

HELEN KELLER'S STRUGGLE IN THE STORY OF MY LIFE

ABSTRACT

One of the literary works is novel. In the novel we can find many kinds of character. This research aims to find out the characteristics of Helen Keller by using psychological approach and to describe the factors influence Helen Keller to struggle in obtaining the equal confession as usual human. This research used qualitative method in analyzing the data. The data is taken from Helen Keller's Novel "The Story of My Life" and in the form of quotation from novel that related to Helen Keller's characters. The result of this research are the characteristics of Helen Keller in term of angry, naughty, curiosity, struggle, eager, clever, diligent, care, confident, brave, independent. There are also some factors that influence the characteristics of Helen Keller, such as: Influence from family, teacher and famous people.

Key Words: Characters, Struggles, Factor Influences.

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INTRODUCTION

Literary often describes about human's life that related to culture, religion, social, moral and so on. Almost the whole literary give impact to the reader when they have finished to read. Sometimes, the impact can be sad or happy and like or dislike, depend on the story.

As we know, literary works such as: poetry, prose, and novel. Many people choose novel as a favourite literary because the content of novel include many aspects. In novel we can see how the author describe the story in wonderful plot, good setting and unique character. Beside that, we can get a moral value or an advise which is good or not.

In this research, the writer analyzes and clarifies more deeply about the character of Hellen Keller in the novel "The Story of my life" written in 1903 by Helen Keller. The writer choose this novel because the writer wants to find out the characteristics of Hellen Keller that is good to be analyzed as inspiration and motivation to people who was born blind and deaf. Besides that, the writer wants to know the struggles of Helen Keller's life and how she can reach the equal confession as a usual human. As a result, the reader can get the spirit of Helen Keller's struggle and about her thought in many kinds character. The writer conducts a research entitled "Helen Keller's Struggle in The Story of My Life". And the writer thinks it is very interesting for research by using psychological approach.

The writer limits this research to the characterictics of Helen Keller's struggle for her life by using Psychological approach in "The Story of My life" written in 1903 by Helen Keller.

This scientific research paper uses a qualitative method by using phycology analysis. According to David Numan (1992:3) the method used in the research is qualitative research assumes that all knowledge is relative, that there is a subjective element to all knowledge research. It is equivalent with the research, which is to describe the people

and the behavior within the novel. The source of data in this research is a novel entitled "The Story of My Life" written by Helen Keller in 1903 as the primary data.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Novel

Novel is derived from Italian novella "tale, pieces of news" and now applied to a wide variety of writings whose only common attribute is that they are extended pieces of prose fiction. In contemporary practice, novel will be between 60-70.000 words and say, 200.000 (Cuddon, 1986:430). According to Oxford English dictionary, a novel is fictious prose narrative or rate of considerable length which characters and actions representatives of the real life of past and present times are portrayed in a plot of more or more complexity (Hawthorn,1985:1).

Structure of Novel

Plot

Plot is the sequence of incidents or events of which a story is composed when recounted by itself. It bears about the same relationship to a story that a map does to a journey. It may include what a character says or thinks, as well as what he does, bit it leaves out description and analysis and concentrates ordinarily on major happenings (Perrine, 1988:41)

Theme

The theme of piece of fiction is it is controlling idea or its central insight. It is the unfying generalization about life stated or implied by the story. To derive them of a story, we must ask what its central purpose is: What view of life it support or what insight into life it reveals (Perrine, 1988:65)

Character and Characteristics

According to The Power of Language, character is the term for the people in

fiction, the heroes and villains, allies and enemies, love intersts and comic relief (Mc Laughlin, 1989:375). According to David Grambs, Character is a portrayal or description so as to distinguish; the creation or representation of character in fiction; delineation; the use in journalism of descriptive or categorical word as modifiers, sometimes irrelevently, and sometimes prejudicially (1984:484).

According to Mc Laughlin, Characteristics is distinguishing trait, quality, or poetry; an element of character; that which characterized. (1989:376)

Psychological Approach

Psychological approach is an approach coming from assumption that a literary work is merely discussing about human life. (Semi, 1993:806)

The term personality is frequently used conversation turn to the social behavior of specific person and the amount and quality of influence they shield upon others. (Wolman, 1977:301). Psychological approach is one of many approaches that can be used to do the research of a literary work, such as novel, poem, etc. Through psychological approach the writer expected to get to know the personality of a character that one to be analyzed by the writer.

Method of Psychological Approach

In analyzing "Helen Keller" character, the writer uses several methods of psychological approach. According to Semi (1993):

1. Psychological approach emphasizes to analyze whole literary work in intrinsic or extrinsic aspect. From intrinsic aspect, the emphasize is to emphasizes on characterization.
2. The important of extrinsic aspect is connected with psychological problems, such as aim, aspiration, desire, etc.
3. In analyzing the characters, we must find the thought of figure's behavior. Also the researcher should explain the motifs that support the action.

