

Characterization in Andrea Hirata's Novel *Sirkus Pohon*

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Abstract: This research aims at revealing characterization in Andrea Hirata's novel *Sirkus Pohon* by applying Stanford's theory. Characterization is a literary tool that is used to focus and explain the details about a character in a certain literary work. The elements included in characterization are physical description, action, inner thoughts, reactions, and speech. Characterization is exposed to invite interest of the readers to get a good understanding of the plot. The protagonist in the novel is Sobri, twenty-eight-year-old, an innocent man from Ketumbi village, only a graduate of elementary school. Sobri works as an unskilled native laborer or collie. One day, he meets a girl, Dinda, whom he loves so much, and he wants to have a permanent job to be able to propose her. There are two other important characters, Tara and Tegar who love each other. Tara meets Tegar when they accompany their mothers in religious court for their parents' divorce. During the course of the plot, Taripol, all the time stands in opposite side. This research is conducted by means of descriptive qualitative method in analyzing the characterization based on Moleong (2006). Descriptive method is done to make the description of facts, characteristics, and relationship between phenomena that are investigated systematically, facultatively, and accurately (Nazir, 2005). The data are collected, identified and categorized related to characterization in the novel. The results show that Sobri is the protagonist, Dinda, a static character, Tara and Tegar, dynamic characters, and Taripol, the antagonist.

1 INTRODUCTION

Sirkus Pohon is a novel written by Andrea Hirata, published on August 15th 2017. *Sirkus Pohon* is his tenth novel after *Laskar Pelangi*, *Sang Pemimpi*, *Edensor*, *Maryamah Karpov*, *Cinta di dalam Gelas*, *Padang Bulan*, *Sebelas Patriot*, *Dwilogi Padang Bulan* and *Ayah*. Andrea Hirata is a brilliant and productive author. He is the first winner in New York Book Festival in 2013 for his first novel *Laskar Pelangi*, the *Rainbow Troops*, in American edition. Various awards from some countries are contributed to him.

All people in the world have characters that they are different from each other by seeing their characterization. The characters may be innocent or ambitious, shy or consistent, kind or cruel, poor or rich, strong or weak, calm or angry, diligent or lazy, aggressive or fearful, thoughtful or inconsiderate, confident or self-doubting, quite or noisy, careful or careless, straight forward or underhanded, winning or losing. One person may have more than one

attitudes, depending on one's personality or situation, all of which are molded into characterization.

In reading a literary work, for example novel, character is one of the interesting things for personal opinions to see how one's life is and how the person concerns has effort to pursue a goal. Character is also a vehicle for the author in order to convey to the readers about her/his view of the world. The readers can learn about individual characters from their own words and action, from what other characters say about them and the way others act towards them. Character in a novel can be differentiated into several kinds based on point of view. The character can be categorized into several at once, for example as protagonist or antagonist.

The characters are revealed to the reader in various ways: description, dialogue, thought and feelings, action and reaction, and imagery and symbol. The characterization is the creations of the author. The differences between characters and characterization are the character refers to the person in literary works, meanwhile characterizations refer

to the way in which a character is created. It means that by characterizations, the readers will know the personality of a person in the novel, through their actions and sayings or through what other characters say about them. By this it is seen that characterization is a way and technique of an author to make the readers understand of personality and will know the image of a character in literary fictions.

Sirkus Pohon tells about Malay people in Belitong countryside, through the characters in the novel; they are Sobri, Dinda, Tara, Tegar and Taripol. Sobri is the protagonist in the novel who loves Dinda very much. As an innocent man, Sobri loves Dinda with his own ways. He always comes to Dinda's house bringing some pomegranates. Dinda likes them very much. Other characters in the novel, Tara and Tegar have some activities in helping their mother. Taripol, another significant character, is portrayed as a recurring thief who always disturbs people by his actions.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Character is any person originating from a fictional work or performance. (Martin in Kusumawati, 2007) says that a character is presumably an imagined person who inhabits a story although that simple definition might admit to a few exceptions. Characterization means how the writer tells the readers about the physical and non-physical characteristics of a person in the story. (Kenney in Mulyawan, 2015) states that the method of presenting character is called characterization. An author should have an ability not only to choose what characters take part in the story, but also to choose the method of presenting the characters in the story.

