘It is an extended prose fiction narrative of 50,000 words or more... concerning the everyday events of ordinary people and concerned with character’ (Shaw, 1972:223). Therefore, he chooses novel as the literary genre to analyse in his thesis.

William Faulkner achieved a reputation as one of the greatest American novelists of the twentieth century. William Faulkner has a style unlike many other authors. He employs stream-of-consciousness to tell exactly what a person is thinking. He won a Nobel Prize in literature in 1949. These facts motivate the present writer to analyse one of his works, Light in August.

During the early 1930s, he wrote Light in August, a story of Joe Christmas, Lena Grove, and Gail Hightower which largely set among poor Southern labourers during the 1920s. It takes up a wide range of thematic concerns centered on isolation represented by the major characters. However, the present writer only focuses on one of the major characters, Joe Christmas. He is half-black and half-white. He is convicted of the murder of Joanna Burden by the society. Christmas' life also influences the lives of other major characters. In the end, a loner character, Percy Grimm, kills him.

In this novel, William Faulkner uses narrative techniques in a unique way. For instance, he mostly uses third person limited point of view, stream of consciousness and flashback; in addition, he combines them harmoniously to convey his ideas to the reader. Narrative techniques are concerned with point of view, time and tempo, style, and distance. According to Eastman, narrative technique refers to how the writer chooses ways of telling a story to manifest the effects that he wants the reader to feel. "He can choose the angle from which the reader observes... the closeness at which the reader is to be held"

(Eastman, 1965: 31).

Statement of the Problem

In order to analyse the novel, the present writer states the problems as follows:

1. What narrative technique is used in Light in August?
2. What effects are achieved in the use of the narrative technique?

Purpose of the Study

Based on the Statement of the Problem, the present writer mentions the Purpose of the Study as follows:

1. To show the narrative technique used in Light in August
2. To point out what effects are achieved by the narrative technique.

Method of Research

The method that the present writer chooses is library research. He begins by reading William Faulkner's Light in August, and several books that are relevant to the topic to be discussed. After that, the present writer analyses the primary text by using some theories from some books of reference and materials from the Internet that can support the analysis and help him in writing a good thesis. Finally, he draws some conclusions of what has been discussed.

Organization of the Thesis

The present writer divides this thesis into four chapters, which are followed by the Bibliography and the Appendices. In the first chapter, the present writer presents the Introduction that contains the Background of the Study, the Statement of the Problem, the Purpose of the Study, the Method of Research, and the Organization of the Thesis. In the second chapter, the present writer presents the theories on narrative technique used in analysing the novel. In the third chapter, he analyses the narrative technique of Faulkner's Light in August. Later, in the fourth chapter he draws a conclusion based on the analysis of the narrative technique in the novel. This thesis ends with the Bibliography and the Appendices, comprising a synopsis of the novel and the biography of the author.