DISCUSSION

The Characters in The Story of My Life.

Main Character

- 1 Helen Keller
Helen Keller is a nice person. She is independent, clever, diligent and have ambition to get a miracle for her live.

Supporting Character

- 1 Miss Sullivan
Miss Sullivan is a kind teacher. She makes Helen comfort to study about everything even Helen was blind and deaf. Miss Sullivan never give up to teach Helen because she is very patient.
- 1 Kate Adams (Helen's mother)
She is a good woman and full of affection. She also wisdom woman for Helen.
- 1 Alexander Graham Bell
He is a simpathic person, smart, and friendly.

A. The characteristics of Helen Keller before she got influence from many factors.

1 Angry

At the first, Helen Keler was difficult to comunicate with everybody, she tried to use the sign but she fault. This condition made her angry, she became impatient and discourage. She often coarses, when she was angry if she hasn't got something that she want, she kicked everybody who was standing beside her. Ella, her nurse has kicked by her.

Miss Sullivan taught Helen Keller to understand about words. Because everything have the name, but Helen Keller thought that was difficult to understand. He became more impatient, till she dashed her doll.

And for the quotations that show the angry of Helen Keller's character:

"Sometimes I stood between two persons who were conversing and touched their lips. I could not understand, and was vexed. I moved my lips and gesticulated frantically without result. This made me so angry at times that I kicked and screamed until I was exhausted." (Page 10)

"I think I knew when I was naughty, for I knew that it hurt Ella, my nurse, to kick her, and when my fit of temper was over I had a feeling akin to regret. But I cannot remember any instance in which this feeling prevented me from repeating the naughtiness when I failed to get what I wanted." (Page 10)

1 Naughty

When Helen Keller was young, she had a

friend, her name is Martha Washington. Martha and Helen often make Helen's mother be panic. One day, Martha and Helen were playing together. They were cutting some things till they were bored and then they were cutting their hair each other. This moment describes about the naughtiness of Helen Keller.

And for the quotations that show the naughty of Helen Keller's character:

"Martha Washington had as great a love of mischief as I. Two little children were seated on the veranda steps one hot July afternoon. One was black as ebony, with little bunches of fuzzy hair tied with shoestrings sticking out all over her head like corkscrews. The other was white, with long golden curls. One child was six years old, the other two or three years older. The younger child was blind—that was I--and the other was Martha Washington. We were busy cutting out paper dolls; but we soon wearied of this amusement, and after cutting up our shoestrings and clipping all the leaves off the honeysuckle that were within reach, I turned my attention to Martha's corkscrews. She objected at first, but finally submitted. Thinking that turn and turn about is fair play, she seized the scissors and cut off one of my curls, and would have cut them all off but for my mother's timely interference." (Page 11)

1 Curiosity

Helen Keller has the big curiosity, she wanted to know everything when the people made or given something. For example, when Miss Sullivan was introduced to her about word. From one word d-o-l-l, Helen wanted to know more and more word till she realized that everything has a name.

As we know, Helen was blind and deaf, so that she was difficult to know something. She knew water very hard, but her curiosity made her patient to know it. Helen went to the garden, she learned about flower, then she looked for many insect and caught them. Then Helen touched the insect and guessed the insect's form.

And for the quotations that show the curiosity of Helen Keller's character:

"The morning after my teacher came she led me into her room and gave me a doll. The little blind children at the Perkins Institution had sent it and Laura Bridgman had dressed it; but I did not know this until afterward. When I had played with it a little while, Miss Sullivan slowly spelled into my hand the word "d-o-l-l." I was at once interested in this finger play and tried to imitate it. When I finally succeeded in making the letters correctly I was flushed with childish pleasure and pride. Running downstairs to my mother I held up my hand and made the letters for

doll. I did not know that I was spelling a word or even that words existed; I was simply making my fingers go in monkey-like imitation. In the days that followed I learned to spell in this uncomprehending way a great many words, among them pin, hat, cup and a few verbs like sit, stand and walk. But my teacher had been with me several weeks before I understood that everything has a name." (Page 15)

B. The characteristics of Helen Keller in obtaining the equal confession as usual human

1 Struggle

Helen keller was very struggle for her life, when she was difficult to know what people said, she was placed her hand on the hand of speaker. Before Helen Keller became an author, she wrote letter for her friend. But, she was very careful to wrote something because she was afraid if what she had written was similiar to the other author.

She also visited President Cleveland, World's Fair and etc. When she was studying at class, she could not make notes or write exercise. She wrote down it at home. Her work was painfully slow, so that when she had an exam, she had to read the example over and over because she was difficult to understand what it means.