According to (Vidhya & Arjunan, 2015) characterization is classified into dimensions in which it revolves. Most of literary works are classified under four main dimensions such as physical, social, psychological and spiritual dimension. The characterization concentrated with physical dimension exists mainly with the ideas based on human and physical capabilities. This kind of characterization reflects the peculiarities of society and acts as the realistic representation of society and morals. On the other hand, psychological dimension moves a step further to present the character not only as socially driven but also biologically driven. The spiritual dimension refers to

the religion of the character that takes place in the background of the story.

Stanford (2003) states that a character is presumably an imagined person who inhabits a story, and the best guide to understand him or her is what s/he does and what s/he says. Stanford also describes the types of characters as follows:

- a. Dynamic Character, a character who changes in some significant way during the course of the work.
- b. Round character, a character who shows many different facets, often presented in depth and with great detail.
- c. Flat character, a character who usually has only one outstanding trait or feature.
- d. Static character, a character who does not change in any significant ways during the course of the work.
- e. Protagonist, a major character with whom we generally sympathize.
- f. Antagonist, a character with whom the protagonist is in conflict, generally not a sympathetic character.

3 METHOD OF RESEARCH

The writers use qualitative research in analyzing the characterization in Andrea Hirata's novel *Sirkus Pohon*. (Moleong, 2006) states that qualitative research is a study that intends to understand the phenomenon of what subjects experience, such as behavior, perception, motivation, action, etc., holistically and by way of descriptions in the form of words and languages, in a specific context that is natural and by utilizing various natural methods. As stated by Nazir (2005), descriptive method is done to make the description of facts, characteristics, and relationship between phenomenon investigated systematically, and accurately. The data are collected, identified and categorized in line with the existences of the characters.

4 DISCUSSION

There are some significant characters in Andrea Hirata's Novel *Sirkus Pohon*.

4.1 Sobri

Sobri is twenty-eight years old, still living with his father and his sister's family in his father's house.

His routine activity is driving his niece and nephew going to school on foot.

Rutin tasku setiap pagi adalah mengantarkan kedua keponakanku itu, Pipit dan Yubi, ke sekolah. Kuantar mereka berjalan kaki karena aku tak pandai naik sepeda. Waktu aku kecil, Ayah tak mampu membelikanku sepeda. Kian besar, kian malu aku mau belajar bersepeda. Akhirnya, aku tak bisa naik sepeda. (Hirata, SP: 24)

As an uncle, Sobri is very nice to his niece and nephew. He always takes them home in safety. The background scene of the novel is a small village in Belitung, desa Ketumbi. It is usual that bicycle is one means of transportation in the village. But Sobri cannot ride a bike. From the quotation above, we know that Sobri comes from a poor family; his father cannot buy him a bike.

Sobri only graduates from elementary school. In his self-talk, he says that it is because he has been influenced by Taripol, his friend. Hirata portrays Sobri as a boy who is easily affected and he let Taripol influence him.

Maka, bukan orang lain, melainkan Taripol yang menyebabkanku drop-out SMP dahulu. Dihasutnya aku untuk berleha-leha di Bioskop Sinar Malam. Tak tahu dari mana dia dapat duit untuk membeli karcis. Berkilat matanya memantul sinar dari layar, saat itu kukenal kilat mata seorang pencuri. (Hirata, SP: 24)

The above quotation tells that Sobri and Taripol always watch film at *Sinar Malam* cinema, in spite of going to school. So, finally Sobri and Taripol drop-out from junior high school. Actually, Sobri knows that Taripol always steals to buy the movie tickets. But, Sobri lets himself affected by Taripol.

Hirata reveals the character of Sobri as an innocent man. Hirata portrays the characterization of Sobri through self-talk. This is seen when Sobri is asked to give a TOA to Soridin Kebul. Taripol states that he will ask him watching film. Without any doubt, he walks slowly as two policemen gaze him bringing TOA.

Aku tak menaruh curiga. Pertama, aku tidak tahu semua barang Taripol hasil colongan. Kedua, tak mungkin dia menjerumuskanku, kawan dekatnya. Ketiga, sudah lama aku tak nonton pelem.

