

## Conflict Analysis of Novel Main Character: A Discourse Perspective

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze the conflicts of main characters depicted in the Sidney Sheldon novel entitled “Tell Me Your Dreams” published in 1998 using both discourse analysis approach and textual analysis. It is to find out how discourse can be formally use to analyze and reveal the internal and external conflicts of the main characters using a medium of lexical choices and the flow of the dialog among the characters. This study used a qualitative descriptive research method. It is concerned with the description and explanation of phenomena involving the main characters of the novel. The lexical choices and some linguistic features used in the dialog among the main characters shows show both internal and external conflicts in this novel. In this novel there are also external conflicts. Using certain lexical terms in the plot, this novel is packed with neat stories and provides images and knowledge of life for readers.

Key Words: character, conflict, discourse

### I. INTRODUCTION

Literary works are creations delivered communicatively about the author's intentions for aesthetic purposes. These works often tell a story, either in the first or third person, with a plot and through the use of various literary devices related to their time (Wikipedia). Literary works are known in two forms, namely fiction and non-fiction. Types of fiction literary works are prose, poetry and drama. While examples of non-fiction literary works are biographies, autobiographies, essays and literary criticism. Then it was mentioned by Sapardi Djoko Damono that the function of literary works was to communicate ideas and channel the thoughts and aesthetic feelings of the creators. The idea was conveyed through a mandate that generally exists in literature. In addition to ideas, in literature there are also descriptions of various events, psychological images, and various dynamics of

problem solving. This can be a source of thought and inspiration for readers. Conflicts and tragedies depicted in literary work give readers the awareness that it can happen in real life and is experienced directly by the reader.

The novel is a work of prose fiction that is narrative written. Generally a novel tells the story of the characters and their behavior in everyday life, with a focus on the strange sides of the narrative. The word novel comes from the Italian language, *novella* which means "a story, a piece of news" and the novel has a story that is more complex than a short story. Fiction is narrative prose which is imaginary. Even so a work of fiction still makes sense and contains truth that can dramatize relationships between people. A literary work must have intellectual and extrinsic elements. Intrinsic element to help the development of a literary works or stories such as themes, plots, settings, characters, conflicts and so forth.

This paper focuses on the conflicting main characters depicted in the Sidney Sheldon novel *Tell Me Your Dreams* published in 1998 which has been translated into Indonesian using both discourse analysis approach and textual analysis. It is to see how connected discourse can be formally analyzed to reveal the internal and external conflicts of the main characters using a medium of lexical choices and the flow of the dialog among the characters. According to Mayr (2008), discourse analysis can be viewed from two perspectives. They are structuralist and functionalist. The structuralists view discourse analysis as the use of language in the top level of clauses and sentences which focuses on how the structure of the text is drawn from the cohesion and coherence (cf. Halliday and Hasan, 1987: 21-23; Halliday, 1994: 129). Meanwhile, the functionalist view discourse analysis as a form of 'language in use' (the use of language) which can not be separated from the purpose and function of language in social praxis. This Sydney Sheldon novel was chosen because the story is very good, thrilling on each plot and provides additional knowledge about the disease Multiple Personality Disorder. Sydney Sheldon is a well-known novelist whose literary works have been translated into many languages and his works are always best sellers. The novel consists of 418 pages and was published by PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama 6, January 2005.

## II. METHOD

This study used a qualitative descriptive research method. It is concerned with the description and explanation of phenomena involving the main characters of the novel. This method is applied to find out the conflicts of the main characters described textually on the novel entitled, "Tell Me Your Dreams". There are many theories and approaches used in analyzing a literary work. One of the things is the flow of one's life is conflict. This study uses a technique of documentation in collecting the data and mechanical documentation done by documenting texts and discourse related to and described on the novel (cf. Laba, Riana and Schmolli 2015:193). In this context, the documents referred to text and discourse existing in the novel. It is further remarked that discourse analysis can help language researchers to see linguistic elements of a particular text.