And for the quotations that show the struggle of Helen Keller's character:

"I place my hand on the hand of the speaker so lightly as not to impede its movements. The position of the hand is as easy to feel as it is to see. I do not feel each letter any more than you see each letter separately when you read." (Page 32)

"In reading my teacher's lips I was wholly dependent on my fingers: I had to use the sense of touch in catching the vibrations of the throat, the movements of the mouth and the expression of the face; and often this sense was at fault." (Page 32)

1 Eager

When we analyzed the characteristics of Helen Keller, we can said that she is an eager person. She was difficult to communicate with another persons, but she was very eager to made somenone understand what she means. For example, Helen made her aunt understood that she wanted if her aunt to sew beads off to her doll.

Helen Keller was very eager to study many words, so that when she played a game also related to words. Sometimes, she learned many things alone, she touched that thing, then felt and guessed that form.

And for the quotations that show the eager of Helen Keller's character:

"I tumbled off the seat and searched under it until I found my aunt's cape, which was trimmed with large beads. I pulled two beads off and indicated to her that I wanted her to sew them on my doll. She raised my hand to her eyes in a questioning way, and I nodded energetically. The beads were sewed in the right place and I could not contain myself for joy; but immediately I lost all interest in the doll." (Page 13)

"I left the well-house eager to learn. Everything had a name, and each name gave birth to a new thought. As we returned to the house every object which I touched seemed to quiver with life. That was because I saw everything with the strange, new sight that had come to me." (Page 16)

C. The characteristics of Helen Keller After her struggle in obtaining equal confession as usual human.

1 Clever

Helen was clever when she did something or thought about something. She learned from mistakes, tried to be better and better. She also studied many languages, she was clever to make an analysis about language, she liked picking up words that she understood and tried to make sense.

And for the quotations that show the clever of Helen Keller's character:

"A day or two afterward I was stringing beads of different sizes in symmetrical groups--two large beads, three small ones, and so on. I had made many mistakes, and Miss Sullivan had pointed them out again and again with gentle patience. Finally I noticed a very obvious error in the sequence and for an instant I concentrated my attention on the lesson and tried to think how I should have arranged the beads. Miss Sullivan touched my forehead and spelled with decided emphasis, "Think." (Page 19)

"At first I was rather unwilling to study Latin grammar. It seemed absurd to waste time analyzing, every word I came across--noun, genitive, singular, feminine--when its meaning was quite plain. I thought I might just as well describe my pet in order to know it--order, vertebrate; division, quadruped; class, mammalia; genus, felinus; species, cat; individual, Tabby. But as I got deeper into the subject, I became more interested, and the beauty of the language delighted me. I often amused myself by reading Latin passages, picking up words I understood and trying to make sense. I have never ceased to

enjoy this pastime." (Page 39)

1 Dilligent

Helen knew the words step by step, at first, she studied one words need a long time, because she must imagine about the words. She was care with her environment, also with animal, she was very dilligent to take care an animal, for example a bird.

And for the quotations that show the dilligent of Helen Keller's character:

"I took my "Reader for Beginners" and hunted for the words I knew; when I found them my joy was like that of a game of hide-and-seek. Thus I began to read. Of the time when I began to read connected stories I shall speak later." (Page 21)

"Every morning after breakfast I prepared his bath, made his cage clean and sweet, filled his cups with fresh seed and water from the well-house, and hung a spray of chickweed in his swing." (Page 24)

"I learned more and more words, my field of inquiry broadened, and I would return again and again to the same subject, eager for further information." (Page 19)

1 Care

Helen Keller was very dilligent, she had many inspiration to write some stories from many books that she read. As we know, she was care to people and her environment. She wrote a story for gift birthday.

And for the quotations that show the care of Helen Keller's character:

"Accordingly I copied the story and sent it to him for his birthday." (Page 33)

1 Confident

Although Helen was blind and deaf, she was confident to play a drama for celebrate Washington birthday. Helen played with beautiful performnaces as Ceres.

And for the quotations that show the confident of Helen Keller's character:

"I was to be Ceres in a kind of masque given by the blind girls. How well I remember the graceful draperies that enfolded me, the bright autumn leaves that wreathed my head, and the fruit and grain at my feet and in my hands." (page 33-34)

1 Independent

Many things that showed Helen was an independent girl. Exactly, Helen thought that she could do it alone without needing help from other people. But sometimes, many people worried that Helen could

not to do something. This condition made Helen Keller wanted to tried by herself even she knew that was not easy and need more struggle to do everything.