As an innocent man, Sobri has never had a doubt with Taripol. He thinks that Taripol is his friend who will not give him any harm.

One day, when Sobri watches a volley ball competition, he sees Dinda. It is the first time he sees her and he has fallen in love with her at the first sight.

Sejak pertama melihatnya di pertandingan voli karyawan Timah vs LLAJ tempo hari, hatiku telah tertambat pada Dinda. Saban malam perasaanku tak karuan dibuat sipu malunya itu. Lewat kawan-kawannya, aku berkiriman salam kepadanya, (Hirata, SP: 41)

At that time, Dinda is shy and Sobri says hello to her through her friends. Finally, Sobri knows that Dinda works as a shopkeeper. He goes there to keep in touch and Dinda takes their friendship.

Akan tetapi, ternyata cerita menjadi lain Dipandanginya aku dengan cara tidak seperti orang lain memandangkku. Pandangan matanya itu seperti air es yang disiramkan ke sekujur tubuhku. Dia menyambut tanganku, kami bersalaman, aku menggigil. (Hirata, SP: 42)

In every meeting, Sobri does not forget bringing pomegranate for Dinda because Dinda likes them. Then, Sobri wants to propose Dinda.

"Aku ada maksud denganmu, Dinda," kataku berhati-hati.

"Maksud apa?"

Aih, semua orang Melayu tahu apa arti kata ada maksud itu.

"Aku mau melamarmu." (Hirata, SP: 44)

Hirata portrays the characterization of Sobri as a gentleman who wants to make a friend with a woman. He makes a strategy to know her well. At first, he says hello through her friends and then he meets her in her leisure time at the shop. Finally, he makes a statement that he wants to marry her.

Sobri works as a coolie in many places, like a salesman in terminal, a cleaner in a company, a lifter of loud-speaker in the sound system company, and so on. But, his sister, Azizah, tells him that all his jobs are not permanent. Then, Dinda asks him to get a permanent job before they marry. For some months, he searches for a work, a permanent work. When he is accepted as a clown in Glacia circus, he is very happy.

Menumpang truk timah, bergegas aku ke Stadion Belantik untuk memberi tahu Ayah bahwa aku sudah dapat kerja tetap. Setelah memberitahu Azizah dan Instalatur, tiga hari tiga malam kusimpan kabar baik ini karena aku sendiri yang ingin menyampaikannya kepada Ayah. Ayah gembira. (Hirata, SP: 60)

Sobri shares his happiness of having a permanent job with the family. Sobri has a good relationship with his family. All the family feels happy.

Sobri is also humble. He thinks that it is because of Dinda, he may be hired as a clown in Gracia circus.

.... *Setelah sekian lama, seakan sepanjang hidup aku mencoba mencari kerja tetap dan gagal, akhirnya berhasil. Itu pasti rezeki Dinda dan rezeki mahligai rumah tangga yang akan kami bina nanti, hopeless romantic. Kusampaikan kepadanya aku sudah dapat kerja tetap sebagai badut sirkus. Dinda membekap kedua tangan di dada, wajahnya kagum tak terkira.* (Hirata, SP: 61)

The characterization of Sobri as a humble man is also seen from Tara, a junior high school student, who becomes his instructor. He seriously takes some instructions like how to wear a clown shirt and how to have a tidy make-up.

Tara-lah yang membuka pintu alam ajaib itu untukku. Usianya belia, tapi pengetahuannya tentang sirkus amat luas. Koleksi buku-buku dan dokumentasi sirkusnya lengkap. Dia lahir dalam kelurgasirkus dan digadang-gadang orang tuanya untuk suatu hari meneruskan tradisi sirkus keliling. (Hirata, SP: 85)

Sobri is also as a faithful man. As a lover, finally he asks his father and his sister to come to Dinda's house to propose.

Minggu berikutnya keluargaku mengunjungi keluarga Dinda dengan membawa kue bulat yang sangat besar. Demikian adat melamar orang Melayu. (Hirata, SP: 109)

In Malay community, it is common that when someone wants to propose a woman, he asks his family to come to her house by bringing a big cake. Then, they will determine the wedding day. The two families agree to marry Sobri and Dinda after Sobri's house has been built completely. But a bad condition happens. It is not known why suddenly Dinda loses her memory. But Sobri keeps to marry her. Dinda's father feels surprised when Sobri tells that he wants to marry her even she is sick. It can be seen in the quotation below.