## III. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

The definition of literary works and novels is explained for theoretical basis of this library research. According to Sugihastuti's view (2007: 81-82) literary works are the media used by the author to convey his ideas and experiences. As a media, the role of literary works as a medium to connect the thoughts of the author to be conveyed to the reader. In addition, literary works can also reflect the author's views on various problems observed in his environment. The social reality that is presented through the text to the reader is a description of various social phenomena that have occurred in society and are re-presented by the author in different forms and ways. William Kenney (1966: 5) mentioned two types of conflict, namely external conflict and internal conflict. In addition, literary works can entertain, increase knowledge and enrich the reader's insight in a unique way, namely writing it in narrative form. So that the message is conveyed to the reader without the impression of pursuing it. According to Mukarovsky and Felik Vodicka in Ratna (2004: 93) literary work is a process of communication, semiotic facts, consisting of signs, structures, and artistic values, so to analyze them requires structural and semiotic methods. Structuralist is basically a way of thinking about something related to the response and description of structures. One part of literary works are novels. Novels generally consist of 45,000 words or more. According to Sayuti (2000: 10) novels are often opposed to short stories, the difference is that short stories focus on intensity, while novels tend to be broad "expands". A good novel

tends to focus on the emergence of complexity, which is the ability to convey complex problems in full, create a world that "is", in contrast to the short stories that are implicit, namely to tell a problem briefly.

The conflict itself is very broad in scope. Conflict in literary works is the life that determines the life and death of a literary work. In general, conflicts in literary works can be classified into two, namely internal conflicts and external conflicts. According to William Kenney (1966: 5), there are two types of conflict, namely external conflict and internal conflict. External conflict is a problem that occurs with factors outside the human self. External conflict is a form of fighting, contention, or just opposition where two sides are present. Conflict is expressed as an example between humans between humans, between humans and nature, humans and society. External conflicts shown through actions (struggles, squabbles, and physical struggles), characters where there are good and bad characters, dialogues, descriptions and so on. While internal conflicts are battles that occur in the mind of a character due to different desires or choices. Conflict is also through a process and has four stages. The four stages according to Robbins (1979: 290), these stages are the potential for opposition, the potential for cognition and personalization, the potential for behavior, and the potential for outcomes.

In this novel it is explained that the main character in this novel is Ashley Patterson. Daughter of a famous doctor named doctor Patterson who works at Global Computer Graphics Corporation. She is a beautiful and attractive woman but she has never dated anyone. When he graduated from high school he had a date with Jim Clearly but Ashley's father did not approve of the relationship. Ashley's character is portrayed as a bit shy and boring as early as 30 years old. Ashley suffering from MPD or referred to as multiple personality disorder, where Ashley's personality can change at any time without being realized by Ashley himself. This arises because Ashley's dark past, when Ashley was a child, experienced sexual abuse by her own biological father. Ashley's childhood trauma caused Ashley's personality to split. Ashley never thought that there was someone else living in his body. Personalities born of the trauma are Toni Prescott and Allete Peters. Toni Prescott has a strong, passionate and determined character. Alter is 22 years old and

was born in London, has a charming British accent. He is also good at ice skiing and singing, but his attitude is sometimes curt and cynical.

The third alterer of Ashley Petterson is Alette Peters. This personality was born in Rome, Italy and Allele is twenty years old. Described Allele character is a figure full of imagination, soft-spoken and melodic Italian accent. He is also described as an artist who is good at painting. Allele rarely has friends. Only Tony is his only friend. Friends share stories and problems. Toni and Allele like to talk about Ashley who, according to them, never laughs and is always moody like the Ice Queen. But these three characters are intimately connected with brutal murder cases. All three are the main suspects. They have the same fingerprint and more precisely they are in the same body. Ashley denies that he ever killed a person because to think about it Ashley would never be able to do that. But all the evidence points to Ashley. Ashley's father asked a famous lawyer to help Ashley. And finally Ashley was under the supervision of a psychiatrist for his case. These psychiatrists tried to help Ashley by digging up the information from the three personalities. When under the influence of hypnosis, Ashley told how his alibi at the time of the incident, and not yet finished, Toni had barged in and sabotaged the body's consciousness. Then Toni was the one who took over consciousness and eliminated the men without remorse. Human personality is complex. Sidney Sheldon shows nicely through this *Tell Me Your Dreams* novel. Although fictional, Sydney Sheldon shows how other personalities are created. Internal conflicts are usually referred to as psychological conflicts between the main character and himself. For example, the character has an inner conflict with himself in deciding which things are good and which are not good according to him or deciding on one solution to the problem he is facing. For example in the novel *Tell Me Your Dreams*, Ashley as the main character The following is an example of an internal conflict that occurred in Ashley:

*"I won't allow my father to do this to me, think Ashley was determined. He tried to ruin my life. Ashley sat on his bed for a long time. Jim, my future. I want to be with him. My place is no longer here. He got up and started packing the small suitcase. Half an hour later Ashley slipped through the back door and headed for Jim*

Clearly's house. About a dozen blocks from his house. *"I will stay at his house tonight, and we will take the morning train to Chicago."* But after getting closer to Jim's house, Ashley thought, *No, this is wrong. I don't want to destroy everything. I'll meet him at the station.* " He turned and went home. (Chapter I: 22) . Using a perspective of discourse analysis, the text and the linguistic features on the dialog implies how contradictions or inner conflicts occurred to Ashley who tried to escape from her house because her father clearly did not approve of the relationship between her and Jim Clearly. On the one hand he wants to live together and continue to live with his girlfriend, but on the other hand there is a great controversy in him that he does not want to disappoint the father who loved him so much.

Other examples of internal conflicts are:

It took Ashley an hour to decide whether he would go to the office or not. He was very confused." *Once they see me, people will immediately know that something is wrong. But if I didn't show up, they would want to know why. The police might go there to interrogate. If they ask me, I will be forced to tell them what really happened. They will not believe me. They will accuse me of killing Dennis Tibble. And if they believed me, and if I told my father I knew what Dennis was doing to me, they would blame my father."* (Chapter 6: 82-83)

The sentence above also clearly describes the internal conflict within Ashley. He was confused about deciding what should be done. Does he have to work that day or should he just stay at home. Because when the murder case against Dennis Tibble occurred, he was the last person with Dennis Tibble and he did not feel anything at all to Dennis. The sentence also shows clearly how Ashley really protected his father and always wanted to protect his father's good name. The two examples above show the internal conflict in this novel.

In this novel there are also external conflicts. External conflicts are conflicts that occur between the main character and supporting characters (conflicts between people). External conflicts between Ashley, who is Toni and her mother, are as follows:

Toni thought, how much her mother would hate the internet. But his mother hates everything. He only has two ways to communicate: shout or whine. Toni could

never make him happy. *"Can't you do anything right? You stupid child!"* His mother snapped too often. Toni remembered the terrible accident that made her mother die. Still ringing in his ears how his mother screamed for help. The memory made him smile. (Chapter 2: 37-38)

The second example is when Ashley was Alette Peters, an artist. External conflicts are also shown in the following paragraphs:

Alette wants to be a painter. He could hear his mother's brown-brown voice. *"You're wasting paper and paint. You have no talent."* (Chapter 3:40)

In that paragraph, it is explained how the external conflicts that Ashley often experienced as a child. He always gets unpleasant treatment from his own mother. Always under pressure and every action he does is always wrong in the eyes of his mother. This external conflict also eventually gave birth to the birth of these new personalities.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

In Sydnel Sheldon's novel entitled "Tell Me Your Dreams", there are two conflicts that can be categorized as internal conflicts and external conflicts. In the external conflict, overall said this conflict occurred between Ashley and her mother. This conflict with his mother became one of the triggers for the emergence of MPD (Multiple Personality Disorder) or multiple personalities in Ashley besides sexual abuse committed by his father as a child. This main character is depicted as a shy person and difficult to interact with others because of his gloomy childhood in this case Ashley, then when he becomes Toni, his character will turn into a strong and expressive figure, and when he becomes Alette, he will become a melancholy figure and gentle. It is also that he unconsciously raises an internal conflict within him which shows the inner turmoil between him and his subconscious. And this is what is analyzed as an internal conflict.

This literary work focuses on the struggle of patients with MPD multiple personality disorder or can be called a person with multiple personalities to recover from his illness. These symptoms are indeed frequent not seen and not felt by the sufferer. So here those involved in the treatment process tend to use a psychiatrist

and hypnotherapist. This literary work is also interesting to be raised because many of us are not aware that the environment will affect one's mental health and how much a child's success becomes successful both from association and healthy mentally and psychologically obtained from the love and love of both parents. Conversely, the growth and development of a child's soul will become blunt and become a soul soul that is sick if not properly maintained. This novel is packed with neat stories and able to provide images and knowledge for its readers.

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