And for the quotations that show the confident of Helen Keller's character:

"Sometimes Miss Sullivan read to me, spelling into my hand little stories and poems that she knew I should understand; but I preferred reading myself to being read to, because I liked to read again and again the things that pleased me." (Page 50)

1 Brave

At first, Helen afraid with something that strange. She guessed something with her hands and her feelings. Till she became a brave woman. Indeed, she was never afraid to canoeing at night. And she also like sailing.

And for the quotations that show the brave of Helen Keller's character:

"I also enjoy canoeing, and I suppose you will smile when I say that I especially like it on moonlight nights. I cannot, it is true, see the moon climb up the sky behind the pines and steal softly across the heavens, making a shining path for us to follow; but I know she is there." (Page 55)

"My favourite amusement is sailing. In the summer of 1901 I visited Nova Scotia, and had opportunities such as I had not enjoyed before to make the acquaintance of the ocean." (Page 55)

D. The factors influence Helen Keller to struggle in obtaining the equal confession as usual human.

1. Family

1 Helen's mother (Kate Adams)

It is sure that mother is very important for every child. Of course Helen also felt it. Without her mother, she could not be a good person. Her mother made her understood many things, taught her to do something, and built Helen's character.

And for the quotations that show Helen's mother influence of Helen Keller's character:

"My mother, moreover, succeeded in making me understand a good deal. I always knew when she wished me to bring her something, and I would run upstairs or anywhere else she indicated. Indeed, I owe to her loving wisdom all that was bright and good in my long night." (Page 10)

2. Teacher

1 Miss Sullivan

The Big influence of Helen Keller's characters were from Miss Sullivan. She taught many things that are important for Helen's life. She taught about hardskill that made Helen became clever person, and made Helen realized that she had softkill which was good to increase. In another hand, Miss Sullivan was responsible to build character of Helen Keller. So that, Helen became success woman even she was blind and deaf.

And for the quotations that show Miss Sullivan's influence of Helen Keller's character:

"Thus I learned from life itself. At the beginning I was only a little mass of possibilities. It was my teacher who unfolded and developed them. An When she came, everything about me breathed of love and joy and was full of meaning. She has never since let pass an opportunity to point out the beauty that is in everything, nor has she ceased trying in thought and action and example to make my life sweet and useful." (Page 23)

"It was my teacher's genius, her quick sympathy, her loving tact which made the first years of my education so beautiful. It was because she seized the right moment to impart knowledge that made it so pleasant and acceptable to me. She realized that a child's mind is like a shallow brook which ripples and dances merrily over the stony course of its education and reflects here a flower, there a bush, yonder a fleecy cloud; and she attempted to guide my mind on its way, knowing that like a brook it should be fed by mountain streams and hidden springs, until it broadened out into a deep river, capable of reflecting in its placid surface, billowy hills the luminous shadows of trees and the blue heavens, as well as the sweet face of a little flower." (Page 23)

3. Famous People

1 Alexander Graham Bell

Alexander Graham Bell is a nice figure for Helen Keller. He is a famous people but has a good personality. He is one of the people that give influence to Helen Keller's character. Mr Bell understood every sign that Helen has made. He was as a people that helped Helen to get proper education. Then, Mr. Bell told to Helen about her experiment. He made Helen was easy to understood the difficult theory. He is an inspirator for Helen.

And for the quotations that show Mr. Bell's influence of Helen Keller's character:

"Child as I was, I at once felt the tenderness and sympathy which endeared Dr. Bell to so many hearts, as his wonderful achievements enlist their admiration. He held me on his knee while I examined his

watch, and he made it strike for me. He understood my signs, and I knew it and loved him at once. But I did not dream that that interview would be the door through which I should pass from darkness into light, from isolation to friendship, companionship, knowledge, love. Dr. Bell advised my father to write to Mr. Anagnos, director of the Perkins Institution in Boston, the scene of Dr. Howe's great labours for the blind, and ask him if he had a teacher competent to begin my education." (Page 14)

1 Mr. Henry Drummond

Mr. Henry is a sympatic person. He was kind to Helen, he also taught Helen many things especially about general knowledge.

And for the quotations that show Bishop Brooks's influence of Helen Keller's character:

"I knew Mr. Henry Drummond, and the memory of his strong, warm hand-clasp is like a benediction. He was the most sympathetic of companions. He knew so much and was so genial that it was impossible to feel dull in his presence." (Page 61)

CONCLUSION

The result of this research are the characteristics of Helen Keller in term of angry, naughty, curiosity, struggle, eager, clever, dilligent, care, confident, brave, independent. There are also some factors that influence the characteristics of Helen Keller, such as: Influence from family, teacher and famous people. This research far from being perfect, that is why the writer suggests to the next researcher to

make a research deepest discussion of character. They may use another approaches to their research in analyzing character, such as: moral, feminism, sociolinguistic, historical approach, and etc.

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