Pada minggu sore yang tenang itu, aku menikahi Dinda. Aku berpakaian Melayu lengkap persis seperti waktu aku melamarnya dahulu. Dinda berpakaian muslimah Melayu serba hijau. Bajunya berwarna hijau lumut, jilbabnya hijau daun. Dia memang pencinta

lingkungan. Itulah hari terindah dalam hidupku. (Hirata, SP: 315)

The readers feel sympathy to his characterization. He is kind, innocent, having good relationship with his family, faithful and a good lover.

4.2 Dinda

Dinda is a woman who is not like other women. It is portrayed by Hirata in *Sirkus Pohon*.

Gadis Melayu lain suka menjahit, menyulam, membuat panganan, meronce bunga, menjalin janur, menabuh rebana, ikut kursus sepuluh jari, tapi Dinda suka buah delima. Apakah ini perbandingan yang selaras? Aih, Kawan, usahlah kau persoalkan itu. Namun, dengarlah, dengarlah baik-baik, Dinda dan delima, bukankah suatu paduan nan memesona? (Hirata, SP: 44)

The quotation above is Sobri's sentences who say that it does not matter Dinda is different from other women in their village. In her leisure time, she just eats pomegranates. It is told that she has no skills like other women.

Dinda always supports Sobri's work as a clown. One day, when Sobri takes his first performance, Dinda encourages him.

Seketika demam panggungku lenyap waktu kulihat Dinda dan Azizah tak henti bertepuk tangan, Instalatur ternganga sampai tak bisa mengangalagi, Pipit dan Yubi menunjuk-nunjukku, paman mereka yang hebat ini.

It is his first performance as a clown in the *Glasia* circus. He wants his family and especially Dinda, to watch how good his action as a hero in the Belitung legend story *Raja Berekor*.

A week after Sobri has lived in his own house, their marriage is determined. Then, suddenly Dinda's uncle comes telling that Dinda goes for work and does not come home. She is lost for 24 hours. All people in Ketumbi village seek her. Sobri gets panic as he thinks Dinda gets an accident, or becomes a victim of crime. And suddenly, someone tells that there is a woman sitting beneath a cherry tree in Belantik market since yesterday morning.

Bak bohlam yang bersinar terang, sekonyong-konyong putus, gelap, begitu pula Dinda, tiba-tiba dia padam, diam, dia seribu bahasa. Mantra didatangkan dan dengan cepat menyimpulkan Dinda sehat walafiat. Tekanan

darah, detak jantung, suhu, napas, semua normal. Tak ada flu, demam, pening kepala, gangguan pencernaan, atau benjolan-benjolan aneh di perut, dada, atau leher.

Tak ada bekas cedera yang menimbulkan gegar otak atau trauma. (Hirata, 2017: 126)

Hirata does not portray to the readers why Dinda gets shock and loses her memory. After the incident, Dinda has lost her memory. It is not known exactly why she could lose her memory. The writers conclude that Dinda is a static character who does not change in any significant ways during the course of the story.

4.3 Tara

Tara is a dynamic character. The dynamic character is a character that changes in some significant way during the course of the story. Tara is changed, from a simple girl to a beautiful lady. When Tara is a girl, a fifth-grade student, she meets Tegar in religious court as their parents get divorced. Tara likes Tegar because he helps her to have a chance to play a game. Then, they are separated from each other.

Tara is a strong kid. When her parents get divorced, she does not cry.

Ayah dan ibu Tara juga berpisah baik-baik. Tak ada suara tinggi, tak ada rusuh, tak ada tuduh-menuduh, tak ada rebut-ribut. Ibu menerima cobaan ini secara elegan. Tara berusaha keras agar tak menangis. Perceraian berlangsung lancar dan penuh penyesalan. Penyesalan yang disimpan masing-masing orang sebagai rahasia hati mereka. (Hirata, SP: 29)

Tara is also a talented girl. This comes from her mother's blood. she is able to draw some decoration for gipsy's bikes, making some lamps, and tents.

Orang-orang bilang dia menurun bakat seni ibunya. Ibunya itu tamatan sekolah menengah seni rupa di Yogyakarta, dan mengaku, dalam usia yang sama dengan Tara sekarang kemampuan anaknya jauh melampauinya. Anaknya menggambar dekorasi kereta-kereta gipsi, merancang lampu-lampu hias, tenda-tenda, dan panggung utama. (Hirata, SP: 62)

As a girl of circus, she is very creative. She knows the names of all circus properties and their uses. She draws the decoration, plans the position of the lamps and tents. When Tara is in junior high school, she becomes Sobri's instructor. She teaches

Sobri how to wear the clown shirt and how to make a clown's make-up. Sobri always feels comfortable with Tara.

"Tara".

Suaranya mungil seperti siul kutilang. Kata Ibu Bos, ikut saja perintah anak itu karena dialah mandorku.

Sore itu juga Tara mengajarku cara memakai baju seragamku itu dan cara merias wajah karena aku adalah badut sirkus. (Hirata, SP: 59)

Sobri thinks that Tara is very talented. She learns how to draw face from her mother. She spends hours to draw.

Di dalam kepala Tara ada penggaris, busur derajat, jangka alami, perpustakaan warna, dan perbendaharaan yang kaya akan pola-pola hiasan sirkus. Minat dan keahlian utamanya adalah melukis wajah. Dia belajar dengan serius dari ibunya bagaimana melukis wajah. (Hirata, SP: 62)

Tara has planned to paint the face of a boy whom she knows in religious court. Then, Tara paints one face in one month. For 10 years, Tara has painted 119 faces. Each of the face makes her remember him. As the time goes by, Tara could find Tegar, until one day she decides to stop coming to the park of religious court.

Tara terpana melihat Tegar menyentuh perosotan itu seakan sedang mengenang kejadian pada masa lalu. Seketika waktu membeku dan Tara dilanda déjà vu. Dilihatnya Tegar menjelma menjadi anak lelaki kecil yang membelanya itu dan dia terlempar ke pagi itu, 10 tahun yang lalu, ... (Hirata, SP: 370)

The above quotation shows that Tara finally decides that she will not come again to the park of religious court. But unexpectedly, she meets Tegar.

Tara is a faithful lover. Tara's love to Tegar is great. She keeps on seeking Tegar whose face she cannot remember well as they are separated when in their childhood.

4.4 Tegar

Tegar is a child of a broken-home family. His parents get divorced at the time of Tara's parents also get divorced. It is in the park of religious court that Tegar meets Tara at the age of ten. Like Tara, Tegar should also substitute his mother's works,

because after getting divorced his mother always cries and does not do anything.

Gara-gara pecah kongsi sama suami, ibu Tegar mengerang, meradang, lalu patah hati, lalu melamun sepanjang hari. Hobi membuat kue dan menanam bunga dinoaktifkan. Dapur sunyi senyap, pekarangan merana. (Hirata, SP: 65)

Like Tara, Tegar also seeks Tara by his own way. Tegar asks his friend, Adun, to accompany him to find Tara by means of smelling.

Sebenarnya Adun telah bertugas dengan baik. Dia mampu mengendus bermacam-macam jenis parfum yang dipakai para pelajar. Termasuk pelajar yang tak mandi pagi, tapi tak ditemuinya seorang pun beraroma vanili. (Hirata, SP: 132)

Tegar gets a mistake. He thinks that it is *vanili*, but it is *kenanga* flower. So, Tegar gets some difficulty.

Tegar is a good son for his family. He always helps his mother and his sisters. Tegar also works bike garage.

Karena ibu banyak melamun, Tegar harus pula mengambil alih pekerjaan dapur. Dibantu adik perempuannya yang telah beranjak remaja, dia belanja, bersih-bersih, mencuci pakaian, dan memasak. Setelah menyiapkan adik-adiknya untuk sekolah, setiap pagi dia sendiri terbitir-beritir ke sekolah. Pulang dari sekolah, dia tak bermain-main seperti remaja seusianya. Dia makan siang sebentar, berganti pakaian, lalu bergegas ke pinggir kota, ke bengkel sepeda Masa Depan, demikian nama bengkel sepeda peninggalan ayahnya itu. (Hirata, SP: 67)

Tegar is a dynamic character. Tegar's character always changes from time to time. One time, he becomes a father for his family, another time he becomes a brother for his siblings so he should help his sisters in doing homework, and sometimes he should become a son for his mother to listen to all his mother's nags.

4.5 Taripol

Taripol drops out of school in his early age. He always steals something like candy and others from the shop. All the people in the village know that he is a thief.

Kondanglah dia sebagai bramacorah, maling kambuhan. Setiap terjadi pencurian di

kampong, tak pernah luput namanya disebut-sebut. Hilang sepeda, Taripol; hilang jemuran, Taripol; hilang antenna tipi, Taripol; hilang di kota, Taripol; hilang di kampong, Taripol. Pokoknya setiap ada barang hilang, orang bergunjing: Taripol maling. (Hirata, SP: 16)

Taripol always persuades his friends to follow him. One day, Taripol asks Sobri to deliver TOA to his friend, Soridin Kebul. Sobri does not know that Taripol has stolen the TOA from a government office. So, the police arrest them.

.... Maka, pencurian TOA itu dianggap Yang Mulia Hakim tak lain sebagai suatu perbuatan yang keterlaluan. Taripol kena kurung setahun. Selaku penadah barang colongan, Soridin Kebul kena enam bulan. Keduanya dioperkan ke hotel prodeo kabupaten. Tinggallah aku sendiri menekuri nasib yang sial. Sudah kena kecoh Taripol, kena usir keluarga, plus dituduh nyolong TOA, plus dicurigai khalayak sebagai anggota mafia geng Granat. (Hirata, SP: 41)

When Taripol gets out of the jail, he becomes gambler in Belantik night market.

Taripol menarik napas panjang, mencium cincin batu satamnya, lalu pelan-pelan membuka cangkir tengah dan sontak penonton terbelalak karena tak tampak sebutir pun dadu di situ. Kini malah si gendut pucat pias. Tak percaya dia dengan pandangan matanya sendiri. Dia merasa yakin telah menebak dengan benar. Dibantingnya duit sepuluh ribu di depan Taripol. (Hirata, SP: 213-214)

Taripol names the gambling as *dadu cangkir*. He uses 3 cups and a dice. The player should guess where the dice is. There are so many people standing around him to play the game. At the end, Taripol win much money from the gambling.

When there is an election campaign for village head, Taripol also takes a part in this occasion. He says to the people that pomegranate tree is sacred. When Ngasbulah becomes village head, a pomegranate tree is planted in the yard of his house.

Delima diangkut ke Pulau Menguang naik perahu. Sampai di sana langsung ditanam di pekarangan rumah Ngasbulah dan ditemplei foto-fotonya. Dia terpilih menjadi kepala desa. (Hirata, SP: 329)

Knowing about the intension of the pomegranate tree, some people come, asking for some blessings from the tree.

Sejak itu delima punya nama baru: delima keramat. Karena status baru itu, pamornya makin kondang. Pengunjungnya makin ramai dan setiap hariberdiri di situ seorang lelaki bertopi jerami bernama Taripol sambil memegang karton bertulisan "Pohon delima keramat, sekali peluk Rp 2.000,00. Berfoto Rp 1.500,00." (Hirata, SP: 298)

Taripol has some plans to make people doing something though it is harmful in our religion. He makes people believe what he says. And there are so many people who do not know what is true and what is false. So, they follow what Taripol says blindly.

5 CONCLUSION

The writers conclude that there are some types of characters found in the novel as stated by Stanford (2003). The protagonist in the novel is Sobri. Through his characterization, the readers understand that Sobri has a good personality and an innocent man.

Dinda is a static character. She is a shy woman who works as a shop-keeper. Sobri loves her so much and she accepts his love. But, one day, without knowing the reason, she loses her memory and does not know anything.

Tara and Tegar are the dynamic characters who always change in some significant ways in the novel. They fall in love while they are in young age and they always seek each other using a various way till they meet again. Their characterization is dynamic: they are very busy in helping their mothers doing all works but they do not forget to preserve their love.

Taripol is the antagonist in the novel. He is like a bandit in cowboy film. He has some bad habits influencing others and he always disturbs other people.

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